



## Donald D. James

June 14, 1934 - July 4, 2022

Donald D. James, of Saint Paul, died on July 4, 2022. He was 88 years old. Don was born on Flag Day - June 14, 1934 - in Ames, Iowa. He was the older of a pair of identical twin brothers. Donald and his brother Dean were well-known around town as "the James boys" - handsome brown-eyed boys who were always dressed alike.

During his teenage and college years, Don worked as an usher at a movie theater in Ames. He saw the movies that played there so many times that he could quote the lines decades later. At the theater he met Suzanne Truesdell, who was a ticket seller. They fell in love and were married in 1960 and had two children, Cynthia and Christopher. Don and Suzanne recently celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary.

Don graduated from Ames High and attended Iowa State University for his undergraduate and graduate work. He earned bachelor's, master's, and PhD degrees in mathematics. After finishing his doctoral work in Iowa, he accepted a job in Minneapolis with the Aerospace & Defense Division at Honeywell, and he and Suzanne moved north. Don managed software engineers; among other projects, he was part of a team that developed the laser gyroscope used in the space shuttle. Later in his career, Don taught math to college students at both St. Mary's University of MN and Metro State University. He enjoyed tutoring students of all ages in mathematics; he spent many, many hours at the kitchen table making sure his children and grandchildren proved all of the required 80 theorems to pass 8th grade math. Both of his grandchildren have

inherited his mathematical gifts.

Donald and Suzanne traveled the world during their marriage, making trips to most of the states in the US and to many countries in Europe and Central and South America. They took river cruises on the Rhine and Seine and passed through the Panama Canal on a cruise ship. Don enjoyed reading in preparation for their trips and created scrapbooks of all their adventures after they returned. Closer to home, Don especially liked visiting Door County, Wisconsin. He spent happy fall weekends on the peninsula with family, enjoying nature, art galleries, and fish boils.

Donald loved music and theater and good food and family and friends. He supported both the Minnesota Orchestra and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and had season tickets to many theaters in the Twin Cities. He invented complicated puns and jokes that made his family groan. He adored eating mushrooms (to a point almost beyond reason) and added them to every dish he could. He created salads that were works of art, with every vegetable cut to precise specs. He wrote little notes pretending to be a green elf and hid them under his children's bowls to reward them for eating pea soup. He drove his kids to work and to activities and picked them up again late at night in sketchy parking lots. He was part of the carpool at his grandkids' elementary school, and fixed them little personalized bags of treats each day to eat in the car. For 15 years, he ate lunch on Tuesdays at the corner table at Shuang Cheng restaurant in Dinkytown, chatting with his daughter, son-in-law, and their U of M friends over plates of house fried rice. Don wrapped presents with mathematical precision -- making sure every stripe on the giftwrap lined up and the tape was perfectly placed. His wardrobe included sweater vests of every color. He loved dogs and his cat, Boots, and fed most of the birds, squirrels, and racoons of St. Paul at his feeders. He excelled at contract bridge and at cribbage, which he played for years with his grandchildren and at the end of his life with residents at his care center.

Donald is survived by his beloved wife, Suzanne; his daughter, Cynthia James

Murdoch; his grandchildren, Emily Macaluso (Ellie Valentine) and Philip Macaluso (Holly Dang); and many dear extended family members and friends. He was preceded in death by his mother and father; his brother, Dean James; his son, Christopher James; and his son-in-law, Scott Murdoch.

Instead of flowers, consider a donation to The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra in his honor:

The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra

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