



Milton Leon Burch

September 28, 1941 - March 20, 2020

M. Leon Burch, 78 of Vancouver, Washington, was born on September 28, 1941 in McPherson, KS and died March 20, 2020. After a battle with Leukemia, Leon was at peace and surrounded by his family. Leon spent most of his life in Central Kansas before relocating to Vancouver, WA to be near his children and grandchildren. The son of Milton Emerson Burch and Eula (Anderson) Burch, he was raised in Windom, Kansas and graduated from Windom High School. Following graduation, he attended Bethany College where he met the love of his life and wife, Judy (Peterson) Burch, and graduated in 1964. Leon moved to Beloit, Kansas in 1964 where he became a high school teacher of business, head football coach, and an assistant coach of basketball and track. Leon married Judith Kay Peterson on December 19th, 1965 in Kansas City, Missouri. In 1969 Leon and Judy moved to Lindsborg, Kansas where he was employed as Admissions Councilor at Bethany College and assistant football coach. He became Bethany College Dean of Admissions in 1971 and served in that position until 1984 when he was selected as Director of Development at Bethany College. In 1986, Leon became the Director of Development and Personnel at Bethany Home until his retirement in 2003. Despite his retirement, Leon kept working - coaching track at Smoky Valley H.S. and mowing lawns, doing both alongside his son. He took over his son's lawn mowing business in 2005 and continued to do small jobs, many of them without pay, to simply serve others. In 2011, Leon and Judy moved to Vancouver, Washington to be closer to their children and

grandchildren. Of course, Leon kept "working", mowing yards and doing odd jobs (typically yardwork) for people in their neighborhood until his leukemia diagnosis in 2018. Throughout his life, Leon Burch has made a profound impact and been such an influential presence in the lives of so many. He had great pleasure in doing outdoor projects and yardwork - taking pride in a hard workday with the family in Vancouver, WA. He loved sports and received great joy watching his grandkids compete. He thrived off staying connected with loved ones, colleagues, past students, and athletes. He will be remembered for his dedication to all things Bethany, compassion for people, service to others, and the lasting impression he's made in his community. Leon is survived by his wife, Judy of 54 years, daughter Susan (Jared) Smith of Vancouver, WA, son Darren (Margaret) Burch of Portland, OR, grandchildren Meilynn and Remington Smith, his brother Merlin (Sharon) Burch of Oklahoma City, OK, and numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and his sister Yvonne Bennett. In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Bethany College, Bethany Church, Bethany Home, or Messiah Lutheran Church in Vancouver, WA.

Due to the current risks and restrictions of travel, including large gatherings, a memorial service in both Vancouver and Lindsborg will be announced at a later date.

Tribute Wall

DA

“ Judy, Susan, Darren and family Please accept my deepest sympathy on the passing of a wonderful husband, father, grandfather and great friend to so many. Upon graduating from Bethany in 1976 I had the opportunity to work in Admissions alongside Leon, J.H. and Bryce. Little did I realize what an impact those two years would have on my life, both personally and professionally. Even though my time in Admissions was brief Leon became a lifetime friend and mentor to me. Leon was an incredible leader and made such a positive impact on every life he touched. Faith, Family and Friendships were what drove him to be the incredible man he was. My life was certainly enriched by him and I will always cherish the friendship we shared. My thoughts and prayers have been with you and will continue in the days ahead. Blessings, Doug Anderson

Doug Anderson - April 05, 2020 at 12:00 AM