



Donald Lee Trussell

June 1, 1946 - March 12, 2016

Donald Lee Trussell (69) passed away at home on Saturday, March 12, 2016, after a brave battle with mesothelioma. He was born in Tampa on June 1, 1946 to the late Margaret Manelli Trussell and Harold Hobart Trussell. He lived in Tampa until 1958 when his family moved to Woodville. After graduating from Leon High School in 1965, he joined the Air Force and was stationed with the 657th Radar Site at the Houma Air Force Base in Louisiana and spent 1967-1968 in Pleiku and Da Nang, Viet Nam. He also spent two years in the Marine Corps Reserve. He graduated from Florida State University. He worked for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for 35 years and retired as a Certified Professional Environmental Auditor in Health and Safety. He also spent 24 years serving as a Reserve Officer with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Donald was a 6th degree black belt in judo, senior instructor, and nationally certified coach; he loved working with kids to master the sport and most importantly to positively guide them with life skills such as respect, loyalty, discipline, dedication, commitment, and focus; he loved to share his knowledge, experience, and love of the sport with others of all ages; he was one of the founding members of Leon County Judo and Apalachee Martial Arts.

Donald is survived by his true love and soulmate Marianne Aubel Trussell, two children Renee Edwards (West) and Robert Vos II (Pearl), four grandchildren Dylan and Mason Edwards and Maddox and Robert Vos III who adored their grandpa/"Pi". He is also survived by three brothers, Frank Trussell (Vickie),

Ronald Collins (Betty Jo), Floyd de'Montmollin, Jr. (Cyrinda), and one sister Rita Shivers (Gary) and his much loved nieces and nephews and aunts and uncles in the Tampa area. Donald never met a stranger and everyone he met soon became a friend. He saw only the good in people and was quick to help anyone in need. His memory will be treasured and preserved by the many people who love and admire him especially Marianne who loved him with all her heart and then some, and who will remember him for the love and humor that he brought to everyone who knew and met him.

A memorial service will be held on Thursday, March 24, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. at Bevis Funeral Home, 2710 N. Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32308. The family will receive friends at a reception immediately following the service.

Please bring your favorite picture with Donald to share on our memory board.

Interment with full military honors will be at the Tallahassee National

Cemetery, 5015 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, Florida 32311 on Friday,

March 25, 2016, at 2:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be

made to the Tallahassee National Cemetery Support Committee, 5105

Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, Florida 32311 or Big Bend Hospice, 1723

Mahan Center Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32308. Special thanks and

recognition to Angie and Alison and to Dr. Carlos Campo and Dr. Mark

Saunders for all they did for us during this long journey. Susie Mozolic of Bevis

Funeral Home is assisting the family with their arrangements. (www.bevisfh.com

m 850-385-2193)

Previous Events

Memorial Celebration

MAR **24**. 6:00 PM (ET)

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

Graveside Service

MAR **25**. 2:00 PM (ET)

Tallahassee National Cemetery
5015 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, FL 32311

Tribute Wall



“ *He was a great sensei and I am thankful to have been able to study judo with him. Peace, George Tatro*

George Tatro - July 18, 2025 at 10:13 PM

JS

“ *1 file added to the album Jill's photos*



Jill Stokesberry - April 02, 2016 at 06:21 PM

JJ

“ I met Don in 1974 in a small dojo in the back of a Chinese Restaurant on Adams St in Tallahassee, FL. I was 7 years old. My first memories of Don was that he came from a background of Karate and how John Ross would give him grief about how Karate was for girls. That never seemed to bother Don though. I remember Don as a wiry fast man with wicked foot sweep skills and always with a smile. Always a competitor, a mentor, and a coach that constantly enjoyed the aspect of teaching not just Judo but also about life. Always finished training with questions of "how are your grades, what book are you reading, did you thank your parents today?". Questions I ask my own kids and the kids I coach in soccer to this day. Through the years Don and I trained together at several dojo's between Tallahassee and Woodville until I left for the US Navy in 1984 and again after coming home in 1989. I remember the stories of arrowhead hunts he would tell me, the thumps on the head for not paying attention in class, the confidence he had in me to teach me techniques beyond my years as a youth, and how he always found compassion for someone looking for a ride as we traveled to the dojo in Woodville from Tallahassee three days a week. I remember the phrase "Tiger Time" at nearly all the tournaments we would travel to in competition. Tiger Time was his phrase that you had 30 seconds to do something to positively change the outcome of your match. I had no idea Don was ill when I saw him at the dojo this past summer and true to his nature he trained as if nothing bothered him. Again, always with a smile and a positive word or two every time we spoke. Since learning of Don's passing it has given me pause to reflect on the impact Don has had on my life as a youth and an adult. It was my honor to be his Uke in class for all those years. Rest in peace Don Trussell.

John E. Holgan, Jr.

John E Holgan, Jr - March 25, 2016 at 08:33 AM

DA

“ A great judoka and a great guy. I really enjoyed working out with Don, and learned from him every time I did.

Dave Royse

Dave - March 24, 2016 at 10:15 PM

RL

“ My most sincere condolences. Donald was a class act. Always positive, willing to do anything to help a friend. While we were not close after I left the Commission I thought of him (and you) often. He will always remain in my thoughts for the friendship we shared and the professional and personal example he set for others to follow.

Richard Long - March 24, 2016 at 06:26 PM

RM

“ I remember the first day I walked into Judo class at the YMCA with Michael. He was 6 or 7 years old and had been so excited about his first day of class. We get there and meet Don who greeted us the way he greeted everyone, as if you had been friends for ever! Michael got out on the Matt and was working on learning the basics and slowly became more comfortable, and then Don asked if he wanted to learn a throw...Michael's eye lit up!! A few minutes later, Michael learned his first throw and the "threw" Don. Michael was thrilled and talked about it for weeks. Don helped Michael develop a confidence and willingness to try anything, that has helped him to grow into the strong, confident, caring and capable young man he is now. Thanks Don for all you taught Michael, Matt and me!! We will always love you!

Rebecca, Mathew and Michael Mello

Rebecca Mello - March 24, 2016 at 03:38 PM

NE

“ One of the finest people I have ever had the fortune of meeting.
Thank you for being my friend.

Neil - March 24, 2016 at 10:30 AM

 Carol
Culton

“ I met Don years ago when I moved to the neighborhood, as he ran by my house. I quickly noted he was a special guy. He always waved or stopped to chat & we found we had many shared interests. Shortly after taking him for a ride in my Jeep CJ, he showed up with Marianne in his very own! When Google Maps recorded Dyrehaven Drive, there was Don running by my house on the street view! Unfortunately, they have replaced that image, but it is always a special memory of Don for me. I continue to feel he is running through the neighborhood each morning while I am still sleeping-in...

Carol Culton

Carol Culton - March 24, 2016 at 10:20 AM

SD

“ 2 files added to the album New Album Name



Shelley Duke - March 24, 2016 at 10:10 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Albert de Czege - March 24, 2016 at 08:05 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Albert de Czege - March 24, 2016 at 08:04 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Albert de Czege - March 24, 2016 at 07:56 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald Lee Trussell.



March 22, 2016 at 04:52 PM

DF

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



David Frisby - March 22, 2016 at 01:51 PM

DF

“ 1 file added to the album LifeTributes



David Frisby - March 22, 2016 at 01:47 PM

DF

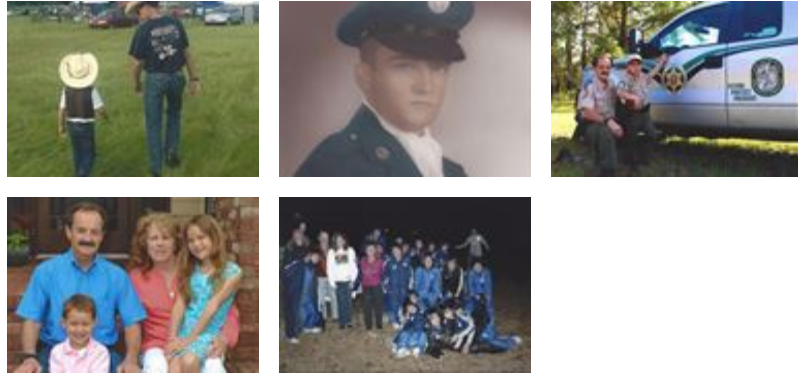
“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



David Frisby - March 22, 2016 at 01:46 PM



“ 87 files added to the album LifeTributes



Bevis Funeral Home - March 22, 2016 at 11:24 AM



“ Donald was always first on the dance floor and bocce court! I know he loved life, both he and Marianne were a great inspiration to me. If it was right and honest and good, they kicked up their boots together! Another wonderful person gone too soon. I extend my sincere condolences to Marianne and family.
Candi Antonetti

Candi Antonetti - March 21, 2016 at 11:40 AM



“ Don, I'll miss you my friend. You were always there and we had many good times working together. Ed



Ed Cates - March 21, 2016 at 06:19 AM

VB

“ Donald was a very special man. During our time at DEP, I enjoyed training with him and listening to him talk about various things. Rest in peace
Sincerely,
Vanessa Brown



Vanessa Brown - March 20, 2016 at 12:32 PM

PL

“ Pam Leslie lit a candle in memory of Donald Lee Trussell



Pam Leslie - March 19, 2016 at 03:14 PM



“ Pink Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Donald Lee Trussell.



March 19, 2016 at 11:12 AM

SD

“ Donald was a wonderful man. He helped our Italian American club at numerous events as well as during the Italian Festivals with my father and had great fun! He was strong and funny. He helped out of the goodness of his heart and asked nothing in return. A strong, principled man, you will be missed by many. Marianne, and family our thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time,
Love, Shelley Duke, Oak Duke

Shelley Duke - March 19, 2016 at 09:45 AM

“ I first met Don at the USAF's now defunct 657th Radar Station at Houma, Louisiana in 1965. We were both first year "rookie" one-strippers and he got there before I did. Donald (or "Truss" as most of us called him) was my first PCS roommate in a WWII leftover Quonset hut.

I was fresh out of technical training and for various reasons it was a time of my life wherein I can't think of a time when I had a worse apparent personality, full of distrust, skepticism and benign belligerency. Yet he never held that against me and we became lifelong friends. Don is the one trooper who maintained contact with many of us who were stationed there.

1965, '66, and '67 was a time of many physical plant changes at the squadron and, due to Don's job description, he was very involved. He reported directly to the First Sergeant who, I believe, realized what a valuable asset he had in Don. Don's USAF job description of being in a helping and assisting profession fit his personality perfectly and that is what he was always doing, both on and off duty. No one was more conscientious about his job than Don. And I can't think of a more honest guy.

Houma was a good duty station for single guys and we all dated those very provincial Cajun girls. I will never forget the many off-base group trips we would take to New Orleans ('Nawlins?), especially during Mardi Gras, and to Grand Isle for the beach as well as to Thibodaux, a college town, on free weekends. It seemed that Don was the unofficial (official?) photographer for the squadron since he had access to a lot of USAF equipment.

We both went to Viet Nam in late 1967. We both volunteered for duty there and we both knew why we did so. Don and I both had two different duty stations in Viet Nam, none of them were at the same place. However, we still managed to meet up twice in Da Nang while we were there because we maintained contact. And he arranged a mini-reunion with other Houma veterans there.

I was glad I was able to reconnect with Don over the years, twice in Florida and once in Austin, Texas. I highly regret not being physically able to personally visit with him after his terminal diagnosis. Nor will I be able to attend his funeral but I certainly hope

I'll be able to visit his grave one day before we meet again in Heaven.

*Thank God for the Life of "Truss,"
C J Johnson, Texas State Trooper (ret.) and USAF Reserves (ret.)*

C J Johnson - March 18, 2016 at 11:39 PM

JW

“ *I met Mr Don years ago when he was teaching Judo in Woodville. He's always had a great personality for working with kids and motivating them. I'm honored that I got to know him and that I got to watch him teach my kids for a while. He is also the only man I've ever had a competition with involving chainsaws. Great memories!* ”

Joe Walsh - March 18, 2016 at 06:29 PM

TB

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall* ”



Toni Brannon - March 18, 2016 at 11:28 AM

HF

“ *Heide Farmarco lit a candle in memory of Donald Lee Trussell* ”



Heide Farmarco - March 18, 2016 at 11:16 AM

SH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Shane - March 18, 2016 at 09:56 AM



“ Don, you did a yeoman's work at organizing the Big Bend Honor Guard . . . in the future, for each call-out, it will be "this we do for you". Thank you for your service.

Jim Geuin - March 18, 2016 at 09:54 AM

SH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Shane - March 18, 2016 at 09:52 AM

MM

“ Mom, Lou, Monica and myself always looked forward to visits from Donald. Mom adored him and loved to cook for him. Many good memories of all of them. Rest in peace Donald. You were a good man and a wonderful husband to Marianne. I am so glad I got to know you these past few years.

With sadness and love,
Mike Marchizza

michael marchizza - March 17, 2016 at 11:25 PM

BR

“ *Buzz & Holly Reedy lit a candle in memory of Donald Lee Trussell*



Buzz & Holly Reedy - March 17, 2016 at 02:31 PM

JS

“ *1 file added to the album Jill's photos*



Jill Stokesberry - March 17, 2016 at 11:03 AM

JS

“ *I will miss you terribly Don Trussell. You were always like a father to me and such an amazing judo coach and friend. Thank you for all your encouragement, guidance and generosity throughout my life. The world needs more people like you. Sending love to Don's family and wife Marianne. I love you both so much.*

Jill Stokesberry - March 17, 2016 at 10:32 AM

JS

“ *1 file added to the album Jill's photos*

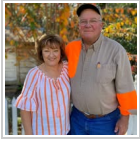


Jill Stokesberry - March 17, 2016 at 09:58 AM

QA

“ I met Don while training judo. He was so eccentric and full of energy. He could light up a room with his presence. I didn't know him as well as most of you but I can tell he was loved by everyone who knew him. RIP Donald! Your legacy will live on through all the people you helped. You will be missed my friend.

Quentin Almeida - March 17, 2016 at 09:33 AM



“ Chop Chop Man of many coats a truly good man will be missed

Rodney Granger - March 17, 2016 at 09:18 AM

AL

“ Don was such a great guy, and was such a delight to be around! I will always remember his enthusiasm and energy! I will keep the family in my thoughts and prayers....he will be greatly missed!

Angela Leggett - March 17, 2016 at 08:44 AM

AE

“ Anne Emborsky lit a candle in memory of Donald Lee Trussell



Anne Emborsky - March 16, 2016 at 06:21 PM



“ Don was an amazing human being. He always had a smile on his face and was full of laughter. He made you feel like you knew him your whole life. I'm so very blessed that I was able to become his friend. He will be truly missed. A true martial artist and a rare breed of a man.

Larry Long - March 16, 2016 at 05:54 PM

SW

“ Don was a rare breed. Talked and walked with righteousness. One of the only people that believed in me as a competitor and coach. His way of breaking the ice with complete strangers was the most realist/humble/humor field way s that I've ever seen and left a huge impression on me. He was like the father I never had. His picture will always be up in World Triumph Martial Arts.

Shane Weinischke - March 16, 2016 at 04:40 PM

AF

“ Marianne, thank you so much for allowing me to be involved in taking care of you and Donald. You came to mean a lot to me. Donald was a strong man with a huge heart; that was so obvious. I always enjoyed our visits. I am here for you, whatever you may need. I will continue to pray for you and think of you often.
Love,
Alison Flynt

Alison Flynt - March 16, 2016 at 02:47 PM

TB

“ Toni Brannon lit a candle in memory of Donald Lee Trussell



Toni Brannon - March 16, 2016 at 02:34 PM

IF

“ Don was such an amazing mentor, coach, and friend for 17 years of my life. He played such an enormous role in how I developed as a man, that I'm more than proud to call him a part of my family. He could always tell when I had a bad day, or something was on my mind, and he never hesitated to help me through quite literally all of the hardest parts of my life. And everyone I said thank you, he would just tell me "That's what I'm here for, now go get em" right before smacking me on the back of the head. He was such a great man and I will miss him terribly.

Ian Ford - March 16, 2016 at 12:25 PM

S(

“ Stan Tucker (FWC) lit a candle in memory of Donald Lee Trussell



Stan Tucker (FWC) - March 16, 2016 at 11:37 AM

LS

“ *Marianne and Family,*

Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family at this time. We pray that God will continue to comfort you in the days ahead. You will feel a little sad from time to time, but remember how much you are loved and thought of often.

Think of the loving memories you have to cherish and they will bring a smile or two all the day long.

*With Love,
Willie and Linda Smith*

Linda B. Smith - March 16, 2016 at 10:33 AM

AH

“ *Sensei Don blessed us in so many ways. As a teacher and mentor and as a fellow human being. He shared wisdom, laughter, love and just plain, down to earth common sense every time we spoke. He made it easy to be yourself and always encouraged us to be our best. I loved to see all the judo kids gathered around him, sharing their day and hearing how to make the most of every day through self responsibility. My children gained so much attending his classes and we will all continue to cherish the light he left in this world. May he rest in peace with his heavenly Father and continue to bless us from Heaven.*

Angela Holden - March 16, 2016 at 10:27 AM

PA

“ Donald was a wonderful friend and neighbor. I will miss seeing him run the roads and trails of our neighborhood and San Miguel; miss seeing him drive his pickup truck, blowing and waving to everyone he saw. He had a great love for life, people and animals. We will miss you Donald, but know we will see you in heaven one day. You are now a guardian angel to so many.

Pam and John Agliato

Pam Agliato - March 16, 2016 at 08:33 AM

TB

“ Tony Brunson lit a candle in memory of Donald Lee Trussell



Tony Brunson - March 16, 2016 at 07:50 AM

PI

“ I cherished the runs with Donald and Dennis through "the farm" and on the greenway. So many great stories and jokes were shared. Donald was one of a kind and will be missed by so many.

Penny Isom - March 16, 2016 at 07:20 AM

FU

“ Donald was such a great neighbor, can not ask anybody better than Donald. I enjoyed the garage sales with him, and he and I shared the "great" treasure story. I sure miss him! I love you Donald, see you again in heaven, and we will do garage sale again!



FUMIYO - March 15, 2016 at 08:02 PM

DF

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



David Frisby - March 15, 2016 at 02:58 PM

JS

Great photo! Look at that hair! haha! Love you Don!

Jill Stokesberry - March 17, 2016 at 10:38 AM