



## Lewis LeRoy Henderson

May 5, 1933 - April 12, 2020

Lewis LeRoy Henderson

May 5, 1933 – April 12, 2020

Lewis was born the youngest son of four children to Ralph Watson and Clara Marie (Dryer) Henderson just outside Galt, Missouri. He had two older brothers, Keith and Leonard and one sister, Alice. According to the story told, there had been a late spring sleet & snow storm that made the country dirt roads impassible by vehicle, causing Lewis to be born at home, the doctor arriving on horseback.

The Henderson family were share-croppers, working various farms over the years until he was around 12 years old when, after a bad case of pneumonia and suffering asthma, Lewis' father was forced to give up farming. When the family moved to town (Trenton, MO), his father, Ralph, took laborer work, while his mother, Clara, worked in restaurants, and Lewis became very popular with the school kids because he had been allowed to bring his pony, Queen, with them and was able to take the "city kids" on pony rides around town.

During Junior High, while his mother was determined to turn him into a musician with first piano lessons (on an old pump organ), then guitar lessons (with a right-handed guitar for left-handed Lewis to use) and, last but not least, clarinet lessons which actually advanced further than any of the other attempts. Sports were where his interest lay. Being too small for football and not tall enough for basketball, he took up baseball, playing first base for the town team. According to Lewis, the "North-End Gang" was quite successful, playing other small town teams in the area.

During his high school years, Lewis spent his summers in South Dakota where his oldest brother, Keith, had a farm. The summer between his junior and senior years, while he was at Keith's, his parents moved from Trenton to Excelsior Springs, but Lewis opted to stay in Trenton to finish high school, living in a rooming house and working at the A&P grocery store. After high school he went back to South Dakota and farmed with his brother for

another year and a half, earning room and board and \$600 for 18 months work.

Drafted into the Army with the expectation of going to Korea, Lewis went to Fort Sill, Oklahoma for basic training. However, instead of being sent with the majority of his training company to Korea, Lewis and five others were sent to Germany to fill in the occupation force from WWII. Germany turned out to be more than just an eye-opener for the Missouri farm boy. His time there and the work he did also had him realizing that there were other things in life than plowing corn and that he wanted to go to school and do something different.

Returning to Missouri, Lewis got his job back with A&P Grocery, purchased a 1955 Bel Aire Chevrolet and, getting support from his GI bill from his service to pay tuition, began taking classes at Kansas City Business College. It was there that he met Wanda Smith and knew she was the one. After a short time dating, they became engaged, graduated school, began working and on December 31, 1956 began a marriage that lasted almost 61 years.

While his first job out of school was with Continental Oil Company (CONOCO), it was ultimately IBM where Lewis began his 30 year career, moving his family from Kansas City, MO to Madison, NJ (so he could commute 1 hr 20 mins twice a day to the office in NYC, NY) to Irving, TX (so he could open a new division in Dallas) to Edina, MN (where he became Regional Manager, traveling 4 days out of 5 each week) back to Irving, TX (but a different division in Dallas) and then ultimately to Springfield, MO (making the commute from Branson where he and Wanda built their home) before retiring.

Prior to leaving Kansas City, Lewis and Wanda welcomed the birth of their daughter, Lucinda Rose. Then, after being informed by doctors that there would be no more children, the young couple decided to apply and went through the process of adoption while living in New Jersey. After 10 months, they were called for a “preliminary interview” which, for them was a formality. Taking all the necessary items with them, Lewis and Wanda resolved that the baby boy brought to them was a Henderson before he was even born. As Lewis said, “The adoption agency only facilitated the transaction. God arranged all the details.” Their family of four was complete.

Over the years, there were many projects that kept Lewis occupied, usually something for their home – building a concrete and stone patio, building and maintaining a pool, creating a retaining wall. He was also an active member in the various churches they attended, serving as Deacon, serving as Training Union Director, serving as Sunday School teacher. While living in Minnesota, he and Wanda, along with another couple, felt the call to begin a

mission church which held it's initial gatherings in the lower level of their home. Working for the Lord gave Lewis a sense of purpose and his great joy was in seeing both of his children accepting Christ and being baptized.

After his retirement from IBM, Lewis and Wanda spent many years enjoying the Ozarks – the spring beauty, the summers on the lake, the fall colors, the crisp winters – attending various music shows, gathering with friends, hosting guests traveling through the area, being a part of a multitude of church activities ... not to mention enjoying visits to and from Cindy and Jim and their granddaughters ... before adding one more member to their family in the form of KeKe Rose, a small Maltipoo who was originally supposed to be just for Wanda but soon captured Lewis' heart as well.

The last few years had been difficult for Lewis and while he tried to roll with each life change as it came, each one took a toll on his heart and spirit. Never truly recovering from losing Wanda to a stroke in October 2017, Lewis spent his time quietly ... only really happy when in the presence of both of his children ... until his beautiful bride, hand in hand with their Savior came on Easter Sunday morning and called him home. Faith, Family and Home ... that was where Lewis' heart always belonged.

A few years ago, Lewis wrote out a bit of his story as he recalled it. He wrote it in the form of a letter to Cindy and Jim and ended it with these words:

“From my perspective, I have been the most blessed. A country boy, really not expecting much, to marrying an incredible woman and having two incredible kids, having lived in multiple states and traveling all over this great country, is beyond my fondest dream. Totally different from plowing corn. A life that is beyond the imagination of your grandparents on either side of the family. There are “side-stories” that occurred along the way that, in some respects are hilarious, and others with sadness, which, in the end is called “that’s life”. My greatest accomplishment in life is wrapped up in our family – Mom, Dad, Cindy & Jim”

Lewis is survived by his daughter Cindy, his son Jim, his three granddaughters – Jordan, Eden & Hannah, his great-grandchildren Jude & Julia, and several nieces and nephews.

There will be a Celebration of Lewis' Life in the form of a memorial service on Friday, June 26, 2020 at 3:00pm at Floral Haven Funeral Home, in the Rose Chapel, in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. The celebration will continue with a gathering of his family and friends at Floral Haven's Family Center from 4:00 to 6:00pm.

All who loved Lewis are invited to attend.



# Cemetery

---

# Events

---

## Floral Haven Cemetery

6420 S. 129th E. Ave.  
Broken Arrow, OK,  
74012

**JUN 26** **Celebration of Life Memorial Service** 03:00PM

---

Rose Chapel

Floral Haven Funeral Home 6500, Broken Arrow, OK, US,  
74012

# Comments

---



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Lewis LeRoy Henderson.



June 24 at 02:27 PM

---



“ Lewis was one of the strongest Christians I've had the pleasure to know. He was a super father and husband. I've been friends with Lewis and Wanda since the late 70's. Lewis and Wanda raised 2 wonderfully talented kiddos. Lewis was so smart and creative.... successful in work and life. I love him and his family. God bless Cindy and Jim.

Love Judy & Taylor



**Judy Springfield** - June 23 at 12:45 PM