



LC Neel

July 28, 1925 - July 17, 2021

LC Neel was born at home on the family farm in Peggs, Oklahoma on July 28, 1925. He was the seventh child born to B.C. and Willora (Bee) Neel, and she prophetically declared him to be her lucky child. He passed peacefully into the presence of our Lord on Saturday, July 17, 2021, 11 days before his 96th birthday and six years longer than any of his siblings. Waiting impatiently was his wife of 70 years, Ellen (McFarland), who died in 2013. Together, they embodied the perfect American Dream. They met in high school where the charismatic LC, class King all four years of high school, won over the top-of-her-class Ellen. They lived several miles apart and LC would ride his bike, which had only one pedal, across the flint rock roads, to court Ellen. That determination defined his life. They eloped to Arkansas on August 23, before Ellen's senior year, with only \$24 between them, most of it hers, and were wed by a pajama clad justice of the peace. When they returned, they each went back to their large families, neither of which had realized they were gone. Willora attempted to get the marriage annulled until Ellen came to live with them and she realized what a blessing Ellen was to her son. LC went through basic training at Fort Sill. He was honorably discharged due to high school basketball knee injuries. Shortly after Ellen graduated, they hitched a ride in the back of a friend's truck to California where LC found work as an American Airlines mechanic and Ellen worked at Woolworths. Four dollars a week went into layaway for her wedding rings. They returned to Oklahoma and in addition to his job at American Airlines, LC began roofing houses in the evenings. He soon realized he could do more and begin building houses. His oldest brother Jay, a master carpenter, worked with him. Their first daughter, Teresa Suzanne, was born in February 1949 and a second daughter, Patricia Ellen, was born 22 months later. His dream of having a baseball team ended with the birth of a third daughter, Marquitta, in 1954. Jay took LC and Ellen to Parkland Baptist Church where LC was baptized, beginning his life as a follower of Christ. LC expanded his building business using Ellen's house designs and decorating skills. They built houses in Tulsa, Collinsville, Claremore and Broken Arrow. While living in Collinsville, the girls thought it was normal to go with him to the back pasture and bring back squirrels for Ellen to fry for dinner and that "we-uns" was perfectly acceptable grammar. LC considered several other career options. He toyed with owning an Otasco store. In Collinsville, the family attended the First Baptist Church for every

service, every week. One Sunday the pastor was ill, so deacon LC adlibbed a sermon. He had more people answer the altar call than the regular preacher had ever had so he looked at becoming a minister but Ellen intervened. They moved back to Tulsa and continued building houses. At some point, they read a book which advised buying land as an investment. They decided Tulsa was going to grow south so they bought all the farm land they could around 111 St. South and Memorial, then a two lane road, and developed their first addition, Southwood. They were told Tulsa would never grow south of 61st and Bixby schools would never be north of the river. But they continued to buy and develop land and their investment paid off. Working together, they became successful home builders, developers and realtors. The Neel's became active in Bixby politics, and LC was elected to the Bixby city council and ultimately became Mayor, propelling the growth of that community. So if you are stuck in traffic on Memorial, you can thank LC.

LC began concentrating on land development in the mid seventies but continued to build homes for many years. He invested in his first bank in the 1970's and was later the owner of First State Bank of Porter and American Bank in Baxter Springs. LC was a proud supporter of the FFA, recalling that Mr. Skelly had financed the Locust Grove chapter's participation in the Tulsa State Fair, putting them up in the Mayo Hotel. He had never seen a tall building, indoor plumbing or an elevator and he and his friends stayed up all night just riding up and down and flushing. He largely attributed his motivation for success to this chapter of his life-and marrying Ellen. He was an active supporter of the Junior Livestock Auction for more than half his life, repeatedly purchasing Grand Champions. In 2016, he was honored as the first recipient of the Legacy Award by the Ringmasters, of which he was a founding member in the 1970's. In addition to showing cattle and acting as a livestock judge, he enjoyed keeping a small herd of cattle at his home and/or on farms and ranches he owned over the years. He was particularly proud of purchasing 5000 acres that had 5 miles of Spring Creek running through it. He was known to buy truckloads of watermelon to dump in the cold creek to have as a handy snack. LC was an accomplished instrument rated pilot and owned several planes over his lifetime and had landing strips in fields close to his homes and a hanger and landing strip near Spring Creek. He flew with Jim Inhof and Red Stevenson and had lots of stories to tell with his infectious laugh. National and state law enforcement agencies used his Spring Creek property to set up base operations after the Girl Scout murders. It was a comical sight to see him flying with his wing man, his devoted German Shepard, Happy, as co-pilot. He made surprise fly ins to his daughters in college to be sure they were not drinking alcohol. He never drank and demanded the same of his daughters. Once Ellen caught one daughter coming home from a wedding after having her first champagne. She didn't snitch-just played the Old Rugged Cross on the piano. LC was a fearless pilot, once flying through a raging thunderstorm and landing at a closed-for-weather Will Rogers airport in Oklahoma City to get Patricia to the Capital on time to be sworn in as a lawyer. In addition

to flying, he loved to travel in his motor home. He loved the west and national parks. He and Ellen took the 3 girls to Yellowstone and had rented a cabin. It was then they learned the one thing that their fearless father feared-bears. He was certain they smelled some good Cherokee meat. He placed heavy furniture in front of the door but when he heard a noise in the night that he was sure was a bear, he packed up the family and drove out as fast as he could. The Neel's actively supported many charities, including donating the land for a new library in Locust Grove and land for several area parks. They also campaigned and contributed time, money and prime locations for campaign signs in support of Democratic candidates and causes. He provided finances to David Boren's campaign for governor when it was on the ropes and flew David Hall all over the state. And he was a Clinton man through and through, taking the entire family to DC for the inauguration. He also wholly supported Obama. LC was known to call his daughters on election days, strongly advocating for them to "Punch the Rooster!" He loved good food, particularly Celebrity Club lobster and fresh fruit. It was somehow fitting that he died during the Porter Peach Festival he had supported for many years by buying and eating the award winning bushel of peaches. Because college had not been financially an option for them, they stressed the importance of education to their daughters. Teresa obtained a Masters in Education, Patricia became the first, and still only, Neel lawyer, and Marquitta obtained a degree from TU. They generously financed grandchildren Ben Jackson (OU) Kelly Norvell (OSU) and Emily Jackson Reed's (Arizona) college education. They were able to attend twin grand daughters Lara and Lisa Neel's graduations from Amherst College and Yale University where the speakers were Hillary Clinton and President George W. Bush. It was a long way from Locust Grove. In addition to his three daughters and five grandchildren, LC is survived by sons in law J Schaad Titus and Randy Jackson, step granddaughter Gina Titus Manassero, great grandchildren Olivia and Nicholas Moody and Alexander Wiesman of Houston, Elisbeth Lara Neel-Lewis of Rockville Md., and Harper and McKenzie Manassero of Austin and numerous other relatives in the extended Neel and McFarland families. He was predeceased in death by adopted family member Judge James O. Ellison, and special friends Frank Sanders and Mike Samara. Ellen's handsome Cherokee fell short of his goal to reach 100 but he gave it his best, as he did all through the amazing life that started in horse and buggy days and ended with the realization of private space travel. He always expected things to work out, never worried or looked back with regret. He had his flaws, one being a temper which fortunately mellowed with age. He had a beautiful singing voice and in his last years, he was known to sing "San Antonio Rose" to all nurses, doctors and waiting rooms. His dementia led him to declare he had made his money as the lead singer at Cain's for Bob Wills, at first stating he had done that for 20 years, then 50 years and most recently, 70 years. There was a grain of truth in that he was lead singer on the radio with his high school band, The Ramblers, and was advised by the superintendent to go to Nashville. Again, Ellen intervened. Special thanks

to Dr. Gerard McNulty, Dr. Richard Slagle, Dr. Christy Wilson, Dr. Johnathan Ladet, and their staffs for helping him toward his goal to live as long and as well as possible. Also to his caretakers who allowed him to stay in his home as he wished: Betty Hall, Destiny Hall, Melissa Hall, Jo Boatright, Linda Dundee, Tremetra Martin, Takneshia Norris Easley, Debbie Higgins, Karen Welch and Saint Francis Hospice. His last view was his favorite, overlooking Leonard Mountain and the bend in the Arkansas River with a deer eating pears off the tree outside his bedroom. Otsaliheliga. We are grateful. LC did not like black clothing so the family asks that you wear bright colors to honor him. Visitation hosted by Patricia Neel Titus, Schaad Titus and Teresa Norvell will be at Floral Haven in Broken Arrow from 1pm-5pm on Sunday, July 25. Internment and Graveside Service hosted by Marquitta Jackson will be Monday, July 26 at Hogan Cemetery at 3 pm. Memorial Service hosted by Schaad and Patricia Neel Titus and Teresa Norvell will be held at First Presbyterian Church 709 S. Boston Ave. at 1 pm on Friday, July 30 with reception following at the Titus home. If not vaccinated, please wear a mask and practice social distancing in the sanctuary. In lieu of flowers, please donate to the charities which impacted our family: Tulsa State Fair Ringmasters, FFA, Alzheimer's, March of Dimes, First Presbyterian Church or the charity of your choice.

Visitation will be held on Sunday, July 25 from 1 pm - 5 pm at Floral Haven Funeral Home. Graveside services will take place at 3 pm on Monday, July 26 at Hogan Cemetery South in Locust Grove, Oklahoma.

Memorial Services will be at 1 pm on Friday, July 30 at First Presbyterian Church - 709 S Boston Ave, Tulsa, OK 74119

Cemetery

Events

Hogan Cemetery

JUL **Visitation** 01:00PM - 05:00PM

25

Locust Grove, OK,

Floral Haven Funeral Home
6500 S. 129th E. Ave., Broken Arrow, OK, US, 74012

JUL **Graveside** 03:00PM

26

Hogan Cemetery
Locust Grove, OK, US

JUL **Memorial Celebration** 01:00PM

30

First Presbyterian Church
709 S Boston Ave, Tulsa, OK, US, 74119-1629

Comments



“ I met LC in 1983 when I was hired as secretary to the director of the fairgrounds/Expo Square and learned, to my dismay, that I would be coordinating the activities of a group of business professionals known as the Ringmasters, since I knew very little about animal husbandry. During preparations for my first Junior Livestock Auction, and over the ensuing 18 years, LC and a couple of his buddies, Frank Sanders and Everett Salley, taught me the difference between bulls and steers, hogs and barrows, sheep and wethers, and many other aspects of the livestock industry. All three were gentlemen of the highest caliber and dear to my heart. My loving condolences to Teresa, Patricia and Marquitta and their families on their loss.

Jean Smith

Jean Smith - July 24 at 05:15 PM



“ Will miss LC always happy enjoyed help caring for him in his lasts days,



Betty Hall - July 23 at 11:59 PM



“ I was not only raised by this man and his wife, but I also worked with him and mother for many many years. My office was open to where he liked to sit with his feet up on the desk leaned back talking on the phone. Our office at election time was the visit from those running for office for an endorsement and some help with the campaign. Many lunches out with whoever happened to be at the office at lunchtime. I called it "Neel holding court."

Building and selling new homes created many lifelong friends. The long relationships with so many contractors that helped create the nice homes they were known for, I thank all of you. We certainly had some of the best craftsmen. Dad believed your word was your bond. Many large deals were just from a handshake. If you are reading this, I hope you smile when you thing of him and mother.

Marquitta Neel Jackson - July 23 at 05:16 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of LC Neel.



July 22 at 02:15 PM



“ I am praying for the LC Neel family and always liked LC and his wife Ellen. I bought a home from LC in Southwood extended in 1972 and am still living there now. One thing that i recall was when he finished building the home across the street from me, he had several months delay in getting it to sell. Most of the houses in our neighborhood would sell before he finished them. His fix was to raise the price some and sure enough, it sold immediately. Many years later their grand daughter bought that home and lived there for a while. They were good neighbors too. Mr. and Mrs. Neel lived for a while South of 111th street between Memorial and Mingo and I visited them a time or two. Always friendly, helpful and made you feel welcome. Condolences to all the family. Douglas Welch and wished my wife were here to wish you well.

Doug Welch - July 21 at 10:52 PM



“ So good to hear from an original owner in southwood, you were all special to mom and dad.

Marquitta Neel Jackson - July 23 at 04:59 PM



“ i am truly sorry we have lost such a great friend and wonderful gentleman. he will never be gone in our memory,,,love to the family...billy patrker family

billy parker - July 21 at 12:03 PM



“ It was great to see you when I had him at Hard Rock for dinner several years ago. I could hardly go anywhere without running into someone he knew. Thank you for your kind words.

Marquitta Neel Jackson - July 23 at 05:02 PM



“ Oh my gosh, I am Bert Neel's granddaughter, I am sorry. I hope he died peaceful. I hope his girls are okay. L.C. and Ellen were so nice to me. I love that I have those pictures to remember your family. love you all, Marsha

Marsha Powers - August 01 at 03:24 PM



“ LC was a great supporter of the Tulsa State Fair in the years I served as County Commissioner and beyond. He was an outstanding community citizen.

Terry Young - July 21 at 08:09 AM