



## Donald Lee Wells

March 27, 1926 - October 31, 2023

Eden Prairie, MN- Donald Lee Wells, 97, formerly of Adrian, MI passed away on Tuesday, October 31, 2023 at The Waters of Eden Prairie in Minnesota. Donald "Don" was born on March 27, 1926, to Aaron and LaNorma (Folkman) Wells in Concord, Michigan. His father was a farmer, and his mother was well known for raising and dressing out geese to sell to people in the area. Don had one older and one younger brother, Wayne and Gerald. Don often remarked that they always had just enough to get by, and his younger years were very happy. Don didn't attend school after the 8th grade, as he went to work in a factory so he could help support his family.

Don served in the United States Army during World War II and was stationed in Europe. He drove a tank and fought on the ground. Don was privileged to participate in the Honor Flight to Washington DC in 2012. He also received a Quilt of Valor in 2021, from the Patriot Dames. Like many veterans, Don spoke very little of his experiences during the war.

After the war, Don returned to Michigan, to marry the love of his life, Helen Happel on April 10, 1947, in Jackson, MI. They didn't have much money at the time, but that did not stop Don and Helen from celebrating their wedding day, maybe a bit too loud, which almost got Don landing in jail on his wedding night.

Don, Helen, and their first-born David, moved to Adrian in 1950. Their marriage was blessed with 3 more children, Lori, Susan, and Randy. In 1954, on the same day Susan was born, Don dug the hole for their new home on

Sand Creek Hwy which he built himself. In 1964, Don and Helen purchased their next home which they lived in while they restored it. This home currently sits surrounded by the Lenawee County Airport. If you couldn't sleep at night, instead of counting sheep, you would count how many turns the airport beacon flashed by your bedroom window.

Don learned all about floor covering from his cousin; and he put this knowledge to good use installing carpet, tile, and linoleum. In 1974, their 5th child was born - Wells Floor Covering. Don had an excellent reputation in the surrounding area for selling and installing floor covering, being a fair businessman and helpful friend. Their son, Randy, joined the business in 1978.

Don and Helen had the privilege to travel to many parts of the world in connection with their business. It really didn't matter where they traveled, as long as they were together.

Don was very involved with St. John's Lutheran Church in Adrian. He served in many capacities within the church and school. Don's children especially liked when he was the Cemetery Board Chairman. It was during this time, when special holidays were approaching, Don's children were "volun-told" to trim by hand around the tombstones. No Electric clippers or weed whackers back then. Don's children say their arthritic hands are a result from trimming around the headstones at St. John's cemetery. About the only task Don didn't do in all his years at St. John's was preach. He helped build the present church, picked up the 1,000 lbs. of cabbage from the farmer needed for the church's annual sauerkraut supper, was a greeter at the church entrance on Sunday mornings, ushered, and served on numerous boards and committees. Don even sang in the choir at one time. One of Don's rules for his children was, "anyone living in my house WILL be in church on Sunday morning, regardless of your Saturday evening shenanigans."

Don was a fixer of things. If he couldn't fix it, he'd learn how to. Don loved woodworking and one of his favorite projects was making wooden dump trucks. Everything but the metal axles for the wheels and an occasional decal

was made of wood, even the wheels. Don loved donating the trucks to charity, or to a young well-behaved child he happened to observe out in the community.

Don loved going to auctions as it was one of his favorite places to meet people and catch up with their lives. While catching up, he may have made an occasional purchase- like a Ferguson farm tractor or a huge box of nuts, bolts, screws, or how about a banana seat bike. One never knows when they will be in dire need of one of those. Don and Helen loved to dance. He enjoyed bowling, fishing, and hunting during his younger years. His children are still trying to figure out why they never saw any fish or deer upon his return, or why his fishing rod or rifle were still at the house after he had left. Maybe that's why he turned to golf in his later years? We were on to him and his fishing and hunting adventures.

In 2019, at the age of 92, while Don was getting ready for work, he fell and broke his neck. He got up and walked to the kitchen to wait for the EMT's. When they arrived, Don walked outside and got on the gurney. A classic example of taking the advice he often gave his children. "You're not hurt, just walk it off." Sadly, that was the last Don walked within the home he had restored and lived in for 55 years!

In July 2020, Don and Helen moved to an assisted living community in Eden Prairie, MN, The Waters. Besides attending their many music events, Don could be found every morning at the men's coffee and donuts gathering at the facility. Always thinking of others, Don would bring his wife Helen back a donut each day. Knowing that staff would soon be in to clean their apartment, Don would sweep the floor to make their job a little lighter. Don cared for his wife until her death in August 2023. They were blessed with 76 years together! Even upon his death Don continues to give to this world. Don's eyes are being used for research and scientific study through the Lions Gift of Sight at the University of Minnesota Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Neurosciences.

Don, is survived by his children, David (Cheryl) Wells of The Villages, FL, Susan (Al) Newville of Minnetonka, MN and Randy (Mary) Wells of Adrian, MI; grandchildren, Daniel (Jaime) Wells, Matthew Wells, Chris (Mesha) Wells, Aubree (Charlie) Yunker, Meghan (Casey) Ching, Ian (Sara) Newville, Alex (Stephanie) Wells and Kaisa Newville; great-grandchildren, Brooke Wells, Drew Wells, Chloe Yunker, Lincoln Wells, Campbell Wells, Silas Ching and Milo Ching. He was preceded in death by Helen, his wife of 76 years; daughter, Lori Macko; son-in-law, Scott Macko; brother-in-law, Karl Happel; sister-in-law, Marge Happel. Gratitude and special thanks to the staff of The Waters of Eden Prairie, in Eden Prairie, MN where Don resided since July 2020 with Helen until her death on August 11, 2023, and to Grace Hospice as they graciously stood beside us and compassionately cared for Don during his final earthly days.

There will be a joint memorial service for Don and Helen on Friday, April 5, 2024, at 11:00 AM at St. John's Lutheran Church in Adrian, MI with Pastor Joel Sarrault officiating. Visitation will held from 10:00 AM until the start of the service. Don and Helen touched the lives of many in Lenawee County. There will be an opportunity to write down your favorite Don and Helen memory as the family would like to collect these treasured moments.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. John's Lutheran Church. Local arrangements have been entrusted to Wagley Funeral Home, Adrian where online condolences and memories may be shared at [www.WagleyFuneralHomes.com](http://www.WagleyFuneralHomes.com).

# Previous Events

## Memorial Visitation

APR 5. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. John's Lutheran Church  
3448 North Adrian Highway  
Adrian, MI

## Memorial Service

APR 5. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. John's Lutheran Church  
3448 North Adrian Highway  
Adrian, MI

*A joint memorial service for Don and Helen Wells*

# Tribute Wall

DH

“ We are honored and blessed to have worshipped with Don and Helen at St. Johns Lutheran Church for most of our lives. Wonderful couple whose faith was an example for us all. We remember Don's kindness, at age 73, showing Darrell how to lay tile in our convenience store. He was so helpful. Our prayers go out to all the family. Darrell and Melodee Hoff

Darrell and Melodee Hoff - November 17, 2023 at 10:59 PM

TB

“ Don was a honest hard working man. Enjoyed times I met with him at his shop. Always had a kind word for his friends. World is a better place because of him.

Tom Barto

Tom Barto - November 11, 2023 at 09:33 PM

JP

“ Don was such a good man and always had a big smile for everyone. He treated all his customers like best friends including us. You have our Deepest Sympathy. May he and Helen Rest in Peace in Heaven now.

Jack and Jeannette Pfeffer 

JEANNETTE PFEFFER - November 11, 2023 at 11:01 AM

NT

“ I am so sorry for the loss of your parents. They were part of the Christian family who, through their nourishing, care, and concern, made me who I am today. I am very grateful.

Nancy Drefke Teets - November 11, 2023 at 07:54 AM