



Donald Clayton Tillisch  
December 12, 1940 - December 19, 2022  
Summer Haven Beach

Donald Clayton Tillisch died peacefully, at home, on December 19, 2022, having just turned 82. He was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on December 12, 1940, to Clayton and Dorothy Tillisch. Soon after that they moved to Moorhead, where he went to St. Joseph's Catholic school and then, Moorhead High School, graduating in 1958. He graduated from MSU with a degree in accounting and then NDSU with a Master's in Business.

He was very proud to have served two tours in Vietnam, attaining the rank of Captain. He also completed the elite Ranger training in Fort Benning, Georgia. Don received many commendations, including the Bronze Star. Unfortunately, he was exposed to Agent Orange in Vietnam and as a result, was diagnosed with multiple myeloma four years ago.

Don fought the cancer with dignity, never losing faith. He never once complained about his situation. He and his wife together did everything they could to try to beat the cancer.

When he was young, Don spent summers at Pelican Lake with his family and friends. His claim to fame is that he was the first to barefoot ski on that lake! His other claim to fame was he played guitar as Brian Shannon of Brian Shannon and the Tornadoes in the Bobby Vee era.

After returning from Vietnam, Don worked a few years in Minneapolis in accounting and at 3M. He then moved to Moorhead, where he worked in residential real estate. After attaining the distinguished designation of CCIM (Certified Commercial Investment Member), he focused on commercial real estate investment.

After his first wife died, he courageously raised his two young daughters, Jessica and Jennifer, as a single Dad, while working full time. A few years later, Don met his wife, Janet, as she was Pediatrician for his girls. Janet and Don then had a son, Patrick. He and his wife were rarely apart, especially during his illness.

Don was always family-oriented. His family was always first and he took great care of them. He loved to travel and took his kids to almost all 50 states. Most summer weekends were on Pelican Lake. He coached his son's teams in football and baseball. He also volunteered many hours with the Fargo Flyers hockey team. Don was an avid sports fan, always favoring the Bison and the Viking football teams. He himself remained active and fit, enjoying jogging, biking, downhill skiing (skiing until his illness), golfing, boating, and fishing. And, of course, he loved his black labs, having a total of about 14.

Don was a great conversationalist and could talk with anyone, making them feel comfortable. He attended daily Masses frequently, and we can

count on one hand the times he missed Sunday Mass, until he became ill. He loved having coffee with the group after daily Mass, his Moorhead High School buddies twice a week in Moorhead, and occasionally his Fargo group at Cashwise. He has been best described as a “gentleman and a gentle man”.

Don is survived by his devoted, loving wife Janet of 40 years; daughter Jessica Rademacher (Jeff and grand dog, Roo, Fargo); daughter Jennifer (Fargo); son Patrick (Raibya and grand dogs, Delta and Bridger, Calgary, Alberta); his current Black Lab, Jake; Brothers: Bruce (Kathy), Jack; Sisters: Kaylynn Christianson (Carmen); Jill O’Leary (Kevin), and lots of extended family.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Clayton and Dorothy, and a brother Craig, plus about 13 labs.

In lieu of flowers, you can donate to the VFW, Nativity Church, or a charity of your choice.

Visitation will be 5-7 with a prayer service at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, December 26, 2022, at Boulger Funeral Home and Celebration of Life Center. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 27, 2022, with visitation one hour prior at Nativity Catholic Church, Fargo. Burial will be at Holy Cross Cemetery South Fargo. Arrangements entrusted to the care of Boulger Funeral Home and Celebration of Life Center, Fargo.

To sign the online guestbook, go to [www.boulgerfuneralhome.com](http://www.boulgerfuneralhome.com).