



## Donald Boyan Spolyar

November 3, 1926 - September 10, 2014

Donald Boyan Spolyar, 87, of Cadillac, peacefully passed away on September 10, 2014, with his family by his side. He was stricken by a stroke 4 days earlier.

Born to the late John and Amelia Spolyar on November 3, 1926 in Detroit, Donald attended Harrietta and Mesick schools, graduating in 1945. Just 23 days after graduation, he was inducted into the Army during WWII, serving for over two years. He attended Wayne State and Central Michigan College, graduating in 1952 with a Bachelor's Degree in Education. Before he began teaching, he worked in Detroit for GM in a tool and die shop and at Detroit Transmission Division. In 1955, Don started teaching in Brethren then transferred to Cadillac Public Schools in 1957, teaching driver's education and Business classes, retiring in 1987. He was loved and respected by many students and staff alike.

Along with his teaching career, Don owned and managed a Christmas tree business since 1971, where some of his trees were shipped as far south as Florida and west to Arizona. He maintained a tree lot in Flint among other places for over 25 years. Many of his tree grower friends stated that Don was a man of "Character and Integrity". It was common to see some of Don's students trimming and harvesting Christmas trees during the busy season, most obtaining first job experience.

As the oldest of seven children, Don was known as the patriarch of the Spolyar family. He helped raise his siblings on the farm as his dad worked in Detroit. He loved to dance, gamble, travel, play cards with friends and enjoyed his daily Freecell computer game. He skied and bowled for many years. Don was a member of the Elks Lodge #680, American Legion, and Mesick Masonic Lodge.

In 2001, Don was married to Margaret (M.J.) Lanning, in a family destination wedding in Las Vegas, NV and she survives him along with; children: Sara (Darrin) Zimmerman of Alpena, David (Jo Ellen) Spolyar of Lake Orion, Julie Nino of Grand Rapids and Kurt Kostbade of Grand Rapids; stepchildren: Keri Lanning of Cadillac; Duane (Roberta) Lanning of Dubuque, Iowa. Don is also survived by eleven grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and many nieces, nephews and other loving family members. His siblings: Joan (Gene) Kelly of Harrietta, Mary Ann Oren (Bob Boekenkamp) of Sun City, AZ, John (Liane) Spolyar of Troy, Jim (Sybille) Spolyar of Las Vegas, NV and Amelia (Clive Cantor) of West Bloomfield..

Don was preceded in death by his parents, John and Amelia Spolyar; former wife, Evelyn Spolyar; sister, Stephanie; brother-in-law, Joe Ris and granddaughter, Olivia Spolyar.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Harrietta Civic Club, P.O. Box 61, Harrietta, MI 49638 or The LEAGUE Michigan, 330 Marshall Street, Suite 200, Lansing, MI 48912, a youth leadership organization, in his granddaughter Olivia's name.

Please join in the celebration of his life at McGuire's Terrace Room in Cadillac, from 12-3:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 13, 2014. An online guestbook is available at [www.petersonfh.com](http://www.petersonfh.com).



# Tribute Wall

LA

“ MJ, you have my heartfelt condolences. Don was a great guy, and I'm glad I was able to get to know him through working at the tree farm. Such crazy times there, trying to get those Christmas trees out every year! My goodness. Don had a really big heart and always took in us "strays" (you guys know what I mean!)... always giving us jobs and treating us like his kids, truly caring. I am grateful for the memories and the fun times. Having lunch or a beer or two on the way home from pruning trees in the hot morning sun--good times. You will be missed.

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**Laura Amsel** - October 10, 2014 at 11:41 AM

UO

“ Loved Don's kind heart and happy smile. Though we only briefly shared in a part of his life there was no mistake that Don shared God's love through his Christmas Trees. Love and blessings to Don's family.

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**Unity of Lake Orion** - September 16, 2014 at 10:21 AM

JF

“ Having taking classes and worked for Don along with graduating with Dave, I can say that Don was a man filled with "character" and I'm sure he's left a lot of it behind with his family. May God shine His face upon you all.

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**Jeff Fagerman** - September 15, 2014 at 05:50 PM

DC

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with your family, we are sorry for your loss

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**Don and Megan Cline** - September 15, 2014 at 10:10 AM

JL

“ So many great memories of a humorous and intellectual man. As my teacher, as my employer in " the trees" and as a FRIEND through your my life, Don was always there. I can't help but smile and be grateful that I had these opportunities to know Don.

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**Jerry Leavell** - September 14, 2014 at 08:08 PM

JB

“ John and I are very sorry about Don's death. He was always so full of life, laughing, telling stories, asking questions, and enjoying the day. He was devoted to his family and MJ, and he will be missed by all who knew him. John and I send our heartfelt condolences.

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**Jean Bjork Boquist** - September 14, 2014 at 02:57 PM

CW

“ Condolences to MJ, Sara, David and the entire Spolyar family. Don was a special man, and a great teacher. He touched many lives, especially in Harrietta and Cadillac...and will be missed. With deepest sympathy in your loss.

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**Caroline (Kerzich) Wunderlich** - September 14, 2014 at 10:28 AM

SC

“ I'm going to miss Uncle Don. You always knew he cared about what was happening in your life. He gave good advice and the best hugs! You all are in our prayers.

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**Stephanie Oren Chamberlain** - September 13, 2014 at 10:12 PM

MO

“ I wish I could be with you all in celebrating Don's life. Remembering all the good things gets through the hard times. It was a life well lived and that is all we can ask for. May he rest in peace. Love you M.J.

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**Mary June Oosterhouse** - September 13, 2014 at 11:01 AM

JR

“ Always enjoyed visiting with Don, he was my teacher years ago. He was a good man and hard worker, very amazing person. He will be missed.

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**Jim and Jan Ransom** - September 13, 2014 at 08:41 AM

JF

“ My condolences and prayers to MJ and the family.

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**Jeff Fischer** - September 12, 2014 at 09:56 PM

JH

“ Uncle Don you will be missed I'll remember your magnetic & loud laughter!

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**Jana Hubbell** - September 12, 2014 at 06:59 PM

SC

“ My heart goes out to Don's family. I love you MJ.

Stephanie Cuddeback - September 12, 2014 at 06:48 PM

KM

“ Cadillac High School Class of '79; Condolences to the family of Don, may Jesus hold you all close in His warm embrace...

Kim (Forbes) McKenzie - September 12, 2014 at 06:39 PM

JM

“ Love you so much, Don. I'll see you when I get there, so keep the home fires burning! You were one hell of a great man, so fun, laughing a lot, loving life! You will be sorely missed...until then..

JoAnn Miltner - September 12, 2014 at 04:09 PM

KH

“ RIP Mr Spoylar

Kelly Holmes - September 12, 2014 at 04:02 PM

TM

“ Sarah and David,  
So sorry to hear of Don's passing. He was truly one of a kind, and will be sorely missed.

Tom Mannor - September 12, 2014 at 12:41 PM

WT

“ Sorry for your lose.

Walt & Janet Treadwell - September 12, 2014 at 11:11 AM

RA

“ *I never met Don, but his sister, Stephanie, was in my class at Mesick High. If he was anything like Stephy, he was a pleasure to be around and possessed of a great sense of humor. May he rest in peace.*

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**Ron Altman** - September 12, 2014 at 10:40 AM

JH

“ *We so enjoyed Don and M.J. last September when we were in Cadillac. I know he will be greatly missed.*

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**Judy Lanning Hlavacek** - September 12, 2014 at 09:58 AM

SH

“ *MJ and Keri, my thoughts and prayers are with you, I am so sorry for your loss.*

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**Sara Parmenter Haskin** - September 12, 2014 at 09:38 AM

JK

“ *Sara & Dave  
So sorry for your loss, I will always remember your father, always fun to be with. God Bless*

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**Jeff Kwilinski** - September 12, 2014 at 08:19 AM

BE

“ *Spo was a good guy. Always quick to share a joke and a smile.*

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**Bryan Elenbaas** - September 12, 2014 at 06:52 AM

BR

“ So Sorry for your loss. Don was such a great teacher and tutor when I was in school. As an adult I considered him a friend. he was always interested in what I was doing. He was a very kind and considerate person. I will miss him.  
My thoughts and prayers are with all of you.

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**Bridgett** - September 12, 2014 at 06:24 AM

TT

“ Don had an infectious joy that will be missed. Condolences to my classmate Dave and the rest of the family.

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**Todd Tinker** - September 12, 2014 at 12:15 AM

J(

“ I graduated in 1967 from Cadillace High School and had Mr. Spolyar as a drivers ed teacher and also as a teacher He was one in a million both as a teacher and person. He will be missed

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**Jayne (Knudson)Neagle** - September 11, 2014 at 09:39 PM

CE

“ It was so good to see Don at the Arts Festival since the Class of ' 64 was having our 50th reunion and The Merryman sang. Don so enjoyed seeing so many of us. MJ stood by and watched his reaction to each and every one of us smiling at all the memories being shared. He will be missed!!

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**Carin (Cornell) Ecker** - September 11, 2014 at 08:57 PM

ML

“ He will be missed greatly

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**Mr &Mrs Kevin Langworthy** - September 11, 2014 at 04:42 PM