



Leslie Marvin Benson "Les"

August 23, 1929 - August 5, 2021

Leslie (Les) Marvin Benson, born in Parker, South Dakota, on August 23, 1929, went to be with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on August 5, 2021 0625 AM in Haymarket, Virginia. He was 91.

He was preceded in death by his four siblings, Leland, Norma Peterson, DeWayne, and Lester; his daughters, Debbie Jechorek and LeAnn Brickey; Debbie's husband Corky; and his precious puppies, Tina and Mitzie.

Growing up in rural South Dakota during the Great Depression, Les spent his time playing in the "big" barn and the county courthouse where his grandfather was the caretaker; jumping trains to explore the world beyond Parker; and working/living with distant relatives as a teenager when his father, a cream station laborer turned Greyhound bus mechanic, moved to Saint Paul, Minnesota. It was in this period of his life that Les became a Christian, recalling, "that was the best thing that ever happened to me. I would have ruined the city." He certainly would have.

Les joined the U.S. Army Air Corps on November 6, 1947, after telling his mother that his enlistment papers were railroad union papers. After basic training in Illinois, Les was proud to support the Berlin Airlift. He was then accepted to the United States Military Academy but was unable to attend after he contracted Valley Fever while stationed in Arizona. At his next duty station, a young Doris Lee (Virginia) Jones caught his eye at church one evening (as he would always recount, "Wowie-wow-wow!"). They were married on December 9, 1949.

Les proudly served 20 years in the armed forces beginning his career in administration and retiring as a master sergeant working in the Precision Measurement Laboratory as an electronic technician. During his time-of-service he was stationed at 17 different duty stations, including Oklahoma (where he met Virginia and later their daughter Debbie was born), Greenland (where he lost his hair), and Japan (where he and Virginia adopted their daughter LeAnn). Les retired from the U.S. Air Force on November 30, 1967.

Following his retirement from the Air Force, Les and Virginia moved to Saint Paul where he started a television repair shop, and then went to work for an electronics company. In a move to Dallas, he starting working for E-Systems and was later assigned to Athens, Greece, and Mildenhall, England, as an electronic technician for RC-135 reconnaissance aircraft.

After retiring from the workforce for good, Les and Virginia remained on the go. Intrepid travelers, together they saw the world. Whether it was jet-setting across the globe, touring the United States in one of their recreational vehicles, or moving again (and again...and again...) they were a study in perpetual motion. It was only after they got their puppies that they “slowed down” – they never actually slowed down, they merely refrained from most air travel. They continued to travel with their pups throughout the U.S., covering many thousands of miles and wearing out their atlas. It was only in their most advanced years that they ever truly settled down – that was largely because they outlived their friends who they would travel to see rather than yielding their indomitable get-up-and-go spirit.

Les enjoyed many hobbies outside of traveling. He and Virginia loved to play games, and taught all their friends and family how to play with them. Les enjoyed learning new languages and would repeat phrases he picked-up on his travels throughout his life. He loved motorcycles and always liked to take his Harley out for a ride (especially if that ride took him by a Dairy Queen). Les had a penchant for explosions, as was evidenced by his annual fireworks display for Debbie’s birthdaythe Fourth of July. He would run across the border to “smuggle” his fireworks into Minnesota from Wisconsin. There was also that time he bought a whole roll of firecrackers just because...he was too deaf to hear what sounded like the sustained barrage of enemy fire that echoed off the mountains that day.

His coin collection is something of legend – he was always eager to show the many binders of coins and paper money off to anyone who was willing to spare three hours of their life. He had a story for every addition to his collection. In fact, he and Virginia have stories for almost any occasion...there was that time he had to poop in China, the time he traded a Soviet soldier for their ushanka, or the time he drove to Louisa May Alcott’s home in Concord, New Hampshire, only to be told it is in Concord, Massachusetts, just to name a few. He also told a cool story about a covert mission he was involved in while living in Athens but no one knows if it was true or just a story he read in a John Grisham novel (or was that Reader’s Digest?). In Les’ stories barns were bigger, dark and stormy nights were darker and stormier, and Helen Krueger always remained his sweetheart.

Les was certainly a rascal. Ever the jokester, he was a child at heart and always had a

gleam of mischief in his eye. He had a big smile and an even bigger laugh, and he greeted everyone with a, "What'll you say, kid?" while resting his hand on your shoulder or jostling you in one of his signature side hugs. Les loved people and loved to serve them. He was always eager to help anyone who needed it. Always smiling, upbeat and happy, Les was accepting of everyone and was quick to offer an encouraging word.

He was a mountain of a man with an incredible faith, and was regularly called upon to serve as an elder in his local church. It takes a strong man to live such an incredible life, especially after experiencing the loss of both of his daughters and his dear little puppies. Les was a workhorse, and relished putting in a good day's work. His industriousness and financial acumen allowed Les to provide a comfortable life for Virginia and the girls, and allowed them to have the adventures that they did. He was a family-man through and through, and a proud patriot of the United States of America.

Les is survived by his beloved wife of nearly 72 years, Virginia Benson; his grandson Brian Jechorek and his four children, Tyler, Trevor, Alexis and Riley; his son-in-law Joe (Michelle) Brickey; his granddaughter Jill (Bryant) Hottel and her daughter, Adelaide; and his grandson Stephen Brickey and his children, Hunter and Evelyn.

Memorial services will be at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday August 10, 2021, at The King's Chapel 12925 Braddock Rd, Clifton, VA 20124 where Pastor Bill Jeschke will officiate. Burial will follow at the Clifton Cemetery 12829-12855 Yates Ford Rd, Clifton, VA 20124. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service starting at 2:30 PM til 3:30 PM

In lieu of flowers, Virginia requests that donations be made to the Tunnel to Towers Foundation (<https://t2t.org/>) in honor of Les. Domo arigato gozaimasu.

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG **10**. 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM (est)

The King's Chapel
12925 Braddock Rd
Clifton, VA 202124
<http://thekingschapel.org/>

Funeral Service

AUG **10**. 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM (est)

The King's Chapel
12925 Braddock Rd
Clifton, VA 202124
<http://thekingschapel.org/>

Graveside Service

AUG **10**. 5:00 PM - 5:30 PM (est)

Clifton Cemetery
12829-12855 Yates Ford Rd.
Clifton, VA 20124

Tribute Wall

CC

“ *Les, and Virginia, were our sponsors when we arrived in Greece in 1979, and over the years we spent many happy times together. Les always made us laugh, and he and my husband Bob had some great adventures, like zooming away from the base police one day on Les' motorcycle. :-)* We will miss him very much. RIP Les. We send love and support to the family. May his memory be a blessing.



Chris Coleman - August 15, 2021 at 05:58 PM

IP

“ *Inge Petersdorff lit a candle in memory of Leslie Marvin Benson "Les"*



Inge Petersdorff - August 10, 2021 at 03:18 PM