



Donald Richard Gillies

January 14, 1939 - July 12, 2023

Donald R. Gillies, age 84, of Minnetonka passed away after a valiant battle with Alzheimer's disease on July 12, 2023. His final days were spent with his family at his bedside sharing love, laughter, tears and a lifetime of memories. Born on January 14, 1939 to Donald F. and Gladys O. Gillies, Don was born in Sioux Falls, SD and spent his early childhood in Sioux City, IA and Winona. His family finally put down roots in Minneapolis where Don graduated from Washburn High School and the University of Minnesota. Advertising was in Don's blood. He got a head start on his career with a part-time job in production and news dispatch at WCCO-TV while he was a high school and college student. (He could still regale us with detailed tales from those days.) After graduating with a BA from the School of Journalism at the U of M, Don landed a job at Campbell-Mithun Advertising that would forever change his life. There he met, wooed and married Twyla Bloomquist, the amazing woman he would call his wife for 61 years. Don's business career proved a success as well. He rose through the account service ranks at Campbell-Mithun to Senior VP, Management Supervisor, Board of Directors before moving on after 26 years. Don then became President/ COO at Colle-McVoy Advertising. When he left that position, Don focused on sharing his knowledge and love of advertising with the next generation. Don proudly served as an Associate Professor at St. Thomas University and Advisor to the Student Ad Club. He also chaired the 4As Institute of Advanced Advertising Studies. To stay relevant in the ever-changing world of advertising, Don founded Gillies Group,

his consulting business offering his special advertising/marketing touch. Don lent his time to various community and industry organizations including the 4As, Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, the BBB's Midwest Advertising Review Committee, Guthrie Theatre's Board of Trustees and Mount Olivet Church Council. Don was hardly all work and no play. He and Twyla found balance by raising three children (and four Westies). Don was an enthusiastic pianist on his beloved Steinway. He was passionate about cars and open-wheel auto racing, particularly Formula 1. Don owned (and meticulously washed and waxed) 19 cars throughout his life. In fact, he leaves behind one of his favorites: an original 1983 Porsche 944. When Don found a new interest, he was all in. Not only did he and Twyla embrace downhill skiing as a family activity, he purchased a condo at The Cedars in Breckenridge, CO. Breck was the happy place our family and lucky friends visited countless times over 35 years. During the summer, Don loved to pilot his Sea Ray boat through the bays of nearby Lake Minnetonka. Don is survived by his loving wife, Twyla; children, Dawn (Brian) Reid, Trent (Lisa) Gillies and Tara (Brian) Erickson; grandchildren, Ava Gillies, Lola Erickson and Leo Erickson; and his loyal Westie, D'arcy. Special thank you to the kind doctors, nurses, aides and staff at Methodist Hospital. You all helped to make sure Dad's final days were filled with comfort and care. A memorial service will be held at the Lakewood Memorial Chapel, 3600 Hennepin Ave, Minneapolis, MN on Saturday, July 29, 2023 at 2:00 pm with visitation 1 hour prior. Don and Twyla are grateful for the fellowship and community of Mount Olivet Lutheran Church and request that memorials be donated to Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Memorials and Gifts, 5025 Knox Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55419. "May his memory be a blessing to all who knew and loved him."

Washburn-McReavy.com

Edina Chapel 952-920-3996

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 29. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Lakewood Memorial Chapel
3600 Hennepin Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Church Service

JUL 29. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Lakewood Memorial Chapel
3600 Hennepin Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Graveside Service

JUL 29. 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (CT)

Lakewood Cemetery (Minneapolis)
3600 Hennepin Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55408