# Donald Vernon Behnka

Don passed from this earthly plane unexpectedly on a colourful, October day. While he had his struggles with physical and cognitive decline in the past couple of years, we all thought, given his happy outlook on life and strong Behnka constitution, that he would be with us for a few more years. We, his family are deeply saddened but know that he led a full life, and like the beautiful October leaves that show the changing of the seasons, for Don, it too was time for his colourful life to transition.

Don was born in Sudbury, Ontario to an Electrician father (Cecil) and his homemaker mother (Hildegard). He was the youngest of five children: Carl (Ruth), Myrna, Richard, and Larry (Donna). Don's father passed away when he was a young child of five, and his mother shortly thereafter developed cancer making life challenging for the family. The other children moved on as soon as they were able to, and Don and his mother moved to Vancouver to live with an uncle, where he attended Eric Hamber Secondary School. Sometime later Don became a skilled Ironworker. Unfortunately, he experienced a very serious accident on the job which resulted in a near-death experience and a lengthy battle with rehabilitating his broken body. Despite the brain injury and physical challenges he endured, Don's resilience carried him forward, allowing him to rebuild his life and enjoy another 50 years filled with family, friendships, travel, and adventure.

Don had three children with Marian Nadler: Dusty (Kirsten), Andre (Tysia), and Ana (Tyrell). The children experienced many wonderful years with him travelling and living in Mexico and enjoying life on Vancouver Island. In 2002, Don married Kathleen Hall bringing their families together. Along with Kathleen's children, Chelsea and Marc, they shared many special family times at Mount Washington and Sproat Lake, as well as Christmas and other holidays together. In his later

years Don particularly enjoyed exploring Egypt with Kathleen and spending the cold winter months with his brother Carl and sister-in-law Ruth in Cuastecomates, Mexico. He also treasured the hours spent laughing and talking with his brother Larry and sister-in-law Donna during their extended stays in Victoria each year.

Don was loved by his Ironworker colleagues and had a great sense of humour. He truly loved travel and experiencing new cultures. His grandchildren were the light of his life, and he immensely enjoyed his visits with them. Life transitions are difficult, but like the seasonal change that brings the beautiful fall colours, a new cycle of life is thus created.

We miss you Don, with all our hearts.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

McCall Gardens
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