



## Donald Charles Swanson

September 22, 1926 - March 23, 2017

Donald Charles Swanson, 90, of Centennial, Colorado, and longtime Houston resident, was called by God on Thursday, March 23, 2017 in Parker, Colorado, with his loving family by his side.

Don was born in Canon City, Colorado to Charles William Swanson and Josephine Ann Swanson (Kramer) on September 22, 1926. He graduated from Canon City High School in 1944, and continued his education with a BS degree from Colorado State University, a BS in Geology from the University of Tulsa, and a Masters in Geology from the University of Oklahoma.

Don married the love of his life, Helen Kathryn Smith of Fort Collins, Colorado, on June 10, 1950, in Tulsa, Oklahoma; they were married 67 years.

Don's early life was marked by a wide variety of interests and adventures. As a teenager, he was an ROTC marksman, and helped build Camp Hale for the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division; he found and built up a huge collection of gems, minerals, fossils and arrowheads—many of which eventually ended up in several museums including the Houston Museum of Natural Science as well as the Smithsonian. He was also a music aficionado, playing saxophone and leading his own "big band" dance band during his years at Colorado A&M. Through his love of jazz and swing music, he became friends with the likes of Harry James and Woody Herman. Other interests and accomplishments early in his life included his involvement in various "little theater" acting groups, serving as the Tulsa campaign manager for Dwight Eisenhower's 1952 presidential campaign, and was one of the original

founders of the Sigma Chi Fraternity chapter at the University of Tulsa. Later in life, he became very active coaching his sons and serving in many capacities in various athletic organizations, including serving as the Director of the Spring Branch Memorial Sports Association.

Don's professional career was broad and deep. He served 30 years with Exxon, as an exploration and reservoir geologist, becoming a recognized expert in the development and application of microstratigraphy and facies analysis to both exploration methodologies and reservoir studies. While at Exxon's Research and Production Co. ("the Lab") he was an early pioneer in the use of computer applications in exploration activities and reservoir management. He was the author of many technical papers and publications, receiving numerous related awards including the AAPG's A.I. Levorsen Award, which he won three times. After retiring from Exxon, Don founded several energy related businesses, including Stratamodel—which offered the first commercially available 3D geological modeling software system for the oil & gas industry. He was the author of several patents for 3D geological modeling giving rise to Stratamodel, GrailQuest and ReservoirGrail software for the industry. He retired at the age of 82.

Don is survived by his wife, Helen; a son, Charles Richard Swanson and his wife, Karen; a son, Jeffrey Stuart Swanson and his wife, Lisa; and eight grandchildren, Kimberly Marcelle Swanson Myrick, Laura Kathryn Swanson, Jill Kramer Swanson Witt, Philip Charles Swanson, Julia King Swanson Schmidt, Jane Kathryn Swanson, Jennifer Ann Swanson and Jacklyn Elizabeth Swanson. He is also survived by five great grandchildren, Jackson Christopher Myrick, Gracyn Marcelle Myrick, Kramer James Witt, Townes Michael Myrick, and Mason Stuart Witt.

Don was preceded in death by a daughter, Elizabeth Ann; and a son, Philip Christian, both who died at birth. He was also preceded in death by his father, mother and his Aunt Suzie.

Funeral services will be at 1:00 pm on Saturday, April 8, 2017 at the Bohlender Funeral Chapel in Fort Collins, Colorado, with burial following at

Grandview Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be given to the Colorado Alzheimer's Association and the Colorado State University Geology Department in care of Bohlender Funeral Chapel, 121 W. Olive, Fort Collins, Colorado 80524.

# Cemetery Details

## Grandview Cemetery

1900 W. Mountain Ave.  
Ft. Collins, CO 80521

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

APR 8. 1:00 PM (MT)

Bohlender Funeral Chapel  
121 W. Olive Street  
Fort Collins, CO 80524  
(970) 482-4244  
<https://www.bohlenderfuneralchapel.com/>

# Tribute Wall

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“ *Richard Dinkel and the Koch Accounting team purchased the Loving Grace for the family of Donald Charles Swanson.*



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**Richard Dinkel and the Koch Accounting team** - April 05, 2017 at 04:59 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald Charles Swanson.*



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April 05, 2017 at 10:52 AM

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“ *We wanted to let all the family know that we are thinking of you during this hard time. Don was such a great story teller! He was so energetic and now it was wonderful to learn a bit more of all of his accomplishments. A life well led and will be missed.*  
*Kirsten Hartman and Debbie Safcik*

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**Kirsten Hartman** - April 04, 2017 at 06:17 PM