



Donald E. Velkley, PhD

March 7, 1941 - June 7, 2026

Donald E. Velkley, PhD., 85, of Lebanon passed away Sunday, June 7, 2026, at Alpine Valley Nursing Home in Lebanon. He was the husband of the late Kitty (Beck) Velkley who passed away in 2019. They had been married for 53 years.

Born March 7, 1941, in Cold Spring, KY, he was the son of the late Edward and Ellen (Baker) (Velkley) Green. Dr. Velkley received his doctorate in physics from the University of Kentucky and was founder and president of PA Radiation Physics Associates, serving hospitals in the South-Central PA region. He also worked as a radiation physicist at the M.S. Hershey Medical Center and as an adjunct professor at Lebanon Valley College. He was a member of the Christ Community Church in Camp Hill, PA.

He is survived by several relatives and close friends in Kentucky, Missouri and Pennsylvania.

Dr. Velkley will be laid to rest beside his late wife Kitty in Mt. Annville Cemetery at the convenience of the family.

Don had a very distinguished career as a radiation physicist leading him to various states and institutions – medical and educational. Had it not been for his mother, the opportunities that came in life would never have occurred. Don's father died when Don was 2. Ellen and Don returned to Somerset to live with Don's grandmother. His teachers and mother recognized early in elementary school that Don had exceptional ability to learn. As a single mom, Ellen sent Don to a private Christian school (a strict one) in Science Hill, KY

and had to move to Cincinnati from Somerset, KY, to find work to pay for Don's room and board. (Perhaps Don's reluctance to give his life to Christ until later years was impacted by his experience at that school.) Ellen eventually moved back to Somerset and married Estil Green.

Don attended high school in Somerset, KY, and received a Merit Scholarship. He went on to obtain his undergraduate degree (1963) and eventually his doctorate degree (1968) at the University of KY. As an undergrad he was inducted to Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity. He remained an avid supporter of UK throughout his life and followed UK basketball closely. It was while studying at UK that he and Kitty met.

Other favorite pastimes for Don were the Sunday NY Times Crossword Puzzle, Jeopardy, visiting wineries, and the Kentucky Derby. He and Kitty hosted annual Derby parties and Don served up the iconic mint juleps to their guests. He and Kitty had an extensive collection of wines in their cellar. Don and Kitty purchased a shore home in Stone Harbor, NJ where they loved to spend time away from their Annville residence. Friends were important to them, and many were invited to share times at the shore with them.

Don had a very distinguished and illustrious career flowing out of his knowledge in the field of physics. His career accomplishments included contributing to over 40 publications, publishing 18 papers for scientific journals, and presenting at many exhibits, workshops, and conferences. He served in the role Consultant in Physics to many hospitals and Assistant Professor or Instructor in many of the same. His work took him to positions in Houston, Cleveland, Dayton (OH), St. Louis, and eventually to central PA. He was a member of the American Association of Physicists in Medicine. In 1976 he founded PA Radiation Physicists Associates, Ltd and served as president, a group providing radiation services for area hospitals. He served as a consultant to Lancaster General Hospital, Susquehanna Valley Treatment Center, Ephrata Community Hospital, Carlisle Hospital, York Hospital and Harrisburg Hospital. Penn State M.S. Hershey Medical Center he served as Associate Professor. Prior work had taken him to Washington School of

Medicine in St. Louis, Aden Corp. & Aerospace Labs at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, OH, and to Rice University, TX.

(It is told that when the Three Mile Island nuclear failure occurred in 1979, Don was tasked with standing on the roof of the hospital where he worked to measure the atmospheric radiation.)

Don and Kitty had no children, but are survived by Kitty's relations in KY, MO, and MN. Nieces and nephews affectionately called him "Uncle Ducks"

If Don were to greet you today, in his KY accent he would say "Haah" followed with a big smile. We wonder if that's how he greeted Jesus – with full reverence, of course.