

# Donald Lee Smith

*July 18, 1937 ~ March 31, 2021*

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Tremendous human! What a completely generous, encouraging and entertaining person. Some of the things he said I will never forget, and I'll never read Faulkner without his voice saying, "No matter where you move, you can't get away from yourself."

- Peter Rock

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Many will mis you Don. You were a friend to many. Always a scholar and a holy man you were an excellent teacher. We have been friends for 70 years. I wish you eternity with NanC and feel happiness at your reunion. RIP

- Sandra Youngblood

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So sorry to hear of DL’s passing. He was a wonderful teacher, a joy to be in class with. He was far and away the most influential teacher I had at East back in the 80s. I know he affected so many kids in a positive way and I’m grateful to have been one of them. He gave all of us the confidence to speak up.

- David Borgenicht

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We will miss Donald Lee Smith very much. We visited him as often as we could in the hospitals and care facilities and at the Jensen’s home during the last year of his life. We also flew to Ohio numerous times to help him finish moving into his new house and enjoy car rides where he showed us where he grew grew up in Akron Ohio. One of the trips was to help him search and find his lost beloved collie dog “Jack”. We also went on a cruise with DL to the New England in October 2017. We made many cherished memories together. We will miss you every day.

- Daniel Berg

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I am among the thousands of students who had the extraordinary benefit of learning from the man we all fondly called D.L. He was a gifted teacher with a great mind, a big heart, and a generous soul. As a teenager, he

motivated me to think critically about big and complex issues of our time. He coached me for four years in high school debate, always pushing me to work harder, not solely to win, but to accumulate knowledge and skills that would benefit me well beyond my high school years. I will always be grateful for the outsized impact D.L. had on me as a student, a debater, and a critical thinker. He didn't just help me be smarter -- he helped me be a better man. Rest in peace, D.L.

- David Goldsmith

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As a young man Lee (as we always called him) adopted my parents and brother and I as his "second" family. We lived in the same neighborhood where Lee grew up and he spent a lot of time with us. He was a mischievous young man and our family loved him. Mom and dad took him under their wings and tried to give him some of the guidance he needed as a young energetic fellow. He was such a prankster. We've kept in touch through the years and the last time I saw him was in 2018 when he lived in Ohio. I was there for my high school reunion and we met and had lunch together. He was still the same after all these years and will always be a dear friend. Doris (Johnson) & Tom Clatfelter

- Doris clatfelter

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I have been blessed with many excellent teachers in my life, but DL was in a class by himself. Incisive, intense, perceptive, and possessing a razor sharp and nutty sense of humor. Under his tutelage, i became a pretty damn good debater, and learned enough german to find a bathroom or get out of a bar fight, but Don’s most lasting and valuable lessons went way beyond that. His passion for knowledge, and joy in spreading it was magical. His tolerance for the insanity of teenagers was boundless. His tireless efforts to make young folks learn beyond rote instruction is something that I think upon often, three and and a half decades later. A guide, a mentor, a wizard... he made me a better man, a better student, father. I owe a lot to him. A sublime human being.

- Alex Boynton

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I remember taking English, German and Debate with DL. He was a student favorite and one of those amazing teachers who give you life lessons that stick with you 30+ years. Super grateful for his profound influence in my formative years. And beyond. Debate was (and still is) a life changing skill. Godspeed DL.

- Charlotte Oswald

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An exceptional teacher and kind person. I always struggled with English classes and particularly writing. I was nervous to take his class because I knew he expected a lot from his students. He was the first teacher to complement my writing. It was a simple paper about an athlete hero, Bo Jackson. His sincere compliments made me feel more capable and confident. I became a much improved writer and started to take pride in my work. He made a lasting difference in my life and was a wonderful teacher. Happy to hear how many lives he has touched.

- Ryan Jones

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I was so sorry to hear of DL's passing. I know he endured a lot the last few years and I hope he is now at peace with NanC. I very much admired how much they accomplished together and individually. I will be forever grateful to NanC for rescuing me from depression when my Dad died in 1969 when we were in college together. I was unaware that she passed until many weeks afterward. So I say Rest in Peace, my friends and be happy together again.

- Flora Chappuis Barker

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Donald Lee Smith (DL to his High School students) has made a lasting and positive influence on my life. My older brother Grant encouraged me to take debate from DL and as a Sophomore at East High I joined the debaters of East High and he demonstrated what it means to be a master teacher. He was remarkable in explaining logic and how to present, document and defend persuasive arguments. His energy, wit and humor made him one of my favorite teachers and his class one that I never missed. I still smile when i watch an NFL game and people are puzzled when I claim to be a double diamond award holder in the NFL. His legacy will live on in the hearts of thousands of his students. My sincere condolences to Nancy and his family. We will miss DL. - Todd Stevens

- Todd Stevens

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DL Smith had a first-rate mind and a first-rate heart. He was a generous and inspiring teacher, whose support and kindness I will miss. I now teach literature at the university level myself, and I continue to refer to DL and concepts I learned in his class as I work with my students. He was a major influence on my young life and I adored him. I looked forward to his Christmas letter and calendar each year— I will miss that. His optimism and encouragement to excellence was infectious. I will remember and think fondly of him all of my life.

- Makayla C. Steiner

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We have lost a true educator... DL was all about his students! It was amazing to hear stories of how he blessed his former student’s. One night when DL, NanC, my husband and I went to dinner, they wanted to go to the Litza's Pizza in Salt Lake, he ran into a former student from East High School and had such a good visit with he and his wife! Then, when we got ready to leave and asked for the check, the waiter said that our dinner had been paid for and the tip included by this gentleman who had been DL's student probably 30 years before.❤■ He certainly was appreciated by my youngest daughter who said she learned more about English in his class when he came to THS the last 2 terms of her Senior year, than she had the first 3 1/2 years of her high school career! I’m so happy that he’s able to be with his beloved NanC! He has missed her desperately.

- Suzie Hansen

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Lee Smith was a memorable teacher who taught us not only the lost art of diagramming sentences but also critical thinking and writing skills. He made a strong impression on our young lives 50 years ago at Revere. Rest In Peace.

- Lisa Harmon Krosse

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D.L. was one of a kind. As an educator, he had a tremendous impact on me and so many of my peers and fellow students. I will always remember and appreciate his zeal, his passion, and his love of literature. He played an important role in my own education — in pushing me, improving my writing, and being an example of a great teacher. I was so sorry to hear of his passing. God speed, D.L. Thank you.

- Troy Durham

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DL Smith holds a special place in our heart. Not only was he a loving husband to our remarkable cousin, NanC. But he was a dynamic teacher who understood how to be effective and who continued to maintain his standards even

when pressured to change. Our son we thought would be in DL's AP English class his senior year, but there had been a scheduling error. During the summer DL noticed that our son wasn't listed on the class roll. After conversing with us, DL contacted a counselor and fixed the schedule. DL taught his students to craft carefully a single paragraph. He didn't assignment long papers which allowed poor writing. Instead he had his students rewrite, rewrite, and rewrite a single paragraph. We will remember DL!

- Rebecca Willis Boren and Gary Boren

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Without question, DL looms large in my academic experience at Revere. When late to a meeting or presentation (50 years later...) my memories of DL are so entrenched, I DARE NOT cross in front of the speaker (indeed I slam my back against the wall & sidle around the room to my chair). Promptness matters. Many of you will also remember Deadly Composition Sins, which I routinely explain to undergraduates when reviewing their grad school application essays. Their eyes glaze over when I assure them their drafting error is a DCS, and that DL would not have read further... Wonderful that so many of us remember him with affection. My deepest condolences to the family. Marcia Boynton

- Marcia Boynton

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I send my sincere condolences to all the family members and close family friends. Like many, I was deeply influenced by Mr. Smith, both as an English teacher and a debate coach. I am sorry to hear of his passing.

- Nadine Frances Stafford

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Dear D.L. , Other than my mother, and Jean Hust you were the first teacher to really see, understand and nurture my potential. You did this despite my lack of attendance to your class. I remember handing in a paper and got an “A-“and the student in front of me who attended every day and who is now a doctor got a “B” and she was so upset. You saw the gold in my writing. I will never forget you going to bat for me not just with my writing. I wasn’t going to graduate High school based on my citizenship grade in my honors humanities class (despite getting an “A” in the material.) I was in your classroom taking a makeup test and the teacher who was going fail my citizenship for lack of attendance showed up to talk to you. I remember you met her at the door and asked her to step outside. I could hear you yelling at her. I knew you were talking about me and my precarious future and fighting for me. I had heard my name. You knew I could hear but the other teacher didn’t know I was in your classroom. I remember you said “why would you clip her wings when you know she can fly?” You were so insistent and I couldn’t believe it! She changed my grade based on your persuasion because you knew I knew the material but that I had a really hard time sitting in class. You are the reason I graduated when I did with the rest of my class. Your belief in me has carried me. I also thank you for being such a light and dear friend to my mother Suzan Lake. Thank you for your pure heart, your support, and mostly for believing in me when I didn’t believe in myself. Much love to you and we’ll see you on the days at sea in the sky. Thank you. - Margaret Lake

- Margaret Lake

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My heart is touched by the many thoughtful and fond remembrances of a man that was such a positive force for good in so many lives. I was a brand new student over 50 years ago at Revere High School, having just moved from California, when I entered his classroom. He immediately noticed my "western United States" accent, which I didn't even know there was such a thing. He made me feel comfortable and I knew that even though he was very tough, he was always fair. Mr. Smith was a fabulous teacher and set a very high standard for his students to follow. My condolences to his family - you have every right to know that he was one of the best teachers ever.

- Margaret Ferguson Finlay

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I was in debate with DL from fall of 1974 until spring of 1977. DL was one of two debate teachers I had during those years, and both had a huge impact on me. DL took a smartass kid and molded me to an award winning debater. I would never have achieved these goals without his warmth, knowledge, support, and wisdom. That experience steered me into a 35 year legal career and for that alone, I owe DL a great debt. But beyond that, his love and guidance made him truly unique. I am privileged to have known him at such a pivotal time in my life!

- Marc Stenchever

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Thursday Evening 24 February 2022 As we prepare to celebrate my brother's birthday - I am reminded of the powerful positive impact that Mr. Smith had on the life of my brother - a Revere High School graduate -who embraced the art of debate! And in a yearbook photo - 1967 - there was the debate team - young women and young men - with their coach -developing their skills as great communicators! Thank you, Mr. Smith

- David McCann