

*I knew Don in Washington, DC as we would share a beer or two at Stan's bar and restaurant. We connected quickly when we learned that we had very similar backgrounds. He from a farm life in Illinois and me from a farm in Wisconsin. We had some great laughs together talking about the somewhat antiquated farm equipment we both endured as kids growing up there. For example having to work with a "hay loader" while some neighbors were farming with shiny new hay balers. He was a gentle soul who put one at ease immediately. Having looked through the pictures in this obituary I now know that I did not know so many things about him. He was not a man who bragged. It is my pleasure to be able to enjoy the photos presented herein and imagine him as a further extension of the kind, generous and interesting person he was. When we both retired we kept in touch by email from time to time. He especially liked a humorous note from me. In fact when I went a few months without sending anything to him he would drop me a short email asking "if I was OK." The last few emails I sent him I had not heard anything and finally had a response that the email no longer existed. This concerned me a bit and therefore the delay in responding to this obituary. Just an hour ago another search on line brought me to this obituary page. My condolences to the immediate and extended family of Don. Please rest assured he is one of few people I knew that was genuine and humble. May he rest in peace. I will miss him. --Thad Kaminski, Cheverly MD. (my email: [kaminsk.thad@gmail.com](mailto:kaminsk.thad@gmail.com))*

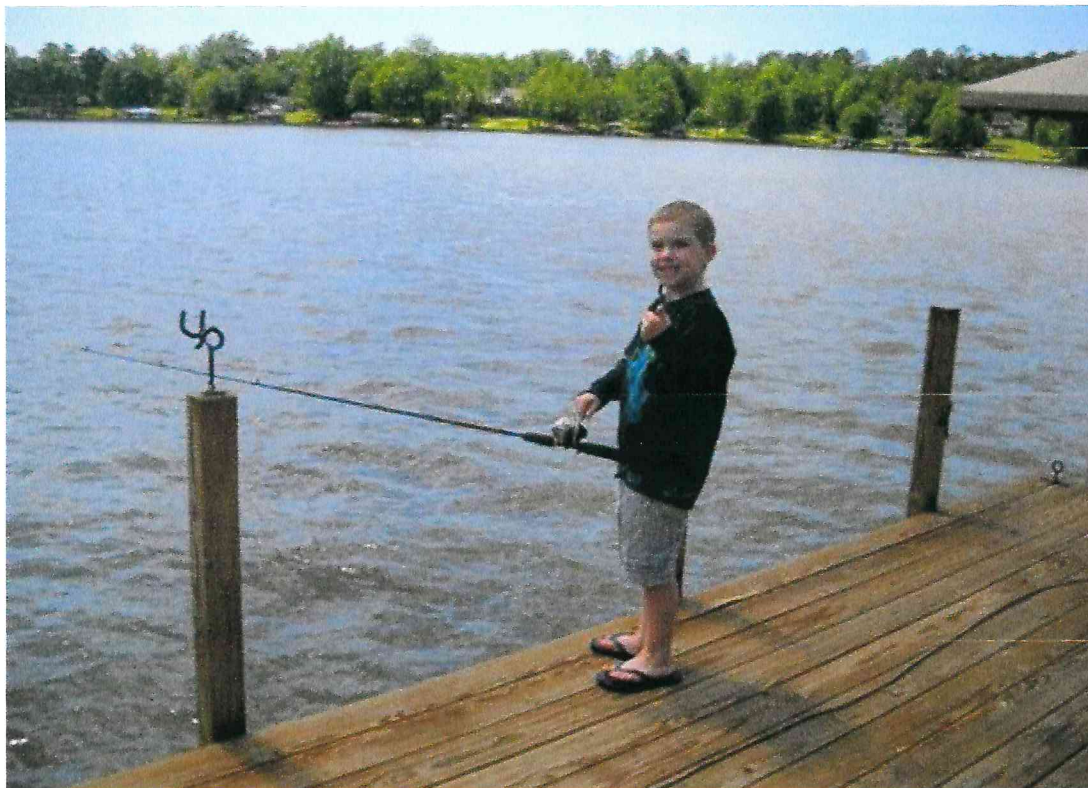
**Thad Kaminsk** - March 21, 2020 at 01:26 PM

*One of the earliest memories I have is cuddling up on the couch with Grandpa Don while he read his book and I watched cartoons. He's the reason why I love to read so much! He wasn't the type to talk a lot but he was always present, watching everything and occasionally chiming in with a funny story. He came to our school events, birthday parties, graduations and always made me my own batch of sweet potatoes on Thanksgiving to take home with me. I'll miss him and love him forever.*

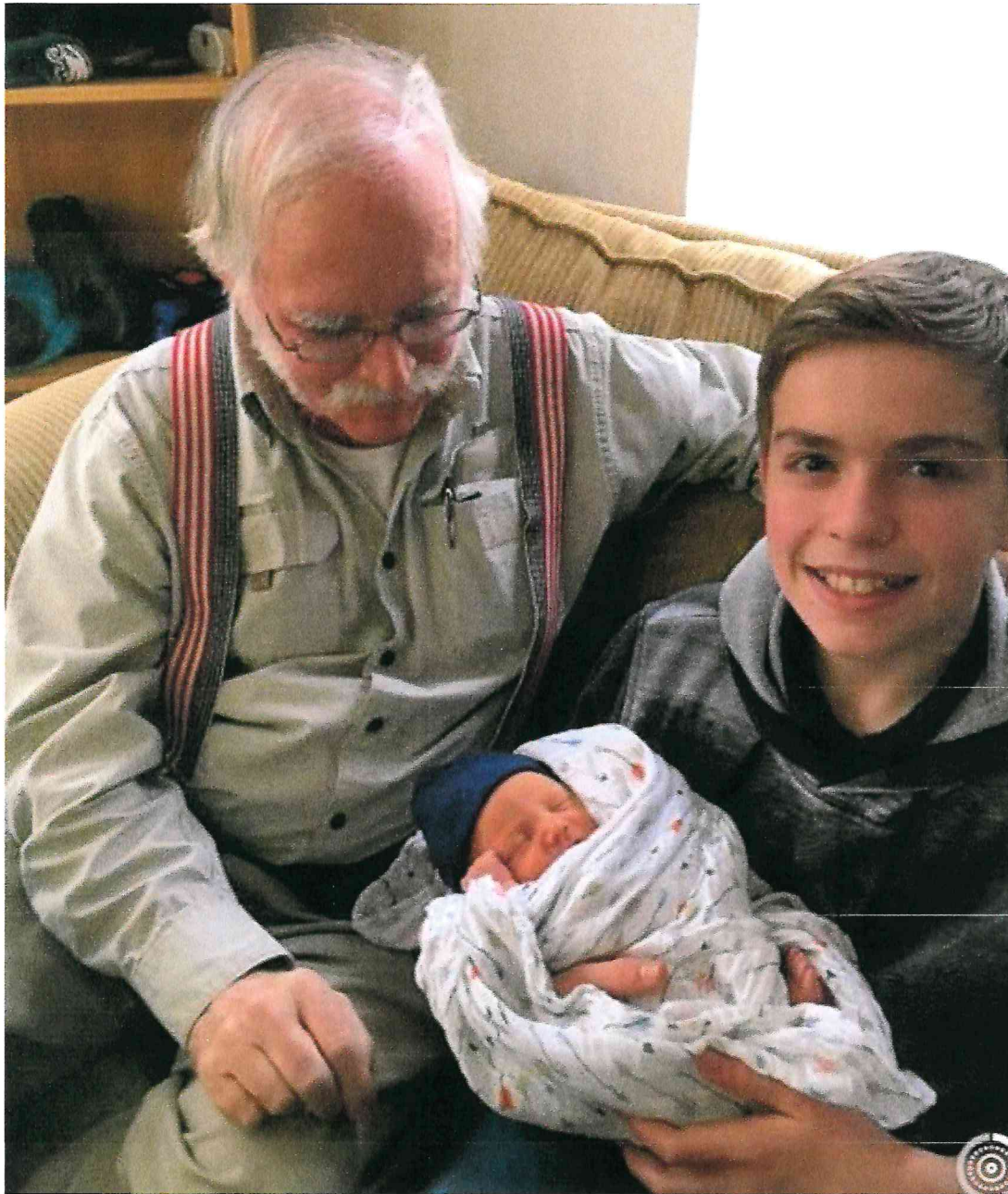
**Aprille Peterson** - January 15, 2020 at 01:27 PM

*When I was younger, I would ask to go fishing almost every time we took a trip to see Grandma and Grandpa Don. He would help me grab the fishing poles and we would pick the worms from the flower bed. To some, that may sound gross. However, I found it fun to do it with Grandpa. After grabbing the worms, he would let me fish on the dock. If I caught anything, he would come to the dock and help me unhook it.*

*Another fun memory I have is from when he took me fishing out on his boat. I never fished on his boat much at all, so it was special when we did. We traveled around the lake, trying to find the best spots to fish. I remember he had this cool fishfinder, which would show you where fish are, and how deep the water is. I was fascinated by it. After hours of fishing, we went home without any fish. I didn't care much, though, because I enjoyed the time I had with Grandpa Don. I have a lot of memories like these, and I will remember them for the rest of my life.*

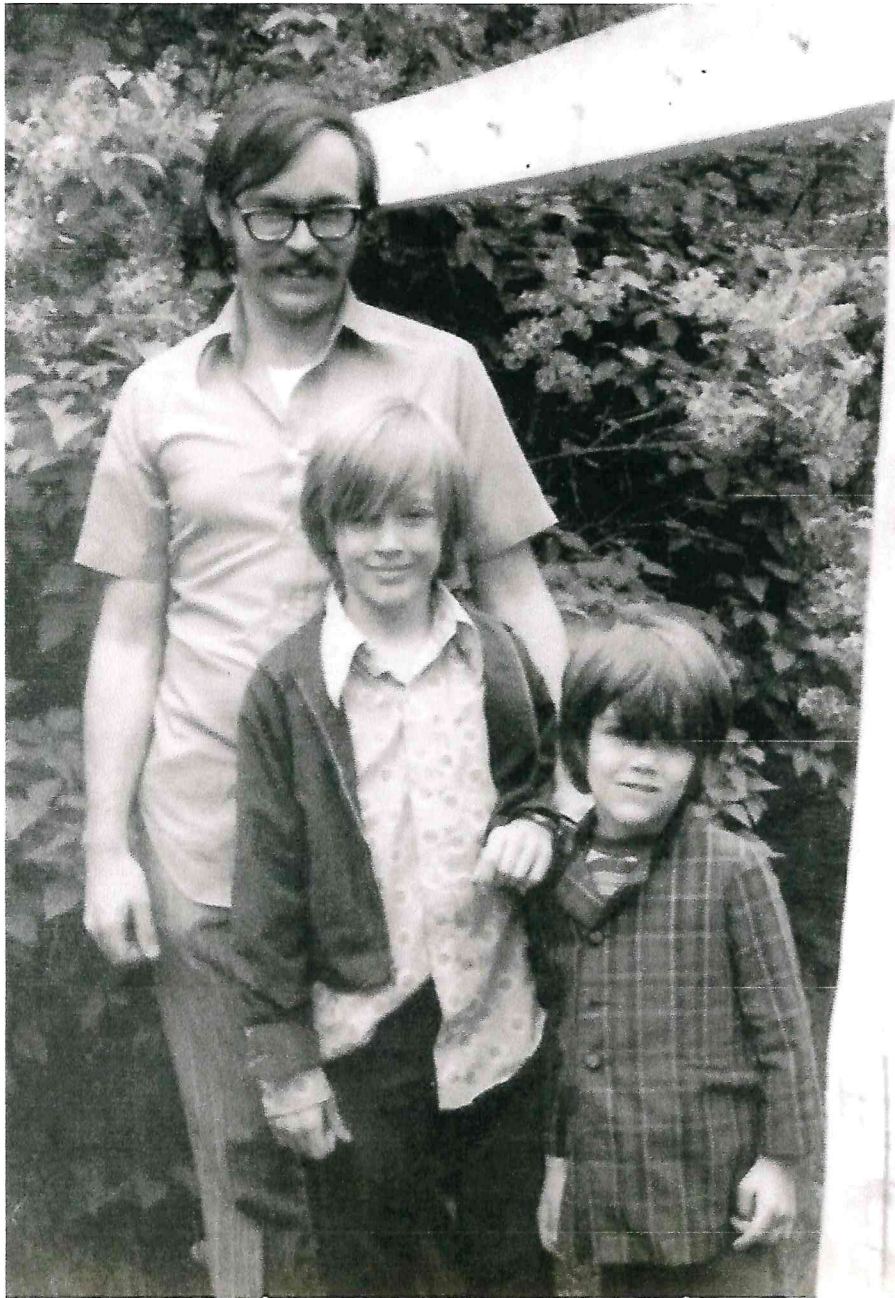






Jason Peterson - January 17, 2020 at 06:25 AM

*Dad was always teaching life lessons from as far back as I can remember. When I was younger I didn't always learn those lessons on the first try. His patients, determination, and sometimes a well deserved "kick-in-the-pants" helped bring some those lessons to light. I'll miss his wisdom, his wit and his knowledge of how to fix just about anything. Life lessons won't be the same without him. Some day Dad, we'll see you on the other side.*



**Brian Ames** - January 14, 2020 at 09:39 PM





**Eileen Daniels** - January 14, 2020 at 08:01 PM

Virginia, I am so sorry to hear of Don passing. Please know I am praying for you and your family.

**Trina McCant** - January 15, 2020 at 07:33 AM

Virginia I'm so sorry to hear about Dons passing Prayers

Larry Hendricks

**Larry Hendricks** - January 16, 2020 at 09:42 AM

*Thanks for a life well-lived.*

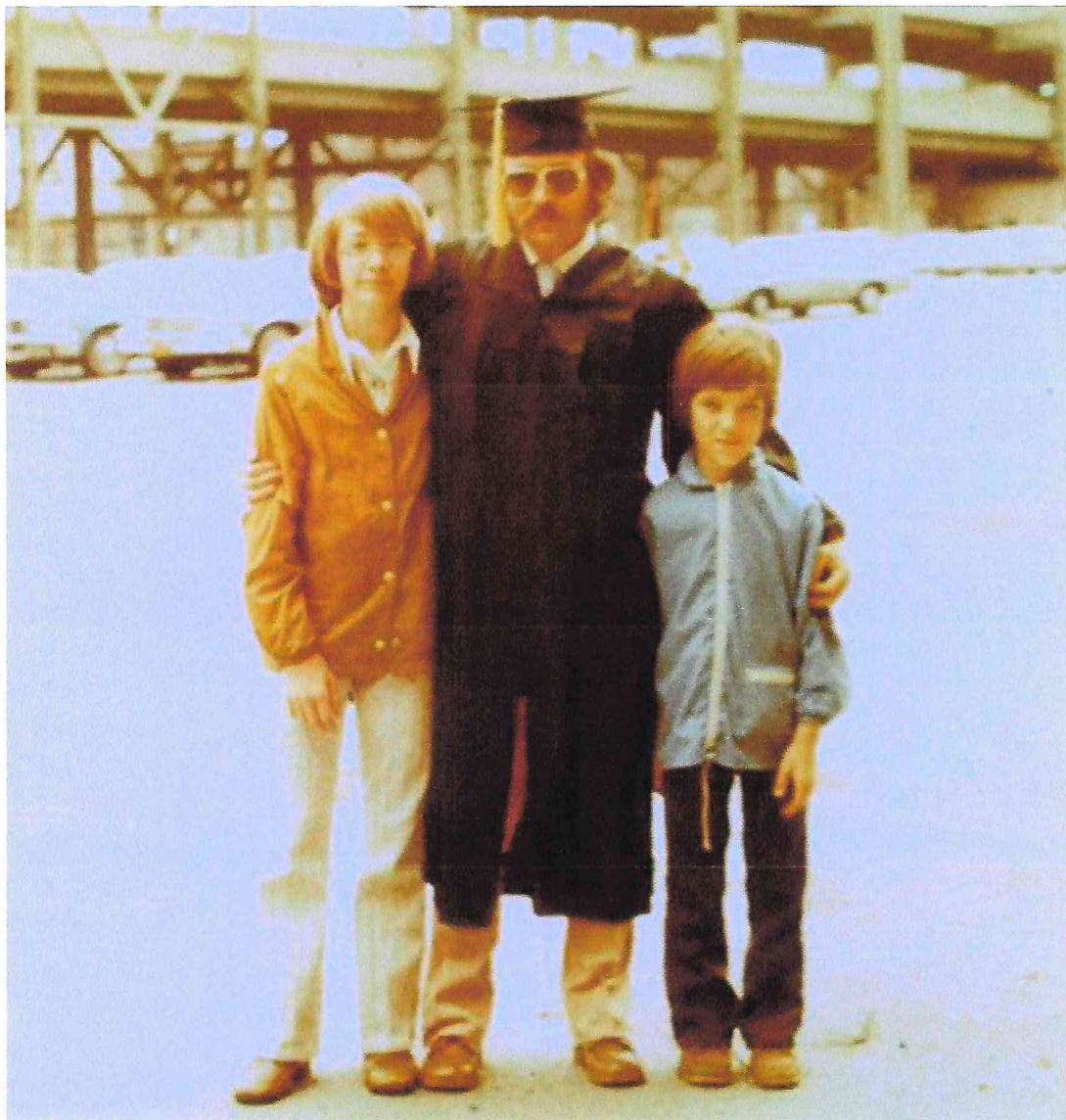
*Jack Fox, Class of '60*

**Jack Fox** - January 15, 2020 at 11:10 AM

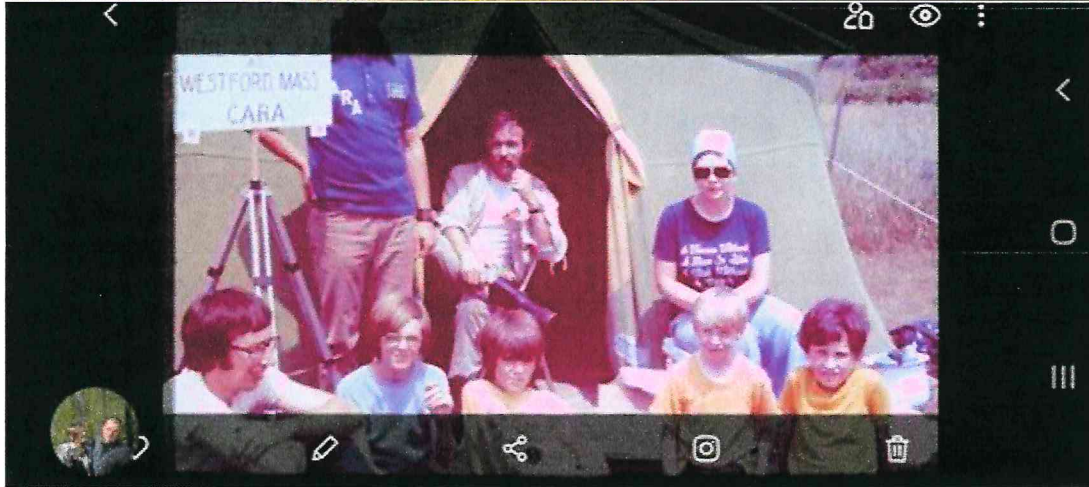
*Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Luther & Berta & Friends At Johnnie McDade Grocery.*

**Luther Minor** - January 15, 2020 at 08:50 AM

*Dad taught me so much. When I was little; I would ask, "why?" He would give a thoughtful answer and I would hit him with another, "why?." If I had his attention, this is how I kept it. I have so many wonderful memories...on one hot summer day after putting a radio in the Jeep we shared a Coors. I might have been 13. It was horrible and wonderful at the same time. Dad wouldn't share a Coke, so this was a very big deal. When my grades were bad he would say, "buckle down." When I was in 5th grade there was an offer of \$50 if my next report card had more A's than B's. It was my only A/B report card ever. 6 A's and 6 B's. I didn't get shit! I also didn't ever get A's or B's again. Dad was a straight shooter. This lesson and so many others have made me who I am. He still wants us kids to "get our shit together." I am ok with that. I will keep that voice and those words tucked away for when I need a push or a little motivation. Rest easy dad, we've run out of tomorrows, but I will see you again someday. 73*







Gary Ames - January 14, 2020 at 07:53 PM

*My heart is heavy - I will miss my Dad in so many ways. He as my mentor, my rock and go to when "life happened". Thanks Dad for loving me and being an amazing Grandpa, and Great-Grandpa. You will be missed forever.*

*Hugs*

*Your daughter,  
Lisa*







Lisa Peterson - January 14, 2020 at 06:33 PM

## Memories of Don Ames...

Don, Carol and I grew up on a small farm just east of Harvard, Illinois. Don was 2 years older than Carol and 7 older than me. Our dad, Ben Ames, farmed but also had his own electric motor repair shop in Woodstock. Don and later I helped at the shop on Saturdays and summers. Our mom, Hannah, kept the books and helped handle the customers. During school, Don was involved with FFA and 4-H and helped with the farming at home. He was an amateur radio (HAM) operator and for a while played the baritone in the school band. After graduation, Don worked at Admiral (a television manufacturer) for a couple years (as did many of us from Harvard). One story I remember is when Don slipped a whole garlic clove into my mashed potatoes one night at dinner. I was about 10 and that was my unappreciated introduction to garlic.

Don enlisted in the Air Force and served from 1962-1966 and was stationed in Austin, Texas for the last couple years. Don trained for and maintained and repaired the navigation and bombing systems on B-52 aircraft. He was serving at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis when the aircraft were on high alert. Father Ben, Don, his son Gary, and now grandson Greg all served in the Air Force. I am very proud of them all. Don's older son Brian served in the Navy Reserve and now works as a TSA agent at the Tampa Airport.

After leaving the Air Force, Don worked at Honeywell doing field service for computer systems at customer sites around the mid-west. He later worked for Digital Equipment Corp. living in Nashua, NH, and later Colorado Springs. Don and Virginia married and lived in Geneva, Switzerland for 3 years while Don worked for Digital. Virginia's daughter Lisa, son David, and Don's son Gary lived with them. My daughter Katherine (KC) also stayed with them for a month one summer when she was just 11. Don and Virginia later moved back to Nashua and later lived in Silver Spring, Maryland. At that time, Don worked in Washington, DC just blocks from the White House. Digital Equipment was eventually acquired by Hewlett Packard Corp. After retiring from HP, Don contracted for a US government agency helping to set criteria for which computer systems could or could not be exported and to which countries. Our discussions sometimes included how many Teraflops ( $10^{12}$  floating point operations per second) of processing speed were permitted. Often I could not comprehend what he was saying.

Don learned to sail while living out east and Don and Virginia sailed on the Severn River and the Chesapeake Bay. They later owned a larger diesel engine cabin cruiser boat docked in Annapolis (or was it Baltimore?) and got their captain's licenses. They later retired to Milledgeville and had a fishing boat and a pontoon boat.

Don continued to return to Illinois every fall to help Hannah get the farm ready for winter. That included setting up the snow fence, painting the barn windows, and whatever else Mom needed to have done. When Hannah passed away, Don took the lead in cleaning out mom's house, shed, and garage, getting the property sold, and getting the estate settled. Visits back to Harvard usually included pizza with a paper thin crust and a beer at Red's Tavern. Red's had a sign on the wall saying "Dynamite Springs" referring to the time our father Ben and his brother John Ames used a sequence of dynamite explosions to try to dredge the creek and drain some low land on the farm. Don said it was an impressive sight. There was even an 8mm movie recording the event.

I've always loved and looked up to Don. I will miss him dearly.

Arnie Ames