



## Mr. R. Don Tanner

May 2, 1935 - June 1, 2020

Conceived as a mistake by Fred and Minnie Tanner in the midst of the Dirty Thirties, arrangements had been made to have their fifth child adopted by one of Fred's sisters. Fortunately, that plan went awry upon Richard Donavon Tanner's arrival into the world on May 2nd, 1935. According to his mom, he was just far too cute and cuddly to be given away. Fred and Minnie devoted their lives to providing comfort and happiness for their family. As the baby of the litter, Donavon was the chief benefactor of their love and generosity. His only regret is never having taken time to acknowledge the fact.

During his school years, Donavon was an enthusiastic participant in various team sports. Starting at age 14, he skipped the zone representatives in Southern Saskatchewan high school curling playdowns for three consecutive years. Also commencing at age 14, he quarterbacked the Moosomin Mustangs football team for four years, culminating with the Eastern Saskatchewan championship in 1951. Together with the rest of his family, he was an avid fan of the Saskatchewan Roughriders and hitch-hiked to Regina on more than one occasion in his early teens to attend Rider games. As the old married man of the squad, Donavon was captain of the Elks' Juvenile hockey team which won the provincial hockey championship in 1952-53. He played third-base with the junior baseball team and was a keen member of the Moosomin golf club. He also spent many hours in competition at the tennis court which was situated kitty-corner to the Tanner house at the corner of Mark Avenue and Main Street. He was also said to have spent many a night sleeping on one of the tables at Turk Kilborn's pool hall.

Golf remained an avocation in Donavon's life for many years. He got hooked on the game at an early age during summer vacation with the family at Kenosee Lake. He assisted with the original design and construction of the Moosomin golf course in the late 40's and joined forces with Wilf Walker and Chuck Vanson to establish the Esterhazy golf course in the late 50's. He was an active member of the Highwood Golf and Country Club in High River for many years and was heavily involved in the club's conversion to grass greens. A life-long dream was realized in the 80's when he designed the original concept for the Cottonwood Golf Course in the Bow Valley southeast of Calgary.

Donavon's newspaper career was launched at age 13 when his mom obtained an after-school job for him at the Moosomin World-Spectator. He became a full-time employee at the Spectator office when he was united in marriage with Fay Bradley on October 12th, 1952.

The family pulled up stakes in 1955 and ventured west to Alberta where Donavon joined the staff of the Olds Gazette as a typesetter/compositor. They returned to Saskatchewan in 1956 when Donavon took over as publisher/editor of the Esterhazy Observer at the ripe old age of 21.

The Tanners returned to Alberta in the spring of 1960 when Donavon became production foreman at the High River Times. Donavon took over as publisher/editor of The Times when he acquired the business from Charles Clark in 1966. Thirty years of newspapering came to a conclusion for Donavon when he sold The Times to the partnership of his son Glenn and Bill Holmes in 1978.

While publishing The Times, Donavon served as president of the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association and was member of the founding committee of the Canadian Community Newspapers Association. He also served as a director with Western Regional Newspapers. In 1977, Donavon assisted Golden West Broadcasting Ltd. of southern Manitoba in establishing the CHRB radio station in High River. He served as a member of the board of directors for the station for several years.

Following retirement from the newspaper, Donavon and Fay spent six weeks touring the Deep South and other areas of the United States in the spring of 1978. They then took up residence for a year at Kalispell, Montana before returning to High River where Donavon became a member of the maintenance staff of Highwood Golf Club for six years. After taking a year off to do the design work for Cottonwood Golf Course, he returned to the Highwood club where he was employed as bartender for several years.

Donavon returned to the printing and publishing field in 1998 when he commenced research, editing and composition for the production of The Best of Times – a series of hard-cover books pertaining to the history of High River and district as chronicled by The Times. The fifth and final volume of the series was released in December of 2003. Donavon also went on to publish a "History of High River Floods" as well as two (one Tanner & one Bradley) family history books.

Don will be lovingly remembered by his sons Glenn (Fran) and Tim (Sherri); grandchildren

Jordan (Heather), Nick (Amanda), Jeremy (Ashley), Lindsey (Chris), David, Dena, Devyn and Landyn; as well as numerous great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Don was predeceased by his wife Fay and son Greg.

He dearly loved, and was very proud of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

During his last days he was always grateful for those “wonderful people” looking after him, in particular, the staff and volunteers at the High River Hospital and the staff at Season’s Retirement Home.

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation in his honour to the Narrow Road Home Women’s Recovery Home in High River (36 – 2nd Ave. SE, High River, AB, T1V 1G5) [www.narrowroadhome.com](http://www.narrowroadhome.com) or to the High River and District Health Care Foundation (560 – 9th Ave. SW, High River, AB T1V 1W4) [www.highriverhealthfoundation.ca](http://www.highriverhealthfoundation.ca) .

Caring for the family is Lyle Reeves Funerals of High River (Craig Snodgrass) 403.652.4242.

# Comments

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“ I grew up with Donavon in Moosomin and was in school with him in the same class from Grades 1 to 12. I have many good memories of him and Fay through those years and also being together at school reunions along with other classmates. Those were good days and I remember the Tanner house that I had to pass every day going home or to school. My condolences to his family and may they rest in peace.

Yvonne Schmalenberg (Wilkie)

Yvonne Schmalenberg - August 11, 2020 at 10:54 PM

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“ Dear Glenn, Tim and families,

So very sorry to hear of Don's passing. Both he and your Mom were good friends and neighbours of our parents Ray and June and I have fond memories of them at the golf club during the summers I worked there, Don also put together a wonderful tribute to Dad on his 80th birthday and for that keepsake we are forever grateful.

Our condolences, Kathy and Mark Carry and the Wellman family

Kathy Carry - July 04, 2020 at 09:43 PM

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“ So sorry to hear about Don's passing. Bob and I have wonderful memories of Don at the Highwood. His sense of humor, his generosity, his graciousness and fun attitude. Our prayers and thoughts are with with you, his awesome family.

Adena (Dene) and Bob Paget - June 17, 2020 at 04:02 PM

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“ Glenn, Tim and family, What a life your Dad lived and what a legacy he left our community with. Sending you my deepest sympathy, Cathy

Cathy Couey - June 14, 2020 at 12:35 PM

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“ Shawn Ottewell lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



Shawn Ottewell - June 13, 2020 at 08:52 AM

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“ Karen Foley lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



Karen Foley - June 12, 2020 at 11:02 PM

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“ Glen, Tim and Family: We have incredibly fond memories of your Dad / Granddad. He was an extraordinary human with so many abilities and attributes. Not only was he an accomplished historian but a fantastic story teller - a wonderful skill on its own.

John F Blake - June 10, 2020 at 01:42 PM

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“ So many memories!  
Innumerable bridge games, Labour Day Golf Tournament shenanigans, grudge match curling games, cabarets at the Memorial Centre (one New Year's Eve, Don and Bruce rented tuxedos and shocked us all - bright yellow and lime green. They were Tweetybird and Little Green Sprout). The annual AUNA Golf trips were unforgettable, especially the year of High Level, playing and partying under the midnight sun. The downside was the cancelled return flight and the longest bus ride home.  
Thanks for the memories, Don, and the support and friendship for over 50 years.  
Rest easy, Boomer.

Jocelyn Laing - June 09, 2020 at 07:51 PM



“ Glenn, Tim and family, our condolences to the Tanner family. High River has lost a true pioneer and progressive thinker.  
Thank you, Don For everything you did for our Community!  
Our thoughts and prayers are with your family during your time of great loss.



**Gerry and Glenda Cutforth** - June 07, 2020 at 10:16 PM

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“ Glenn, Tim and family...our sincere condolences...so sorry for your loss.



**Craig and Debbie** - June 06, 2020 at 01:13 PM

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“ Cheryl and I are sorry to hear of the passing of Mr Tanner. He always had a twinkle in his eye and made you feel welcome. He obviously had a big impact on our Holmes family whether it was at The Times or down the street at the Tanner home. We are thinking of you all.

**Bill Cheryl Holmes** - June 06, 2020 at 11:00 AM

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“ Dear Glenn and Tim and family,  
We're so sorry for your loss! I have many fond memories of your Dad/Grandpa! He was so interesting and so passionate not only about the history of High River but also his family! He was so proud of you all and often spoke with pride about all the successes each one of you had, especially his grandchildren! He was also always interested in what Gabriel had to say. Gabriel said "it's a good thing we went to visit Don and Alvin at Christmas time!". It's a comfort to know he's at peace with his true love again! Sincere condolences, hugs and prayers, God Bless you all!  
Debbie, Ed & Gabriel Pickens

Debbie Pickens - June 05, 2020 at 08:17 PM

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“ Dear Tim & Sherri, Glenn & Fran~~Our Thoughts and Prayers are with you & your Families!!He was a special man~~May he Rest in Peace!!  
Love Agnes & Fred, Mel

Mel - June 05, 2020 at 04:35 PM

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“ Sending our condolences!



Ron & Ann Weston - June 05, 2020 at 10:52 AM

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“ Al & Dorine Moore lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



Al & Dorine Moore - June 04, 2020 at 11:44 PM

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“ Ann Holmes Zirk lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**Ann Holmes Zirk** - June 04, 2020 at 09:53 PM

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“ Wade Thurber lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**Wade Thurber** - June 04, 2020 at 04:32 PM

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“ Carole Malmberg lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**Carole Malmberg** - June 04, 2020 at 03:23 PM

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“ Great man . . . Great family. Saddened by your loss. Deepest condolences and heartfelt prayers for your family in this difficult time. Cam & Donna Crawford.

**cam crawford** - June 04, 2020 at 03:20 PM

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“ Glenn & Fran, Tim & Sherri & your family;  
Our deepest condolences on the passing of your Dad. Cherish your memories! Don gave a lot to our community.



**Grant & Debbie Braaten** - June 04, 2020 at 11:14 AM

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“ Margie and Ray Johnston lit a candle in memory of R. Don Tanner.



**Margie Johnston** - June 04, 2020 at 08:40 AM

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“ William Young lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**William Young** - June 04, 2020 at 01:21 AM



“ Your Dad and I had many great discussions when I worked at the old Gateway hotel. I learned a lot from him.

**William Young** - June 04, 2020 at 01:25 AM



“ My sincere condolences to all of the Tanner family. As you know, my father, Charles Richardson, and Donavon were first cousins. He was the last of that generation. I fondly remember my visit with Donavon and Fay in June of 2009. At that time I had the opportunity of meeting cousins I had only heard about. Thoughts are with you all at this very sad time.

Gail Richardson

**Gail Richardson** - June 04, 2020 at 07:15 PM

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“ Sincere condolences from the Arnolds.

**Tyler Arnold** - June 04, 2020 at 12:32 AM

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“ Kelly Bakken lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**Kelly Bakken** - June 04, 2020 at 12:23 AM

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“ Ray & Sandra Murray lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**Ray & Sandra Murray** - June 03, 2020 at 11:39 PM

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“ Tanner Family !  
Our Prayers Hearts and Thoughts are with you at this trying time.  
God has embraced your Dad and made a place with him in Heaven  
May he Rest in Peace .  
Fred and Agnes Boyko



**Agnes Boyko** - June 03, 2020 at 11:09 PM

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“ Glen, Tim and family our deepest sympathy is being sent to you during this difficult time. Your family was the first family that Len had met through Greg when they moved to High River and so he spent a lot of time at your house with lots of great memories.

I on the other hand had the pleasure of working for Mr. Tanner at the High River Times at my first job with so many great memories to cherish.

Know that we are thinking of you and your family and to remember and cherish all the great memories that you have made over the years.

Sincerely Len and Pat Zebedee



**Pat Zebedee** - June 03, 2020 at 08:13 PM

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“ Condolences to Glenn, Tim and families, lot's of fond memories of your Dad, he was a fabulous fellow. We had lot's of laughs many years ago. Enjoy the memories.

Doug Tannas

**Doug Tannas** - June 03, 2020 at 07:54 PM

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“ A great community and history booster. I think the first incorporation of CHRB was "Palliser Broadcasting", what a coup for our community! Condolences to all of the family.

Mike and Lee McLean

**Mike McLean** - June 03, 2020 at 05:36 PM

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“ Tim and Sherri, Glenn and families, I am so sorry for your loss. Your Dad was such a nice man, he will be missed by many

**Merridell Richardson** - June 03, 2020 at 04:25 PM



“ So sorry for your loss

**lynda cowling** - June 03, 2020 at 05:33 PM



“ So sorry for your loss

**lynda cowling** - June 03, 2020 at 05:34 PM



“ So very sorry for your loss, my thoughts and prayers go out to the Tanner family!

**Jennifer Longhouse (Kramer)** - June 03, 2020 at 07:56 PM

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“ Sharon Doll lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**Sharon Doll** - June 03, 2020 at 04:23 PM



“ My thoughts are with the Tanner family with their loss.

**Sharon Doll** - June 03, 2020 at 04:28 PM

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“ I first met Don in the early 80s while covering his spirited run at provincial politics for the Calgary Herald. Straight talker, colorful character and a very good guy. Really enjoyed our conversations over the years. Our sincere condolences to the family.  
Bruce and Karen Masterman



**Bruce Masterman** - June 03, 2020 at 03:35 PM

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“ One of my favorite people in the world.  
The "Coach"  
My deepest condolences to you all.

**Rob Henderson** - June 03, 2020 at 03:25 PM

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“ Gordon & Sharon Wagner lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**Gordon & Sharon Wagner** - June 03, 2020 at 02:45 PM

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“ Our deepest sympathies to Glenn, Tim and all your family on Don's passing. I know Don left many memories for you to cherish and know his spirit will carry you all forward. God bless.



**Lorie and Lawrence Howe** - June 03, 2020 at 12:06 PM

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“ Linda Walsh lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**Linda Walsh** - June 03, 2020 at 11:28 AM

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“ A life so well lived. My condolences to Glenn, Tim and all. Donna D



**Donna Downey** - June 03, 2020 at 11:23 AM

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“ Don & Carol Petlak lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**Don & Carol Petlak** - June 03, 2020 at 11:17 AM

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“ Joni Bruce lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



**Joni Bruce** - June 03, 2020 at 11:14 AM

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“ Dear Glen, Tim and families

Our sincere condolences on the passing of your dad. He was such a wonderfully community minded man (and historian)...we have all of his books. He and your mom were great friends to our family for many years. Doug and I so enjoyed our time doing meals on wheels and visiting with Fay and Don. Thinking of you at this difficult time.

Doug and Sue

**Doug and Sue Ellis** - June 03, 2020 at 10:29 AM

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“ Jane And Joe Russell lit a candle in memory of Mr. R. Don Tanner



Jane and Joe Russell - June 03, 2020 at 10:22 AM