



## Mr. Donald Leon Komorski of Hanover Park

July 8, 1932 - August 28, 2021

Donald L. Komorski, age 89, of Hanover Park, Illinois.

Peacefully passed away August 28, 2021 surrounded by his family. Don was born July 8, 1932, on the south side of Chicago. The son of Leon and Mae Komar (Komorski). At the age of 11, Don won the Morris B Saks Stars of Tomorrow and the Ted Mack Amateur Hour radio competitions on the accordion. He was a child prodigy. He studied with the famed Andy Rizzo Sr. at the Rizzo School of Music for 8 years, as well as studying at DePaul University, and the University of Illinois at Navy Pier. Drafted into the Army, Don served two years in the U.S. Army band at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. He married Roma G. Rizzo on a weekend pass. They had 4 children. She passed away in 1990.

Using the stage name of Don Komar, Don began performing at age 16 and performed at numerous nightspots over his 70+ year professional life span as well as performing a Concerto for Accordion with the Chicago Women's Symphony at age 18. Most of the clubs are gone today, but you may remember the Chez Paree, Café Bonaparte, Brass Rail, the Pump Room, the Buttery, the Drake Oakbrook, and Seven Eagles to mention a few. Don did some television work including the Playboy Penthouse Show, and the Dirk Courtenay Show (a 13-week summer replacement for the old Topper Show). He has appeared with: Al Morgan, the Harmonicats, Buddy DiVito, Hildegarde,

Ted Fiorito, and Gloria Van. He's played jazz with artists such as Sonny Stitt, Barney Kessell, and Chubby Jackson to name a few, as well as local talent like Joe Vito, Johnny Frigo, and many others. Don added organ/keyboardist to his list of instruments and played as a solo artist throughout the suburbs creating his organ bar following of amateur singers. He was a human karaoke machine playing any song in any key the singer needed. His vast repertoire of music was amazing. He created quite a following playing at Heuer's, Holiday Inn's, the Morton House, Sherwood Forest, and Positano to name a few.

At the age of 48 Don studied to learn piano tuning and repair and became a certified piano technician earning a Doctorate from the Master Piano Technicians of America. He built his tuning business and busily tuned over 800 pianos a year. He married his longtime friend Anita M Kesteley in 1995 and together built A & A Music Academy. The school provides lessons to four park districts in piano, guitar, and drums and teaches over 200 students per week. He taught jazz improvisation to hundreds of students over the years. Several have become professional musicians one of which, Daniel Murphy, played for his 80th birthday party as well as his memorial service. Don and Anita (vocalist) appeared throughout the Chicago suburbs along with Lenny Kaye, tenor sax and vocalist, for many years. Don was invited to a music academy in Alacante, Spain to perform a Jazz accordion concert in 2013. It was a great success. He recorded 3 albums playing his backgrounds on the organ and then "playing with himself" on accordion. Don retired from performing in 2020. Don performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the age of 82.

Don was very adventurous. He became a private pilot and flew single engine planes for many years. He visited his daughter in Wisconsin to take her up for a ride. On another trip he visited his stepdaughter at Eastern Illinois University with Anita where they had lunch. He loved to fly. He also had several motorcycles. The best one was his 1995 Honda Goldwing that he and Anita

took to Quebec, Canada on their honeymoon. They rode the bike to several Goldwing rallies around the country. They converted it to a trike when he turned 75. He took it on his piano tuning calls and his customers loved it when he drove up in his leather jacket and helmet! He was always full of life and extremely humorous. Everyone he met has their own Don Komorski story to tell.

He is survived by his loving wife, Anita; daughters Leona (Brian) Marheine of Greenville, WI; Claudia (David) Van Delinder of Cherry Valley, IL; daughter in law Elaine Komorski, of Elgin, stepson Steven (Joey) Smith of Elgin; and stepdaughter Christina (Tom) Walsh of Bartlett; his grandchildren include Adam, Heather, Lisa, Brian and Emily, Step grandchildren Ryan and Lisa; His great grandchildren Scott, Emma, Alex, April, and Payton; Step great grandchildren Dacian and Izzy; plus several nieces and nephews. Preceded in death by his parents; his beloved sons Andrew, and Gregory, and his beloved sister Marlene (Robert) Marlowe.

A celebration of life will be Sunday, September 19, 2021 from 2:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M., at Morizzo Funeral Home, 2550 Hassell Rd. in Hoffman Estates, IL. Remembrances and military honors to take place at 5:00 P.M.

There will be a live stream during the visitation and services at the Morizzo Funeral Home. To access the livestream visit the photo tab above after 2:00 P.M. on September 19, 2021.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Chicago Accordion Club Scholarship Fund [www.chicago-accordion-club.com](http://www.chicago-accordion-club.com) or the Ontarioville Art & Music League at 1975 Devon Ave. Hanover Park, IL. 60133

For information, please contact Morizzo Funeral Home, Hoffman Estates, IL at

847-752-6444.

# Cemetery Details

**The Directors at Morizzo Funeral Home entrusted with any Visitation, Funeral & Committal; requested.**

2550 Hassell Road  
(Northeast corner at Barrington Road)  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169  
(847) 752-6444  
ross@morizzofuneralhome.com  
<http://MorizzoFuneralHome.com>

# Previous Events

## Life Celebration Funeral / Memorial Service

SEP 19. 2:00 AM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Morizzo Family Funeral Home, Cremation Services, and Cemetery Memorials  
2550 Hassell Road  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169  
(847) 752-6444  
ross@morizzofuneralhome.com  
<https://www.morizzofuneralhome.com>

## Funeral Service

SEP 19. 5:00 PM (CT)

Morizzo Family Funeral Home, Cremation Services, and Cemetery Memorials  
2550 Hassell Road  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169  
(847) 752-6444  
ross@morizzofuneralhome.com  
<https://www.morizzofuneralhome.com>



# Tribute Wall



“ *Morizzo Funeral Home & Cremation Services created a Webcast in memory of Mr. Donald Leon Komorski of Hanover Park*



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**Morizzo Funeral Home & Cremation Services** - September 19, 2021 at 12:44 PM

AK

*Wonderful musical tribute to a remarkable musician. Thank you to the Dan Murphy Trio for their wonderful selection of songs played. They all were masterfully played by Don as well and each one brought back amazing memories for me and all that attended.*

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**Anita Komorski** - December 14, 2021 at 12:42 PM



“ *Mr. Donald Leon Komorski of Hanover Park*

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November 04, 2022 at 06:54 PM

GB

“ I was there the night Victor Lanza walked into our lives - Don and I worked together at a number of places, over the years. He was one of the great one's, and this was a beautiful service - (except for all the masks)

*Feel a loss knowing that he's no longer with us, and am sorry for your loss too Anita.*

*The two of you had many years together, and I'd like to suggest may your happy memories help ease your pain - along with time which does heal all.*

*Glory B.*



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**Glory B.** - January 26, 2022 at 11:16 PM

AD

“ Don taught me organ as a teenager. We did classical one week and jazz another week, and for that reason I have been able to become music director for many great parishes in Chicago, and now in Florida. He made me laugh, despite being such a strict teacher. I received a Masters in Music Composition because he showed me how to arrange. He was the best teacher anyone could have ask for. Rest in peace dearest Don. Surely the angels and saints are dancing to your tunes.

*With great love,  
Alex Dilan Jr.*

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**Alex Dilan** - September 19, 2021 at 01:17 PM

LC

“ I was lucky to have Don Komorski as my father-in-law many years ago. We always remained close and we always cared about each other. I got to see him yearly when he'd come tune my piano and feed dog treats to my dog! But best of all we always remained friends. I will always love him. He will be deeply missed.

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**Linda Carroo** - September 19, 2021 at 11:43 AM

RT

“ Dear Anita,  
All our sympathy on the loss of Donald.  
Guido and Rozemien Cloet-Teerlinck and  
children  
I'll write you soon Anita,  
Rozemien



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**Rozemien Teerlinck** - September 18, 2021 at 05:44 PM

CI

“ Don was a wonderful man, always full of laughter and a phenomenal musician, piano, organ, or accordion he could play anything! I remember singing with him one summer when we had the art show in the park across the street from the school. It is a sweet memory to cherish. When we would have student recitals either the library in the early years then the church later, Don and Anita would team up to get us off to a good start. I really miss the whole school, the students, the teachers, and of course "Papa" Don.  
Carole Irwin

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**Carole Irwin** - September 16, 2021 at 01:42 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Donald Leon Komorski of Hanover Park.*



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September 15, 2021 at 05:05 PM



“ *Don will be sorely missed during A&A's Recitals. Here he is entertaining the crowd with the Accordion a few years back.*



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**Romeo Escobar** - September 13, 2021 at 03:12 PM



“ *Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Mr. Donald Leon Komorski of Hanover Park.*



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September 06, 2021 at 12:05 PM

NS

“ *Losing Don Komorski is like losing a part of my young adulthood. We were colleagues in the music business in the late 1960's. Don was already an accomplished accordion player. We were working in piano and organ sales. While organs were new to him then, his transferable skills from accordion were ever most evident. Since accordions do not have pedals or left hand keyboards I remember like it was yesterday that Don practicing left hand keyboard scales and foot pedals keyboard skills. Within a couple of hours he returned to the sales floor and could out play any professional in Chicago. His mastering new instruments was an inspiration to me as I am sure it was to many.*

*Miles have kept our visits minimal, but visiting with Don and Anita a few years ago was just as if no time had passed at all. His humor, his musicianship, his warm heart makes me smile and he will be missed.*

*Nick Sommerio*

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**Nick Sommerio** - September 04, 2021 at 05:24 PM

DB

“ *Don was my organ instructor, piano tuner & friend for many years. I will always remember him driving up to my home on his huge motorcycle, music blaring & tuning tools in hand. Then his voice shouting: "Hey kid, how the hell are ya?!?!?". God needed one of the greatest keyboard men I've ever known to shake up his choir in Heaven. Give 'em hell, my friend. Darlene (aka your Sunny Girl)*

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**Darlene Burhite** - September 04, 2021 at 08:34 AM

SM

“ Sue and Kevin Mooney purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mr. Donald Leon Komorski of Hanover Park.



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**Sue and Kevin Mooney** - September 03, 2021 at 04:05 PM

PH

“ I have known veteran Komorski as my patient for many years. He was always pleasant and accompanied by his wife Anita to his appointments with me. I will always remember him for his upbeat nature. My team and myself will miss him and feel proud to have served this veteran. May his soul rest in peace. Anita may God give you comfort during these difficult times

sincerely  
Dr. Raju.

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**physician** - September 02, 2021 at 06:27 PM

CS

“ Heaven is now swinging to the sounds of the best jazz accordion music ever! Don was my early mentor when I first met him as a teenager in the mid-60's. He helped shape my musical career and awareness of the hippest tunes, chord voicings, harmonies and style that have remained with me. He treated my wife Sue and I like his adopted kids and we have remained close all these years. Don has been an inspiration to both of us and many others and he will be remembered fondly as his music in us lives on.

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**Craig S Smith** - September 02, 2021 at 02:55 PM



“ *Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Mr. Donald Leon Komorski of Hanover Park.*



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September 02, 2021 at 12:52 PM