



## Donald Lewis Miller

June 9, 1953 - March 18, 2024

Donald Miller, beloved husband, father, grandfather, and resident of the Lake Norman - Mooresville, North Carolina community, passed away on March 18, 2024, at the age of 70.

He was born in Toledo, Ohio on June 9, 1953, to Bill and Doris Miller. Don is survived by his loving wife, Phyllis Miller, whom he married in 1983 (recently celebrating 40 years of marriage), their two children, Amanda (Philip) and Allison, his siblings Marilyn (Alec), Jim (Cindy), Jan (Mike), and his mother, Doris. Don was preceded in death by his father Bill and brother Dean.

Don was a dedicated employee in the field of engineering, sales, and a successful business owner. He was known for his hard work and passion in his career, always striving for excellence in everything he did.

Outside of work, Don was known for his many hobbies that brought him joy and fulfillment. He loved riding motorcycles, spending time on the boat, exploring the depths of the ocean through scuba diving, caring for their home and manicured lawn, and delving into the pages of a good book. Most importantly, he cherished spending time with his family, creating memories that will be cherished forever. Don was a proud 'Papa' to his two grandchildren Oliver and Adriana.

On March 18, 2024, Don tragically lost his life in a motorcycle accident. His passing has left a void in the hearts of all who knew and loved him. He will be remembered for his inquisitive mind, quick wit, kind heart, meticulous organization, adventurous spirit, and unwavering dedication to those he held dear.

In lieu of flowers, financial contributions in memory of Don Miller can be made to 'SafeMiles Endowment - BMW Motorcycle Owners of America Foundation' to support motorcycle rider safety. Please select 'Yes, please recognize the following individual or entity' and enter 'Don Miller'. LINK: <https://bmwmoaf.givingfuel.com/safemiles-endowment>.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 3:00 PM on Sunday, April 7 at the Heritage House of Cavin-Cook Funeral Home.

For those unable to attend the service please use the following link to view the service: <https://www.cavin-cook.com/obituaries/Donald-Miller-147/#!/PhotosVideos/429ac913-8565-48e6-97e7-528625753c2a/5ef9d0cd-63cd-4bbd-8a66-d93b5d5f5b23>

Cavin-Cook Funeral Home & Crematory, Mooresville, is serving the Miller family. Condolences may be made to the family at [www.cavin-cook.com](http://www.cavin-cook.com).

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

APR 7. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Heritage House of Cavin-Cook Funeral Home  
494 E. Plaza Drive  
 Mooresville, NC 28115

# Tribute Wall



“ *Cavin-Cook Funeral Home & Crematory created a Webcast in memory of Donald Lewis Miller*



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**Cavin-Cook Funeral Home & Crematory** - March 25, 2024 at 05:06 PM

MR

“ *1 file added to the album Chapel Service*



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**Michael Roberts** - November 13, 2024 at 04:49 PM

MG

“ *My dear cousin Phyllis, what an upwelling of beautiful memories feeling the deep love between you that was immediate and profound. This was an inspiration to so many that knew you both. I am here for you in British Columbia Canada if you want to talk my siblings have my number. I would so love to be support from my family to yours. Please call if you're moved Michael*

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**Michael guerreso** - August 19, 2024 at 01:41 PM

TV

“ The Verjees planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Lewis Miller.

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**The Verjees** - April 07, 2024 at 04:06 PM

TV

“ The Verjees purchased the Gable Gift Box for the family of Donald Lewis Miller.



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**The Verjees** - April 07, 2024 at 04:06 PM

SS

“ I met Don in 1978 when I started working for Firestone in Wyandotte Michigan. At the time both Don and I were living in apartments close to work, after about a year when the leases were up, I convinced Don we should buy a house together so we would not be throwing our money away on rent as houses always appreciated in value. We purchased a house which was right next door to Phyllis’s family. It was just a couple of years later that I had the honor of raising a toast to Don at their wedding for literally marrying the girl next door and to Phyllis for being that girl.

As other people stated Don was into scuba diving and I causally mentioned that sounded like an exciting hobby. Don stated that if I get certified we could dive together, so five months later I got my dive certificate. We took a couple of dives in some lakes in Ohio and then several dives in the Florida Keys. Don being the more experienced diver always took the lead. Finally, we decided to go to the Bahamas for 5 days of diving.

We booked a week at Sandals because the brochure (this was way before websites) said you can dive right from the beach at the back of the hotel. So, we filled our tanks, packed our gear, and headed to the airport. About 30 minutes before the flight, we were notified that full tanks cannot be loaded into baggage, so we needed to bleed them. When we finally arrived at the hotel the first thing we did was arrange to have the tanks refilled, which the front said they would arrange – we did not see our tanks for 4 days.

The beach at the hotel was accessible after you climbed down about 20 feet of rocky incline which we probably could not do with tanks, but we decided to snorkel. We did not encounter “crystal clear water” we could barely see two feet ahead even after swimming out about 100 feet from the shore line.

Don and I were frustrated that our dive trip turned out to be a bust because our tanks were always coming the next day so we decided to get even as best we could. At the time, if you wanted alcoholic

*beverages you could buy a pop bead bracelet or necklace and use the beads for payment. It took us a day to find out that when the bartender took the beads they just placed them in an open box under the counter, so in the middle of the afternoon when there was only one person working the bar, I went to the far side of the bar and ordered a mixed drink while Don was at the other end getting a couple of handfuls of beads. From that point we became pretty popular handing out beads to other people at the resort. On Karaoke night we made up a song on the things in the brochure that were not true. We became known as "those two crazy guys from Michigan."*

*Finally on the last full day our tanks arrived, and since we did not make any dive plans we put on our wetsuits and promptly dived in the swimming pool and stayed on the bottom for about 40 minutes. Since the sign said to swim at your own risk there was really nothing management could do. I look back at this as the best bad vacation ever.*

**Steven Senz**

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**Steven Senz** - April 06, 2024 at 01:30 PM



*Sounds like a great trip! I had the privilege of attending your Bachelor's Party when your Dad took us to some unique venues! 😎*

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**Patrick O'Bryan** - April 06, 2024 at 06:46 PM

CM

“*Christine and Caleb Martin purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Donald Lewis Miller.*



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**Christine and Caleb Martin** - April 05, 2024 at 07:40 PM



“ I can't say anything about Don that most people who know him won't already know. What a great friend who I, however, fought against meeting. Our wives had become friends after meeting at Bible Study. Cindy kept encouraging me to meet Don, but anyone who knows me would know that I avoid meeting new people. Cindy would tell me he rides BMWs and since I ride them too, we would have something in common. I knew that may mean nothing. Had I known Phyllis better at the time I would have known that Don must be a great guy, or she would not have married him.

The wives finally convinced us to take them on an afternoon ride so Don and I could meet. As they say, the rest is history. Not only did we become great friends, more like family really, the four of us started spending lots of time together going on weeklong jet ski trips, spending weeks at a time boating, and so on.

However, I still didn't ride with Don because I have always preferred riding by myself. The solitude was my way of de-stressing. That didn't stop Don from politely inviting me on lots of rides with him and his other bike friends. He finally asked me if he could join me on one of my bike trips. How could I say no. It was life changing. While I did somewhat occasionally miss riding alone, nothing could beat spending those miles on two wheels with him. We spent literally 7 to 10 hours a day just chatting and learning more and more about each other. Two years in a row we took a two-week ride to Nova Scotia. The first year we couldn't cross the border due to Covid. Last year when we got to Maine the remnants of a hurricane were about to batter Nova Scotia. We said the third time would be a charm, so we were planning to go in June.

Five or six years ago Don started talking to me about getting certified to SCUBA dive. He dove when he was much younger and wanted to get back into it. I was always intrigued about diving and decided to go for it. While I was getting certified Don went back for refresher courses. Since then, we have been on many great dive trips including one where we had to wait out a direct hit from a

*hurricane while in Cozumel. Don and I joined Dave Cook, one of his friends from when they lived in New York, for a week of diving every October. We were scheduled to dive in Dominica this year.*

*In recent months we talked about how we probably had five good years of adventure left due to our age, so we needed to make the most of it. We didn't get five more years, but I am eternally grateful for what we did get. We often said how great it was that we met, because we both enjoyed the same activities, were very fortunate that we could indulge, had the time to spend doing so, and our wives were the best of friends.*

*I felt like Don tested me in a good way with his need to know how things work. There are so many systems on a boat that are not typical in everyday life, and Don sort of felt like I should know the intricacies of each one. I was content to know how to run many of the systems without knowing how they ticked. That wasn't good enough for Don. He wanted to know why they do what they do and how they do what they do. I will miss having to learn all those details so I could be sure to have answers when he asked.*

*There was no one that Cindy and I enjoyed spending time with more than Don and Phyllis. Our hope is that Phyllis will continue to join us on life's journey. An amazing benefit was becoming part of the Miller family. We love Don, Phyllis, Amanda, Allie, and Amanda's family of Phil, Oliver, and Adrianna like they are our family. He was so proud of his family and dearly loved the grandchildren.*

*His loss does not seem real. I keep wanting to text or call him to see what he is doing next week so we can plan the next adventure.*

*What an amazing son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, and friend! I will forever miss him.*

*Dave Tucker*

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**Dave Tucker** - April 05, 2024 at 01:28 PM

JM

“ Jim and Cindy Miller planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Lewis Miller.

Jim and Cindy Miller - April 05, 2024 at 01:02 PM

JM

“ Jim and Cindy Miller purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Donald Lewis Miller.



Jim and Cindy Miller - April 05, 2024 at 01:02 PM

T:

“ The Raffertys & Mom :) purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Donald Lewis Miller.



The Raffertys & Mom :) - April 03, 2024 at 06:47 PM

RH

“ I met Don in 1992 through an American Sigma Rep Ron Clark, and from that day on I had a relationship for life. Over the years I admired how Don made every situation an adventure, honored people, and made everyone feel important and valued. when Don left Hach we stayed in touch and he and Phyllis came to Arizona for my wedding in 2010. in 2021 I was in Greensboro on business and got to stay with Don and Phyllis. They took me out on their boat swimming and we shared life stories, and family and looked at his bike accessories. Don had an ability like no one I had ever met, he was all about relationships and solving problems. He was the best at everything he chose to do.  
My heart goes out to Phyllis and his daughters.  
We will miss Don.  
Randy and Julie Helfrich

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**Randy Helfrich** - April 03, 2024 at 02:58 PM

PO

“ Patrick O. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Lewis Miller.

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**Patrick O.** - April 03, 2024 at 07:39 AM

BH

“ Bill and Mia Hungerford purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Donald Lewis Miller.



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**Bill and Mia Hungerford** - April 02, 2024 at 02:35 PM

BH

“ Bill and Mia Hungerford planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Lewis Miller.

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**Bill and Mia Hungerford** - April 02, 2024 at 02:35 PM

TA

“ I first met Don Miller when I joined the company in which he was working in 2009. He and Phyllis were extremely gracious to my wife and me both in making our transition to the Mooresville area as well as my business transition to the company as comfortable as possible. It was obvious from day one that Don was the "go to" expert for both technical and commercial issues related to our products. Don was a tremendous communicator and this skill was evident to everyone with whom he interacted, both professionally and personally. Of his many positive attributes...in my mind his greatest skill was that rare ability to improve any situation merely by his presence. Whether he was involved with a formal business meeting, or simply a casual social lunch with friends, the time spent with Don was just made better because he was there. My wife and I have been fortunate to have Don and Phyllis in our personal lives. We will miss Don terribly but will always be able to recall his kindness, humor and just the wonderful person we had the pleasure of knowing.

*Tom & Debi Akehurst*

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**Tom Akehurst** - April 01, 2024 at 05:55 PM

TM

“ *The Cycle Conservatio club of Michigan. purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Donald Lewis Miller.*



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**The Cycle Conservatio club of Michigan.** - March 29, 2024 at 03:47 PM

BM

“ *I worked with Don for over 10 years and knew him as an exceptional salesman and person. His demeanor was always calm and confident backed up by obvious competence. He joined our company after great success in business and was looking for a company in an industry similar to the one he owned in New York. Luck shined on us the day he walked in and asked if we needed a salesman. We didn't but we knew we could not pass on someone like Don. After a few years working with us a foreign company approached us with an interest in buying our business. As this buyer's interest grew, our President said to me "I'm telling you the buyers will love Don Miller and he will be a big reason they will buy us". They did buy us and they did love Don. When I retired my wife and I were fortunate to spend time with Don and Phyllis and another couple. That time seems so important to us now and we will cherish all of our memories of Don Miller.*  
*Bill and Connie MacMinn*

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**Bill MacMinn** - March 27, 2024 at 05:12 PM

DL

“ Don and I grew up on 289th street in Toledo together. He was a year older, but all us kids played together. He and I started on dirt bikes at Maumee State Forest in the late 1960's. In high school, his dad took us to Caberfae in Northern Michigan to ride dirt bikes up the downhill ski slopes - back when that was allowed. When I brought home my first my first Honda 4 cyl. road motorcycle, I don't know how he knew, but there he was in my driveway on his brand new 380 Suzuki triple. Over the years we both had many brands of motorcycles, but eventually Don settled for BMW's - I think certainly due to his dad's influence. We both attended Mechanical Engineering school together at UT, and also joined together for our senior year-long thesis project to develop thermal energy equations on the then-new Fourier Spectrum Analyzers and new digital/analog computers, all our research meant for industrial furnace companies. Our project was sponsored by Surface Combustion Corp. and we were both offered jobs after graduation, but neither of us took them. Don went to Firestone Steel in Ypsilanti, and I headed south to the space industry. Don and I rode together over a lot of this country taking longer and longer trips. Finally, when we reached the point where we both moved farther away after college, we would get together once a year, meeting "halfway" from each other in London, Ontario or later in Kentucky, on the bikes, to ride together. The last time I saw Don was at my lake house in Michigan in the mid/late 1980's. Our contacts reduced to annual Christmas cards and letters as our family lives took over our priorities. We have reached the point where 70 years old seems way too young to go, but I take a small comfort that Don was still doing what he loved very much in life and it sounds like he was more active than most of us. Godspeed Don and may you have winding roads ahead. Thanks for the learning years, the fellowship, and the memories. Sincere condolences to Phyllis and your family.

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Donald Leutz - March 24, 2024 at 10:04 PM

AM

*My mom, sister (Amanda), and I read this and teared up at this memory. Thank you for sharing. We love all the stories. My mom said he spoke of you often.*

*With Love, Don's Daughter, Allie*

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**Allie Miller** - March 25, 2024 at 03:49 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Donald Lewis Miller.*



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March 24, 2024 at 12:10 PM

BC

“ Don along with his brother Jim and Brian Hyodo and myself ( the Canadians ) did several rides together. On a ride back from Jackson Hole, Don and I got separated from Jim and Brian. We'd ridden nearly 20 hours in early August and were exhausted ! Coming into a gas station I was too tired to react to gravel on the road and laid my bike down ! This was only 5 or so days before I was getting married....so my thoughts were immediately "how the hell am I going to get home ! " . But Don....as always so calm , and collected swung into action , calling the local Honda dealer before they closed...ordering the right parts and getting the owner to promise not to close before we got there ! A trip to Sears for an easy out drill bit and with Don's expertise he had the repairs done in less than an hour ! I know that if I'd been alone on this ride....I likely wouldn't have gotten back to Canada to get married on time ! I always felt confident when riding with Don. I knew he'd be there, always to help and be the strong, calming force...regardless what happened.

*My throat is tight and my eyes are wet at the loss of this wonderful friend...*

*Sincere condolences to your family....Barrie Clift, Kelowna, BC, Canada*

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**Barrie Clift** - March 24, 2024 at 09:06 AM



“ Don & I met in 7th Grade and were best friend's. We shared many adventures. Alter Boys and our Confirmation at Messiah Lutheran Church. Starting our first jobs and buying our first cars. I saw Don & Jim learn to love motorcycles thru their teacher their Dad. We did the usual teen stuff until we graduated from Woodward HS.. We separated as Don went to University of Toledo and I went to Bowling Green State, Ohio. We lost touch for many years but he was around as He was in my Wedding later on in May 1985. I spent so many Fun times with Don. Luckily, I found him thru Google and contacted him and soon we were spending time together again and I came to his home in August 2015.

Dons was always Polite and driven to success in all that he did and was intellectually well ahead of most thru his inner Drive to be the Best! Indeed, I was lucky to have known Donald Miller most of my life and see his loving Mother & Dad and brother Jim, sisters Marilyn and Janis and his loving Wife Phyllis! This tragedy and loss of our Loving Friend has left me at a Deep Deep Loss and I'm sending all of Don's loved ones and Family my utmost and deepest Condolences as we will surely miss him all our life but have comfort in that he's surely in Heaven as we prepared for eternal life when we were very young!

God Bless you !

Pat O'Bryan

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**Patrick O'Bryan** - March 23, 2024 at 06:02 PM

“ I am so sorry to hear of Don's passing. We were best friends from grade school through college and beyond. We were in each others weddings and when we went our separate ways always kept in touch. We shared so much of our early lives together. My heart felt sympathy to Phyllis and their daughters and to his siblings Jim, Janice, and Marilyn; and to his mother Doris. I feel like a part of me has been lost. Jim Moscrop

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**James Moscrop** - March 23, 2024 at 04:11 PM

DC

“ Love and Condolences to Phyllis, Ally, Amanda, Phil, Oliver and Adriana, for your loss. we surely are going to miss our friend, and all of the adventures we shared together. There isn't enough space here to describe all of the great times we shared. I'm so grateful that Carol and I got to share some of his last days together on our trip to the Caribbean. He loved the underseas world and it was a pleasure to be his dive partner, and his friend. We will see you again Don, in our Lords heavenly kingdom where you now reside. Until then...

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**Dave Cook** - March 23, 2024 at 01:10 PM

TB

“ Our entire family are sad and shocked , ( Phyllis's sisters and brother ) he was a great provider & husband to her ! We first met him as he moved next door to us in Dearborn, MI in late ,70's! He will be sorely missed, he loved life and family !! 🙏🙏 The Guerreso family ❤️

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**Theresa Brodie** - March 22, 2024 at 08:47 PM

EA

“ Don and I met in November 2000 when I bought my first BMW motorcycle from him, a 1997 BMW R1100RT. When I bought that motorcycle from Don I not only acquired a pristine well maintained motorcycle but I also got a new riding buddy.

Don taught me all the nuances of being a BMW rider, gear, maintenance, and riding style. I introduced Don to Americade and we attended dozens of Americade, Honda Hoot and BMW events together exploring the backroads of the country and of life. Don led me through the thickest fog ever on the BRP, black ice in Virginia, rain so blinding I couldn't find the exit on I-77 along with a lot of sunny curvy roads. For 24 years Don and I rode together, shared 1000's of miles together and built a small group of like-minded riding buddies. Don was a true gentleman who loved his family, his friends and motorcycles.

There is now a big empty space in my motorcycle world that will be hard to fill.

God speed Don.

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Ed Apelian - March 22, 2024 at 06:11 PM

MH

“ I met Don on motorcycle trip to upstate New York over 20 years ago. Since that time I have had the privilege to ride with Don on many occasions. He was a kind and intelligent individual with an adventurist mind. Don did not let the grass grow under his feet. He lived life to the fullest in all that he did. I am so saddened by this tragic accident, but find some comfort in the fact Don was doing what he loved. Godspeed Don and I know you are in the arms of your savior.

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mark hainen - March 22, 2024 at 04:12 PM