



Donald E. Emrick

July 11, 1948 - February 16, 2026

Donald E. Emrick, age 77, of Kearney, passed away Monday, February 16, 2026 at Kearney Regional Medical Center. Funeral Liturgy (Outside of Mass) will be 10:30 a.m., Friday, February 20, 2026 at Prince of Peace Catholic Church with Father Scott Harter officiating. Inurnment will follow at 3:00 p.m., that Friday at Fort McPherson National Cemetery near Maxwell, with military honors graveside, and Pastor Jonathan Lumbard officiating from Spirit of Life Church. Memorials are suggested to Rowe Sanctuary. Please visit www.hlmkf Funeral.com to leave a tribute or message of condolence. Horner Lieske McBride & Kuhl Funeral and Cremation Services is in charge of arrangements.

Donald (Don) Eugene Emrick was born on July 11, 1948, in Lancaster, OH to Ila Kathleen Emrick and Donald Eugene Nichols. He was the only child of this union. He was raised in Lancaster, OH and joined the United States Navy at the age of 17. During his service, he was stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas, where he loved flying and assisting with aircraft landings as a crewman aboard an aircraft carrier. Following his military service, Don earned his associate degree from Hocking Technical College. Shortly thereafter, he began his career with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, dedicating his professional life to conservation and the outdoors.

Don was united in marriage with Catherine (Cathy) Joos on June 12, 1971.

Two children were born to this union, Bryan and Angela. In the early years of their marriage, Don and Cathy moved as he pursued his career. They lived in Texas, where both of their children were born, and later in Valentine, NE, where Don worked and the family lived on the wildlife refuge. In 1989, they made their permanent home in Kearney, NE.

Don was an avid naturalist who had a deep appreciation for the many species of trees and birds he encountered throughout his life. His pride and joy was a 35-year old non-native American Beech tree that he nurtured from a sapling, which is a rare find west of the Missouri River Valley. He was a master woodworker who took immense pride in his craftsmanship, a passion that carried over to his garden, where he was known for growing abundant crops of watermelon and popcorn every summer. He was a devoted, daily student of scripture and was an active member of the Spirit of Life Church in Kearney.

Don is survived by his beloved wife of 55 years this June, Cathy; his son, Bryan (Jessica) Emrick of Colorado Springs, CO; his daughter, Angela (Travis) Hollman of Gibbon, NE; and eight grandchildren, Madyson, Sterling, Parker, Marcus, Ayla, Logan, Nathan, and Emmalynn; brother Craig Nichols of Cheyenne, WY; his uncle, Phil Emrick of Lancaster, OH, and many cousins in Ohio.

Don is preceded in death by his parents.

Cemetery Details

Ft. McPherson National Cemetery

12004 South Spur 56 A
Maxwell, NE 69151

Previous Events

Funeral Liturgy (Outside of Mass)

FEB **20**. 10:30 AM (CT)

Prince of Peace Catholic Church
2407 W 56th Street
Kearney, NE 68845

Tribute Wall

AM

“ *Your were special friend in my life as President of Full Gospel now all your pains and actis are gone since you're in HEAVEN, :: YOUR FRIEND ALBERT*

Albert Martenson - March 01 at 04:09 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Donald E. Emrick.*



February 19 at 11:35 AM

SN

“ *Cathy and Family,*

Please know that you are in our thoughts and prayers. Don was an amazing individual Gerald and I got to know with the passing of our uncle, Bernie. You were beyond kind, helpful, and we truly appreciated the time we were able to spend with you. May God hold you close during this time.

John 14:3

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

Gerald and Shannon Nelson

Shannon Nelson - February 19 at 10:13 AM

BF

“ *Bob & Theresa (Mulroy) Krooner & family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald E. Emrick.*

Bob & Theresa (Mulroy) Krooner & family - February 19 at 09:33 AM

BF

“ *Bob & Theresa (Mulroy) Krooner & family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Donald E. Emrick.*



Bob & Theresa (Mulroy) Krooner & family - February 19 at 09:33 AM

TH

“ *Tom, Ed, Suzanne, Cindy & Rick Hubble purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Donald E. Emrick.*



Tom, Ed, Suzanne, Cindy & Rick Hubble - February 19 at 08:38 AM

ES

“ *Eric and Rachelle Staker purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Donald E. Emrick.*



Eric and Rachelle Staker - February 18 at 08:36 PM

ES

“ Eric and Rachelle Staker planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald E. Emrick.

Eric and Rachelle Staker - February 18 at 08:36 PM