



Donald J. Hevey

January 8, 1943 - November 10, 2021

Donald Joseph Hevey (Don) died peacefully on Wednesday, November 10 at his home with his family by his side. He was born on January 8, 1943, in St. Johnsbury, Vermont; the third child of Eugene E. Hevey and Ursula Begin Hevey. Born into a large French-Canadian family, Don lived in Vermont until the age of 14 when his father relocated the family to West Palm Beach, Florida.

Don graduated from Saint Ann High School in West Palm Beach, earned an AA at WPB Junior College, and arrived in Tallahassee, FL where he attended Florida State University for both a Bachelor of Science degree (1965) and a Master of Social Work degree (1968). He has spent a long and storied career in the service of those with behavioral health needs.

While completing his MSW Don worked for the Leon County Mental Health Clinic (now the Apalachee Center for Human Services). He was “in the trenches” when the new, not-for-profit Community Mental Health Centers were forming around the U.S. When Florida’s Office of Mental Health began looking for people to help develop a network of CMHCs, they found Don. The federal government also hired him to go to other states to share his experience. His time in this position led him to shift from helping develop CMHCs to leading one. In 1975 he became CEO of Manatee Glens MHC in Bradenton, FL. In 1981 Governor Bob Graham asked Don to step in as the Program Director of

the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Program of the old HRS; a move that brought him back to Tallahassee.

In 1985 a small group of CMHC directors recognized that the tides were turning; their government funding was drying up, and they needed to find a way to cope with the challenges ahead. The group formed as Mental Health Corporations of America and hired Don Hevey as their first President/CEO; a role he filled for 28 years. Growing up with a contractor father and a busy mother who made no excuses for not getting the job done, he knew how to find solutions that would work for the greater good.

MHCA's mission was to focus on learning to be "business oriented" to fulfill their commitment to place mental health services in their respective communities. Under his leadership MHCA achieved enormous success. In the early years he collaborated with consultants to develop the Mental Health Risk Retention Group to provide insurance that members were unable to secure elsewhere. Don's motto was "We can do that!" – though sometimes his staff wondered "how?" – he always made things happen.

At the age of 70 Don retired from MHCA in January of 2013. He then accepted a job with Genoa Healthcare, a national company that places pharmacies in behavioral healthcare facilities. He served as their Community Development Director until 2018, then retired to spend time with Joy and his family at his beautiful retirement home here in Tallahassee. He loved working on the property, reading a good book, sailing with friends, anything that would make his grandchildren laugh, FSU Sports, watching the wildlife outside his door, and just quiet time with Joy. He did not have a "bucket list" and was so grateful for the beautiful life he had.

In addition to his parents Don was preceded in death by his sister Lori Hevey and two brothers, Bernard Hevey and Normand Hevey. He is survived by his

loving wife of 31 years, Joy NeSmith Halks Hevey; his children Elise Hevey Batchelor (Bryan) and Brinton J. Hevey (Lisa): stepchildren, Joy Ellen Hendrix (Chance), all of Tallahassee, and Patrick S. Halks (Mandy) of Tampa, FL and eight beautiful grandchildren, Zory Batchelor, Bace Hevey; Audrey, Anwen, Michael, Timothy and Lucy Hendrix, and Annabelle Halks. Also surviving are brothers, Raymond Hevey, Ocala, FL; Louis Hevey (Carolyn), Lake Mary, FL; sisters Joanne Hevey Pintacuda (Larry) of Tallahassee, FL, and Denise Hevey Paige (Bob) of Satellite Beach, FL. Joy's family, brothers Lee, Danny, Joe, and Robert NeSmith; sisters, Dot Frye, Mary Ellen Jordan, Sheryl Rehberg, Margaret Windham, Kathy Turner, Charlotte Kantartzis, Charlene Stinson; and a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins. Don also leaves a multitude of friends from this community and around the nation who will miss his sage counsel and his wonderful sense of humor forever. The family thanks Dr. Broseker, Dr. Morris and the staff at TMH Cancer Center, the staff on the Oncology floor at TMH, and Big Bend Hospice.

The family will be receiving guests for a visitation at Bevis Funeral Home of Tallahassee on Saturday, January 8, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. with a Celebration of Don's Life to immediately follow at 2:00 p.m. His family will hold a private burial at Pisgah UMC where he was a member.

The family has established a Memorial Scholarship fund for a Master of Social Work student at the FSU College of Social Work in Don's Honor. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be sent to FSU Foundation: 325 W College Ave Tallahassee, FL 32301 or online at <https://give.fsu.edu/donhevey>

Memorial contributions to Big Bend Hospice are also encouraged: <https://bigbendhospice.charityproud.org/Donate>

Breanna Green of Bevis Funeral Home is assisting the family with their

arrangements. (850-38502193 or www.bevisfh.com)

Cemetery Details

Pisgah United Methodist Church Cemetery

7000 Pisgah Church Road
TALLAHASSEE, FL

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 8. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory
200 John Knox Rd
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 385-2193

Memorial Celebration

JAN 8. 2:00 PM (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory
200 John Knox Rd
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 385-2193

Tribute Wall



“ *Bevis Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Donald J. Hevey*



Bevis Funeral Home - January 08, 2022 at 11:03 AM



“ *Bevis Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Donald J. Hevey*



Bevis Funeral Home - December 16, 2021 at 04:48 PM

HS

“ I have many memories of Don and all of those memories revolve around the incredible person he was and how he helped me pursue mission was to assure that individuals have access to personalized behavioral health services. Don was a pioneer in facilitating the development of a nation wide mental health system focused on community-based services. He was a great leader who represented our corporations bringing all of us together to assure the availability of quality services enabling our clients to live and work in their communities. Don was a skilled teacher and cheerleader developing a clear path for the success of our corporations. Being a member of MHCA and friend of Don Hevey was a highlight of my career. Don and Joy provided me the support to make a difference in the lives of our clients. As a social worker, myself, I was especially proud of the stellar career of Don Hevey. May his memory be a blessing to all who loved and respected him.

Harry Shulman

CEO, South Shore Mental Health, 1982-2018.

Harry Shulman - January 08, 2022 at 03:12 PM

RM

“ Don has been my friend since September, 1967. I have always loved and respected Don for his leadership style characterized by influence rather than control; the values and ethics that formed the basis for his life on and off the job; his steadfast commitment to getting the job done... "I can do that"...even when members of his board and his staff often had to take a deep breath; and his devotion to his family.

There are so many memories that I can recall from my years knowing Don. One of the epic memories was the times that we went to "Wings and Things" in Tallahassee. We would always order the hottest wings and the largest pitcher of beer. After Don took the first bite, he began to sweat profusely and his face turned bright red. At first one would think he was having some sort of critical medical emergency...but it was clear that he really enjoyed the pain :-)

I will miss Don

Ron Meserve

Ron Meserve - January 08, 2022 at 02:02 PM

SM

“ As we all know, in order to be successful one has to be smart, creative, and persistent...with an attitude which says "we can do that". But not everyone can be as kind as Don Hevey. He was all of the above to me, including being one of the kindest people I have ever met. I'll always be grateful for having known Don. Rest in Peace kind soul.

Stuart Meyers

President, The Meyers Group

Stuart Meyers - January 08, 2022 at 01:54 PM

RG

“ Don's energy and wishing to help others needing mental health help lead him to be a founding member of the International Initiative of Mental Health Leaders. His personal leadership was critical to helping develop this organization's efforts in countries throughout the world. His work has improved the lives of millions of people. Thank you Don. Rest In Peace.

*Robert Glover
Chairperson of IIMHL and IIDL*

Robert Glover - January 08, 2022 at 12:11 PM

DW

“ I am so very sorry to hear of Don's passing. He was a pioneer in the community mental health field and a most charming, loyal and kind man. My thoughts are with Joy and his entire family. There are no doubt hundreds of mental health professionals across the country who will mourn his loss. Blessings.

Diane Wilkins

Diane Wilkins - January 03, 2022 at 01:37 PM

CD

“ My dear Joy, I am so sorry to hear that Don has passed away..We've all been friends for over 40 years. I have such tremendous respect for both of you. Don was such an extraordinary leader in the mental health field. And I'm grateful for all the wonderful creative contributions you made to the Florida Council for Community mental health. I still have the poster of you for the "Bring Our Children Home" Campaign, hanging in my office. My husband and best friend, Tommy passed away some 6 years ago...and it's such a huge loss...and I'm so sorry to hear that you're facing the future without Don. I hope the memories of the happy times you had together for all these past years will sustain you. God bless you and give you strength.
love
Chris Zeigler Dendy.

Chris A Dendy - November 16, 2021 at 11:49 AM

BB

“ It was a real pleasure for me to have known Don if only for a short while! I felt as if I knew Don even before I met him because of the admiration of his son Patrick ,our grandson!
Don fought the good fight and has the Crown won for him at Calvary by the Lord Jesus Christ!
Rest In Peace Don! Rise in glory!!
I'll see you at the Throne!

Bob Besalski - November 15, 2021 at 09:32 PM

FS

Don was a wonderful mentor and inspiration to me as we set up, under his watchful eye, an international version of MHCA called International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership (IIMHL) that has reached out to ten countries and 5000 leaders throughout the world. Many of our leaders met Don and loved his kindness, thought fullness and generosity. I know they all wish they could be with Joy and her and Don's family today.

As I lead IIMHL, Don was my guide as a leader. The question for me was always "what would Don do?"

Fran Silvestri - January 08, 2022 at 02:25 PM