



Donald Frace Martin

June 6, 1931 - February 16, 2026

Donald Frace Martin, 94, of St. Augustine, Florida, passed away peacefully following a sudden, unexpected illness on February 16, 2026.

Donald was born on June 6, 1931, in Flushing, Queens, New York, to the late Russel and Julia (Grutzner) Martin. He was predeceased by his brother, Richard Martin. He grew up in East Meadow, Long Island, New York, and graduated from Hempstead High School in 1949.

Following graduation, Donald worked as a stock clerk at Doubleday & Co., Inc. in Garden City, New York, from 1949 to 1951. In 1951, he proudly enlisted in the United States Navy, serving as an Aircraft Mechanic until 1955. During his service, he maintained the North American AJ-1 Savage with VC-7 and was stationed at NAS Patuxent River, Maryland, and Port Lyautey, French Morocco. He was awarded the National Defense Medal for his service.

Upon returning home, at his father's strong encouragement, Donald applied to Grumman Aerospace Corporation, where he began a career that he was very proud of, spanning from 1955 to 1989. He worked at the Bethpage and Calverton, New York facilities. Working as an aircraft engine mechanic and

fuel lab specialist, he contributed to work on the F-14 Tomcat, A-6 Intruder, and EA-6B Prowler, among others.

After relocating to St. Augustine, Donald met his loving wife, Mary Jean Martin. Together they shared many wonderful adventures, traveling to Hawaii, Alaska, Mexico, and throughout the East Coast. For many years, Donald was active in the Moultrie Oaks community, where he and Mary enjoyed swimming, bingo, golf cart parades, and numerous clubhouse activities. Sadly, Mary predeceased him in 2021.

Donald is survived by his two loving daughters, Donna Stears and Janice (William) Phelan, both of St. Augustine, Florida.

He is also survived by Mary's loving children and their loving families: Diana Nash of Rensselaer, New York; Mary (the late Howard) Acker of Culpeper, Virginia; Patricia (Bruce) Weidman of West Sand Lake, New York; Thomas (Danine) McShane of West Sand Lake, New York; and Robert Michael McShane of Brunswick, New York.

Donald was a loving and devoted provider who was always busy and happiest with a project in hand. Whether repairing something around the house or pursuing one of his many hobbies, he was adventurous, inventive, and endlessly capable. He loved cars, airplanes, NASCAR, and watching sports. He was especially gifted in wood carving, whittling, and woodworking.

An active man throughout his life, Donald enjoyed driving, going to the beach,

swimming, and biking. He completed several marathons and regularly rode his bicycle seven miles each way to work—even in the predawn hours. In retirement, he became an avid sailor on the Great South Bay of Long Island and cherished his 19-foot West Wight Potter sailboat, aptly named “Luff of It.” He truly loved the outdoors.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the dedicated team in the Medical Intensive Care Unit at Flagler UF Hospital and to their family nurse practitioner, Danine McShane, for their compassion and care during his final days.

A Memorial Service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 21, 2026, at St. Johns Family Funeral Home in St. Augustine. The United States Navy will render military honors. Those who are unable to attend the service may view the live stream at the following link: <https://iframe.dacast.com/live/2a7a09ae1c0559a83ef537e05e6a14a6/0d926f14-3fd3-923f-c556-1f0bb777106f>.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in his name to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, <https://www.stjude.org/>, or Tunnel to Towers Foundation, <https://t2t.org/>, will be appreciated.

Those desiring may leave messages of sympathy and encouragement by going to his tribute page at: <https://www.stjohnsfamilyfuneralhome.com/obituaries/donald-martin-77/#!/TributeWall>.

St. Johns Family Funeral Home of St. Augustine is in charge of arrangements.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

MAR 21. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Johns Family Funeral Home
385 State Road 207
St. Augustine, FL

Tribute Wall



“ *St. Johns Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Donald Frace Martin*



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - March 17 at 03:57 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Memorial Service*



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - March 23 at 12:56 PM

MZ

“ *I have lots of great memories of Don. The best was when I asked if he would like to go fishing and he said he hadn't fish in years but I told him I have all the fishing gear we need. So the next morning I picked him up and wouldn't you know it the temperature had dropped to 45 degrees. He was all ready with his winter goat and hat and we went fishing. He did make a new friend, this Pelican decided to park next to him for the whole time we were fishing.*

Mike Zema - March 20 at 01:28 PM



“ 98 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - March 17 at 02:53 PM