



Donald “Don” Gene Cole was born on April 2, 1958, in Lincoln, Kansas, to Bill and Eldora Cole. He grew up in the town of Beverly, KS, where his family raised dogs and ran a paper route for more than 10 years. Many afternoons were spent playing football, basketball, or baseball with family and friends, then when evening came the game changed to “Old Grey Wolf”. As all Coles do, Don enjoyed catfishing with his dad.

Don worked at the rock quarry in Lincoln, KS, to put himself through college. He attended Kansas State University where he graduated with a Business Management degree but spent most of his time cheering on the Wildcats.

After college, he moved to Fremont, NE, to begin working for Hormel. While in Fremont, Don met the love of his life, Jan, on a blind date in 1982. He stole her heart by bringing flowers picked from a flower bed at work for their first Valentine’s Day. They were married on August 6, 1983, on a very rainy day in Fremont.

Don and Jan couldn’t wait to start a family and had three children Aaron, Rebecca and Nathan. Goofy as always, Don was sure to instill his children with all his best shenanigans including how to make aluminum can rockets with firecrackers, basketball trick shots and how to send a toy paratrooper up a kite string. Soon after Nathan was born, Don’s career with Hormel took the family to Austin, MN, in 1994. He later transferred to Jennie-O Turkey Store where he worked at plants in Willmar, Marshall and Pelican Rapids.

In 2012, Don and Jan moved back to Willmar, MN, where Don worked at the Jennie-O corporate office. With a house on the golf course, Don used the opportunity to work on his golf game. In fact, after retiring in 2017 he loved golf so much Don and Jan found a second home in Surprise, AZ, so he could golf year-round.

While Don enjoyed golf, what truly brought him joy was meeting and spending time with his grandchildren Hannah, Theo and Scout. Whether he was squirting them with a squirt gun, taking them mini-golfing or sneaking them ice cream, Don was always finding ways to make their time together fun.

He is survived by his wife, Jan Cole; three children, Aaron (Brittany) Cole, Rebecca (Aaron) Lambert and Nathan (Bailey) Cole; three grandchildren Hannah, Theo and Scout; five siblings, Jim (Paula) Cole, Ken (Jaynell) Cole, Bob (Kim) Cole, JoAnn (Tracy) Mote, Dave (Sharon) Cole; brother-in-law, Andy Greene and numerous nieces and nephews.

Don was preceded in death by his parents, Bill and Eldora Cole and a sister, Maxine Greene.



# *Celebrating the Life of*



## *Don Cole*

**1958 - 2024**



*A heart of gold stopped beating  
Hard working hands now rest  
This has been one of life's challenges  
But they do say, God only takes the best*

*We sat with you by your bedside  
Our hearts became crushed and sore  
We saw our duty through to the end  
Until, we could do no more*

*A life of kindness and laughter  
Your love for all the family so true  
You did your best for all of us  
And we will always remember you*

*You leave behind a legacy  
So great, it's beyond measure  
Our hearts full of beautiful memories  
So precious that we will treasure*

*You have been life's  
greatest blessing*

*A good friend to all  
that you knew*

*We take great comfort in  
knowing that we are proud to  
have been a part of you*



In Loving Memory Of

# Don Cole

April 2, 1958  
Lincoln, Kansas

July 18, 2024  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

## Mass of Christian Burial

Thursday, July 25, 2024 - 11:00 a.m.

Church of St. Mary  
Willmar, Minnesota

## Celebrant

Fr. Josh Bot

## Music

Pianist & Cantor: Tim Cayler  
St. Mary's Resurrection Choir

Opening Song: "Here I Am Lord"

Responsorial Song: Psalm 27 - "The Lord Is My Light"

Preparation of Gifts: "Rain Down"

Communion: "Beyond The Moon And Stars"

Song of Farewell: "Shepherd Me O God"

Closing Song: "Soon And Very Soon"

## Casketbearers

Jim Cole      Bob Cole      Ken Cole  
Aaron Cole      Rebecca Lambert      Nathan Cole

## Interment

St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery  
Willmar, Minnesota