



## Don DeSha Jr.

January 26, 1960 - March 3, 2026

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Don DeSha, Jr. who died on Tuesday morning, March 3, 2026, at the age of 66.

Don was a devoted husband, father, family member, and friend whose steady presence and generous heart touched all who knew him. He lived his life with strength, deep integrity, and an unwavering willingness to help others. Don truly would give you the shirt off his own back. If someone was in need, he never hesitated — he simply showed up (and gave lots of advice).

He had a true passion for land speed racing and took great pride in his Barney-purple car, a reflection of both his vibrant personality and his love for life. Racing wasn't just a hobby — it was a joy that brought him lifelong connections and unforgettable memories. Don was also a devoted Tennessee Vols fan and alumnus, cheering his team with unbridled enthusiasm.

Don loved his work as a soil scientist, seeing it not simply as a career, but as a service to his community. He believed in caring for the land and helping others understand its value. His dedication and steady work ethic earned him the respect of colleagues, farmers, and neighbors alike.

He is lovingly survived by his wife, Hilda; his son, Gary Joe, and daughter-in-law, Christy, and their family; his aunt, Jeanne; his cousin, David and his family; his nieces, Molly, Lea Anna, Jessica, and his special niece, Katy; and his nephews, John and Chris. A special mention is extended to Marisa, Mackensie, and Luke, whom he loved as his own and who brought him great pride and joy.

Friends and family will be received at Kyker Funeral Home in Harriman, Tennessee, on Saturday, March 7, 2026, at 3:00 p.m., with a brief memorial service to follow at 4:00 p.m. Attendees are welcome to wear UT orange in honor of Don's Tennessee Vols spirit.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorial contributions be made to a charity of your choice or a live plant be given in Don's memory.

Don's memory will live on in the love he gave, the kindness he showed, and the example he set. He will be deeply missed and forever remembered by those who had the privilege of knowing him.

Kyker Funeral Home of Harriman is serving the DeSha Family.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 7. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Kyker Funeral Homes  
OUR HARRIMAN CHAPEL  
PO Box 232, 430 Morgan St  
Harriman, TN 37748  
(865) 882-1515  
<https://www.kykerfuneralhomes.com/>

## Memorial Service

MAR 7. 4:00 PM (ET)

Kyker Funeral Homes  
OUR HARRIMAN CHAPEL  
PO Box 232, 430 Morgan St  
Harriman, TN 37748  
(865) 882-1515  
<https://www.kykerfuneralhomes.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Kyker Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Don DeSha Jr.*



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**Kyker Funeral Home** - March 06 at 06:22 PM

MW

“ *Maxine Allen, Melanie Walsh and Harriet Walker planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Don DeSha Jr..*

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**Maxine Allen, Melanie Walsh and Harriet Walker** - March 15 at 06:47 PM

DA

“ *Sending prayers for Hilda and family. May God bring you comfort during these difficult days. Donna & Stan*

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**Donna Allbaugh** - March 14 at 03:33 PM

FH

“ Sending many thoughts and prayers to Don's family. I just learned today of his passing. It has only been a few weeks since we talked. Don definately made the world a better place and has helped me a lot throughout the years. He did several jobs for me and gave me on advice many other times. I remember him calling me once. He said, "the best thing you can do with this dirt is to make pottery. I will keep going if you want me to, but I don't know if I will ever find 4 good holes." He was honest and he set me straight always. He knew his stuff! I trusted what he said over anyone, because he knew what he was talking about. Heaven gained a good one and he will be truely missed! Frankie Hawn

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**Frankie Hawn** - March 09 at 10:01 PM

KR

“ I can't believe Don is gone. I was so shocked when my brother told me. I spent a lot of good summers in both Ellijay and Chattanooga with my cousins Don, Kim, David and Susan. Staying with uncle Don, aunt Jo, uncle Buddy and aunt Jean was a highlight memory of my childhood. I wished we had lived closer and spent more time together, but life keeps us busy and robs us of precious time together. Thanks to all those mentioned above for the wonderful childhood we spent together. Especially the day you buried your dad's motorcycle in the mud. I'll never forget that day. We all loved each other and treasured our time together. I'll miss you Don and I'll never forget the fun we had.

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**Kevin Reece** - March 06 at 09:38 PM



“ 53 files added to the album LifeTributes



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**Kyker Funeral Home** - March 06 at 06:18 PM

WT

“ Will & Kristi David & Teresa purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Don DeSha Jr..



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**Will & Kristi David & Teresa** - March 06 at 03:23 PM

ME

“ The world has lost a fine person and loyal friend as you could have known. He was there for everybody. He truly cared... God bless his family...

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**Mike Eaker** - March 05 at 10:15 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Don DeSha Jr..*



March 05 at 09:16 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Don DeSha Jr..

March 05 at 09:16 PM



“ *Arthur, Art & Crystal purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Don DeSha Jr..*



**Arthur, Art & Crystal** - March 05 at 08:39 PM



“ *Prayers to all Dons family and friends, so sorry for your loss*

**mark stack** - March 05 at 04:38 PM



“ *Scott Ledbetter and Family purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Don DeSha Jr..*



**Scott Ledbetter and Family** - March 05 at 02:50 PM

AL

“ Allison, David, Casey and Leo. purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Don DeSha Jr..



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**Allison, David, Casey and Leo.** - March 05 at 11:38 AM

JR

“ Hilda, we are so sorry for your loss. It is also a loss for our family. As our children grew up together, there was many times when he would come to Ellijay, the boys would go out riding on their motor bikes. They usually came back dirty, muddy and laughing. We have many memories of Don. He was my brother Don's son and my nephew. May God bless you!

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**Judy Reece** - March 05 at 11:27 AM

KS

“ Don was a great friend and loved when we both worked at Roane County Health Dept. Don was generous, fun loving, and loved his Hilda fiercely. May Hilda and all family find comfort in memories

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**Kathy Sorrell** - March 04 at 08:03 PM

JT

“ *Hilda, Gary Joe and family,*

*We are so sorry to hear Don has passed. He was a great neighbor to our family members, Ruby and Billie Armes. We appreciate your kindness.*

*May Don soar with the angels. He will be greatly missed by those who were blessed to know him.*

*Jean Peavyhouse and daughters*



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**Jean Peavyhouse - Spring City, TN** - March 04 at 06:44 PM

HD

*Thank you Jean.*

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**Hilda DeSha** - April 04 at 01:44 AM