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Donald Louis Kramer

July 25, 1937 - June 25, 2020

Donald Louis Kramer, 82, of Morganton, NC died peacefully at his home with his wife Terry, family and friends by his side. He passed away on Thursday, June 25, 2020, one month before his 83rd birthday, following a period of declining health.

Don is survived by his loving wife, Terry Garner Kramer of the home; daughter Jenee Marie Kramer-Hobgood, son-in-law William Trevor Hobgood, and grandson Isaac William Hobgood of Savannah, Georgia; Brother John Kramer and wife Sally of Fayetteville, NC; and Sister-in-law Nancy Corbeille and husband Ron of Waterford, Michigan. Don also considered Dave Stang, Michelle Wellman, and Tracy Hall as part of his extended family.

Don was born in Grace Hospital in Detroit, Michigan to the late Louie and Celia Bynum Kramer. He attended Madison HS in Royal Oak, Michigan where he played varsity football. He was a life-long fan of the game. After graduation, Don attended Lawrence Institute of Technology (LIT) where he earned his bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1955. Upon graduating with honors, Don joined General Motors Corp. (GM) at their GM Tech Center in Warren, Michigan in the Design Engineering Dept. While working there, Don also pursued his Law Degree at night at Detroit College of Law, graduating after 3 years as a Patent Attorney. Don then accepted a position with the GM Patent Dept. in their Corporate Offices. Don had an

accepted a position with the GM Patent Dept. in their Corporate Offices. Don had an illustrious career with GM spanning some 30 years and holds several Patents in the development of the Locking Seat Belt, Air Bag Restraints, and other Safety Features.

Upon retirement from GM, Don, his late wife Carol Mihay Kramer and their daughter Jenee, moved from Clarkston, MI to Morganton, NC where Don designed and built a

custom home on the shoreline of Lake James. Don enjoyed living in the East Shores Community of Lake James, being outdoors, hunting wild turkey and deer, and staying in shape through daily visits to the Phifer Gym in Morganton. Fondly called “the Duke of Phifer”, he developed many acquaintances and lasting friendships over the years

Don and Terry regularly attended Glen Alpine United Methodist Church, where they were both Trustees and Council members. Both were instrumental in planning and developing the Church’s new columbarium, currently under construction and where Don will be inurned. He was also one of the visionaries and founders of the Glen Alpine Food Pantry. He helped set up the original bylaws and served on the newly established board of directors. He remained a steadfast food pantry supporter even when his term as a board member ended.

Don was a patriarch of the East Shores neighborhood since its inception. He volunteered to be on the Advisory Board of Crescent Resources, beginning in 1996. When Crescent released the neighborhood property for development on April 24, 1999, Don became the first ESHOA President. He remained President until his resignation in 2003. Under Don's leadership, East Shores became a thriving neighborhood - a place of which its residents could feel proud. Even after Don's resignation, he remained a vital and active part of East Shores and the Lake James Community. Don genuinely enjoyed living among the many caring, generous neighbors and friends in East Shores, who have been like family to him.

Don also served on the Board of the Community of Lake James (CLJ) and was an active member of the Lake James Area Wildlife & Nature Society, one of the 14 Chapters in the state. Don played a vital role in the Chapter helping to organize, support and carry out various events such as the annual clean-up of Lake James which involved recruiting over two hundred volunteers. Don organized local mountain hikes, aided in establishing a 6-mile butterfly highway in Burke County, was always ready to help and was the Chapter’s chief cook for the BBQ cookouts. His specialty

ready to help and was the Chapter's chief cook for the BBQ cookouts. His specialty was delicious down-home chili! He also enjoyed “poker nights” with the guys.

Don was a loyal and trusted friend and neighbor who will be dearly missed.

A memorial service, followed by a greeting of friends to celebrate Don’s life will be held later.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Don’s memory may be made to the Glen Alpine United Methodist Church or to Burke County Hospice.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.