

Hiawatha , KS

Donald Lee Rowan, 76, of Hiawatha, died April 7, 2016 at his home. Don was born Feb. 25, 1940 in his home near Troy to John and Doris (Trant) Rowan, the second of four siblings. Don attended Hiawatha High School.

From 1957-1959, Don served in the Army National Guard in Hiawatha. This led to his enlisting in the Air Force in 1959. From 1959-1963, Don was an aircraft mechanic based out of Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, Texas. He had many stories about working on B47 aircrafts.

Back in Hiawatha, after an honorable discharge, Don began working at Flair-Fold, where he eventually met his second wife, Karen Plankinton. They were married Aug. 14, 1975. After working at Flair-Fold over 25 years, the factory closed, and he took a job as a custodian at Hiawatha High School. Even after his retirement, he is still remembered at HHS as "Papa Smurf."

Don was preceded in death by his parents, Sheila Rowan, his daughter from his first marriage; Anthony McFeeters, his grandson; and his sister, Phyllis Shaw. He is survived by his wife Karen; a sister, Twilla (Larry) Blanton; a brother, Allen Rowan; a son from his first marriage, Dan Rowan; two daughters, Jennifer (Rusty) Joslin, and Kristene (Stanley) Urbina; six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Don was proud to have his body donated to research to help future generations of cancer patients. An informal come-and-go fathering will be held at Karen's home, 1006 Kickapoo, in Hiawatha. She welcomes all friends and family to stop by and share memories anytime on Saturday, April 16.