



Donald Edward Tesiero, II

November 17, 1962 - May 25, 2026

Donald Edward Tesiero II, 63, passed away on May 25, 2026.

Born on November 17, 1962, in Amsterdam, New York, Don lived a life defined by faith, family and hard work. He loved to learn, enjoyed sports, and being in nature.

FAMILY

Wife Kelly

Don loved his wife Kelly. He cherished her everyday and always made anniversaries and birthdays formal occasions. Every time Don prayed out loud he would start by thanking God for his beautiful wife. Sometimes he would arrive home with an orchid after a hard day and say lets go out tonight. Kelly knew Don had her back. Don always protected and provided for Kelly and the children. They were a unit. Whatever the circumstances, Don surrounded Kelly and made her feel secure and deeply appreciated.

Don was always happy being together as a couple, whether it was having a car picnic on the way to a kid's golf tournament or walking around the garden looking for birds. He loved being married to Kelly and let her know daily how he loved and appreciated her. They knew each other so well...often a quick glance brought laughter or the twinkle of an eye signaled a shared memory.

Don respected and loved Kelly with his whole heart. It was for better or worse. When issues arose, there was coffee time to figure things out and make a plan. Once on vacation, Don asked the captain of a schooner the secret to his long marriage. He said, "Strong coffee before sunrise." Don took that to heart and for 36 years did that. Coffee time was golden.

More important than coffee was Don's faith in Jesus and it grew over time. He learned about God's way of doing things by hearing God's word in church. Things he did not hear about growing up became powerful in his adult life, like forgiveness. Don was a prayer. When he decided to become a follower of Jesus, not just a believer in God, his life became better, not perfect but deeper and more powerful. He learned that to be a strong man he needed to put God in authority over his life. He did.

FATHERHOOD

Son Trey

Trey was long awaited and born the apple of his father's eye. Trey is the third Don Tesiero. Don imparted wisdom and plenty of life lessons continually to Trey. He was constantly showing Trey what it meant to be a man: in business, life and with his future wife. Don was extremely proud of the adult man Trey became. Don was incredibly happy Trey chose Ashlyn Storms for his wife to be. He always said that this was the most important choice in life and Trey did it right.

Proud Dad

Anyone who walked close enough to Don was shown photos of golf swings or shiny trophies. Don coached the kids in T-ball, soccer, softball, baseball and golf. As junior golfers they quickly surpassed his golf skills, but not in the love of the game or watching his children play it. Don was happiest walking a course following his children in a tournament. He walked many Player's Tournaments following the kids as standard bearers. Both children went on to

play college golf, making their Dad very happy.

Daughter Marie

Don had plans to meet his parents in Washington D.C. for the commemoration of the WWII monument. At 10:30 that night he got a call that changed his plans and heart forever. A precious daughter was coming into the world and she was his. He was proud and protective of his little Marie. She got his humor, his love of music and fell head over heels for the game of golf. They played together often. They had a strong father-daughter relationship. He wanted her to know how a man should treat her through his actions. Don cherished Marie. Don said she was beautiful as she was created by God. He picked out jewelry for special occasions. He was immensely proud of her accomplishments, but his heart beamed when she turned her heart to follow Jesus.

Extended Family

Don is survived by siblings Donna Tesiero in Boston, Massachusetts, Tom Tesiero in Amsterdam, New York, Dawn Kolodziej in Charlotte, North Carolina and Jim Tesiero in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts. Don is also survived by his cousin, and dear friend, Kim Tesiero.

Don's parents remained in Amsterdam, NY their entire lives, but they were always happy to visit grandkids Trey and Marie in Florida. Don honored his parents throughout his life.

EDUCATION

Don majored in political science at Columbia University in New York City. Then he graduated from Albany Law School. Later, Don desired advanced expertise in business as well as a winning college football team. He obtained an M.B.A. from University of Florida - a good excuse to attend more Gator

games.

CAREER

After graduating from law school Don worked in the prosecutor's office for Albany County and then in a private law firm in Albany, New York for two years. After marrying Kelly he moved to Boston to work with Burns & Levinson, the region's tenth largest law firm. In 1993 Don moved to sunny Jacksonville and worked in several private law firms. He was President of the Jacksonville Bankruptcy Bar. Don graduated with his MBA from the University of Florida and was honored to speak at the graduation. Afterwards Don was hired by Alltel in Jacksonville, Florida.

He loved working on the business side of Alltel. Eventually they found out he was a lawyer and welcomed into the legal department family where he has worked ever since. Don enjoyed working on large projects with colleagues who became like family. Don liked to engage people and learn their stories. He liked to learn about their families, hear about trips and share golf adventures. He knew mostly everyone because he had been there so long. He completed his career working for I.C.E., after Intercontinental Exchange bought Black Knight.

Over the years Don practiced many types of law like bankruptcy, mergers and acquisitions, construction, and contracts. Contract law was his favorite. He was a member of the New York, Massachusetts, and Florida Bars.

The "MEETING STORY" Don Loved

Kelly was hired as a landscape architect intern at an environmental engineering firm in Syracuse, New York. It's about about three hours west of Albany where Don was working. Her firm represented a residential community that found out a surprise landfill was to be built in their backyards. Kelly created pictures that showed what the finished landfill would look like. Kelly

and her boss attended the pre-trial conference as expert witnesses. She sat across the table from Don for seven-hours. He was brought in at the last minute to play hardball with the other side. The conference table was surrounded with eight male lawyers, four male engineers and one smiling landscape architect intern, named Kelly. On the way back to Don's office, it rained. He asked if anyone wanted to share his umbrella and hoped it would be Kelly, rather than her middle-aged boss. Sparks flew under the umbrella. After three months, Don popped the question. They married within a year and have been together 37 years and married 36.

SPORTS

Don played tennis, wrestled and ran cross country in high school. He liked to ski in the Adirondacks, a sport he had to give up in Florida. He traveled out west for work with ICE two months ago and took the opportunity to night ski. He had a great time on the slopes. Mostly, Don was relieved he was not too sore to walk through the airport on the trip home.

Don completed 7 marathons- Washington D.C. and Boston were among them. He also medaled as a National Masters Race Walker Champion. When Don learned about something...it was usually a deep dive. This is how he developed his love for the game of golf. Although he played golf with his dad at the course behind his childhood home, his love of golf developed from reading about the game, playing and coaching his children.

Don's happiest times were traveling to junior golf tournaments with one or both kids in tow. There was time to talk in the car, the hotel and walking the course. Many pizzas were shared while watching movies in Hampton Inns. When Trey and Marie were in college, Don was always up for a car ride to follow them on any course between South Florida and Alabama.

OTHER INTERESTS

Don enjoyed studying military history, the Olympics and current events. He grew up close to Lake Placid where two Winter Olympics were held. In 1996 due to his board work with a non-profit autistic school, he was asked to carry the Olympic Torch through a path in Jacksonville. It was a life highlight.

In college he played guitar and once played an opener for Suzanne Vega at Columbia University. Don studied at the London School of Economics. When he travelled to France, he made dinner money playing the streets of Paris with an open guitar case. He also wrote songs. Something he used to sweeten the deal with his Kelly before proposing. Don enjoyed music and passed this love onto his daughter Marie. Sunday evenings good music often joined dinner and conversation.

In the past few years Don made it a point to see more live music. Paul McCartney, Chicago, a Beatle tribute Band, Gordon Lightfoot, Diana Ross, Frankie Valli, Willie Nelson, Lynyrd Skynard and the Tedeschi Trucks band- to name a few. Don gave Marie a nice collection of t-shirts and memories.

FAITH

Don grew up in the Catholic tradition. After meeting Kelly, Don learned there is more to church than what he knew. He began reading the bible and prayed to become a follower, not just a believer of Christ. This started a personal relationship with Jesus that is still going now, after death in heaven. Don allowed the teachings of Jesus to guide his life and family.

LOVE of NATURE

Don grew up in Amsterdam, New York in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains. He hiked and canoed in the Adirondacks with his father, also named Don. In recent years, Don enjoyed deer herds grazing in the backyard. Several fawns were born in the side shade garden, which is now called "Don's

Garden. It was the corner of heaven he shared with Kelly.

Don is remembered for his intelligence, kindness, sense of humor and deep love of family. Though Don is gone too soon, the impact of his life will continue to ripple through Kelly, Trey, Marie and those he shared life.

Donations to Labor of Love Ministries International will allow children and widows to be helped in our nation, India and Thailand. Pastor Wayne Lanier, who Kelly has known for almost 40 years, heads up the organization. Wayne or his wife Diana would love to share all the good things that are happening. Your donation would honor Don's memory tremendously and help others. Please press the donate button.

<https://www.laborofloveinternational.org/>

Those unable to attend the service may watch the live-stream by going to: <https://iframe.dacast.com/live/2a7a09ae1c0559a83ef537e05e6a14a6/0d926f14-3fd3-923f-c556-1f0bb777106f>.

Previous Events

Public Viewing

JUN 6. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

St. Johns Family Funeral Home
385 SR 207
St. Augustine, FL 32084
(904) 824-1625
<https://www.stjohnsfamilyfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

JUN 6. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

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

Tribute Wall

DK

“ *I cherish the childhood memories. He was a wonderful, kind, caring, loving brother. He is forever in my heart.*

Dawn Kolodziej - June 17 at 05:58 PM

FM

“ *The sad news made it to me. I worked off and on for Don's employer over the last decade and really enjoyed our occasional lunch and phone calls to solve problems. The conversation always included meaningful updates about family. There is never enough time spent with people like Don but I take comfort knowing how much of his time he made available for family, friends and strangers. Like many, I have only good memories of Don and admiration for him.*

Frank Morreale - June 15 at 10:01 AM

HF

“ *Hinson & Castano Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Donald Edward Tesiero, II.*



Hinson & Castano Family - June 05 at 01:49 PM

DC

“ I’m still shocked and saddened by Don’s passing. Kelly, Trey, Marie, and Ashlyn, I have been and will be praying for you guys, for sustenance and supernatural peace through an impossible time. But also—wow, what an incredible tribute! So encouraging to hear you share about Don’s faith in Jesus and deep love for his bride and his kids. And I had no idea you guys only dated three months before getting married! Thanks for sharing your story and all these memories. Really grateful you took the time to put that together.
Donnie

Donnie Cohn - June 04 at 05:24 AM

DC

*engaged, not married 🙄

Donnie Cohn - June 04 at 05:26 AM

SC

Since retiring one thing I miss is engaging with folks. I especially miss talking to Don. Although we worked together on more contracts than I can remember, it was the conversations about our families and kids that I’ll cherish. Don wore his love for Kelly, Trey, and Marie on his sleeve. He always had a story to share and was so proud of each of them.

Rest in peace my friend. Your work is done.

Steve Campbell - June 05 at 06:29 PM

JC

“ 2 files added to the album Don



Jessica Canada - June 03 at 02:45 PM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Donald Edward Tesiero, II.



June 03 at 12:43 PM



“ Dear Kelly, Trey, and Marie,

You are in our hearts with deepest sympathy as you experience this tragic loss. Brother Don is with you always.

*Love,
Donna and family*

Donna Tesiero - June 03 at 12:12 PM



“ Sister Donna and family purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Donald Edward Tesiero, II.



Sister Donna and family - June 03 at 12:04 PM