



### **DONALD GEORGE MARQUART '73**

Donald G. Marquart, after bravely battling metastatic melanoma, peacefully passed away on 27 December 2015 with his intended bride, Lori Pillittiere, at his side.

As middle son of Clayton and Betty Marquart, "Don" graduated from New York's East Aurora High School in 1969.

After Don's June 1973 Naval Academy graduation, his first assignment was aboard LEADER, where he qualified as a Surface Warfare Officer and earning accolades including Best Fleet OOD Award. After this at-sea tour, Don was dispatched to Navy Recruiting District New York – accountable for nearly impossible physician and nuke power personnel quotas. After being frocked to lieutenant commander, Don's life took an unexpected turn toward entrepreneurship.

In 1983, with investment funding from Southwestern Bell (now AT&T), Don co-founded First Pacific Networks, the original cable modem company. As chairman and CEO, Don led FPN to Wall Street's sixth largest IPO in 1992.

With his extensive start-up expertise and investment banker relationships, Don mentored a long list of high tech entrepreneurs. In the early 2000's, Don retired to Scottsdale, AZ, with a personal mission to make the local economy "look more like Silicon Valley."

One USNA classmate best described Don's remarkable character: unbridled dedication-to-others, integrity, humility, compassion, entrepreneurial persistence, unpretentious humour and quiet-yet-confident toughness.

Don accumulated an extensive collection of rare documents and treasures, including a 1931 Pierce Arrow. One document, Commodore David Porter's promotion certificate endorsed by Thomas Jefferson, will be gifted to the Naval Academy Museum on behalf of the USNA Class of 1973.

Don often reminded us of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's socio-political conscience: "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act. God will not hold us guiltless."

As a moderator for the annual Service Academy Alumni Association of Arizona Ethics Forum, Don focused on building the integrity of student government leaders and ROTC midshipmen/cadets.

God called your name. No one heard the footsteps of your Angel drawing near ... softly from the shadows, there came a gentle call. You closed your eyes and went to sleep, and quietly left us all.

Don is survived by his fiancée, Lori; and brothers, Russell of Elma, NY, and Bruce of London, England.

A springtime memorial service and inurnment at the Naval Academy will coincide with the USNA museum gifting ceremony.

"Lucky were we to breathe his air." Forever thank you, Shipmate.

*Bob DeGour '73*