



## Lester Lee Whittle

December 17, 1930 - September 3, 2022

Dear Dad,

September 3rd, 2022 is your day, a blessed return to our heavenly Father.

You were an amazing man to many. As founder of the Benton County Veterans

Memorial, you realized there was nothing in Benton County to honor our veterans.

So, you and mom set your wheels-a-turn'n; and designed what became an icon in Corvallis...Because of you the community has gone on to honor

our veterans living and passed dignity.

We're proud to say you truly deserved the honor bestowed upon you as, Senior

First Citizen, for your dedication to our veterans.

You were a visionary. Not only did you found the Memorial, but you created the

first-ever Honor Guard in Corvallis, which recognized and honored our veterans

passed. As an educator you worked in partnership with local schools to educate

students about the importance of "remembering" what Memorial and Veterans Days

are about. You will always be remembered when you guided granddaughter, Jennifer Kreft-Yarrow to put on the first-ever Veterans Day program at Cheldelin Middle School, years later to present, “The Colors” at its Veterans Day programs.

You had a great rapport with your students at Corvallis High, teaching Vocational and Distributive Education and Personal Finance, for over 25 years. Many of your students still drop you cards today, saying how much they appreciated your class, your kindness and wisdom.

As a businessman you managed Acme Shoe Store, which is now 5-Star Sports. It was through your business wisdom that you built up a strong respect throughout our community, still felt strongly today. You were well-known by parents for your

compassion in making sure their children had shoes that fit properly. Having a daughter, Becki, born with club feet, you saw firsthand the importance of proper care of children’s feet. You, then and today are regarded with great respect.

You worked hard to put food on the table and a roof over our heads while still attending OSU. (We kids can still hear you and mom endlessly typing your college papers long into the night.) You and daughter, Becki both graduated in 1972,

she

from Corvallis High and you from OSU with an MEd. She was so proud to share

that day with you. You instilled in us the value of hard work and perseverance. And thanks, to you, we went on to fulfilling careers.

As kids we remember our countless fishing trips on the Alsea River, attempting

to catch that prize-a steelhead-only to return empty handed. Still it didn't matter

because the best part was returning to the old pick up for a PBJ, hot cocoa, and

spending time with our dad.

The other day we found the huntin' gloves you used to wear when we went pheasant hunting, and recalled how if our hands got cold, you'd have us slip them on. (Those oversized, red fuzz and leather gloves fit perfectly today.)

Our sister, BethAnn, passed away last year, but we know she would "thank you"

endlessly for taking amazing care of her. She was born with a life-threatening birth defect, with your encouragement she on to become a doctor.

John says, "You instilled in us the meaning of a firm hand shake, and your word

stood on that handshake, while looking the other in the eyes. No written contracts

would overcome your word and that handshake.

You had a passion for baseball, playing shortstop, second base, and left field. This love for “the game” was passed onto your children and grandchildren.

Today,

Grandson Alex can knock a ball out of the yard. “Batter up!”

Your C.B. nickname was “Jelly Bean,” which later spilled over to when we had a

boo-boo and you would give us jellybeans to cure all. This healing tradition has

carried over to our own children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

As a veteran of the United States Navy, you served our country during the Korean

Conflict. You were stationed in Kwajalein and were part of a radiation study.

You served with valor and honor and received an honorable discharge.

You always shared with us, “I would serve our country again.”

October 2016, South Willamette Valley Honor Flight was a highlight for you.

You

were able to visit the Korean Conflict Memorial in your honor.

As a young man you met our mom, Anita Self, in Sedalia, Missouri. Mom wrote about

about what a hard worker you were at 16. You worked as a fry cook and had a newspaper route to earn money to take care of your mom, our Grammy Whittle.

You and mom met on a blind date and became high school sweet hearts. You won

## Les Whittle Obit

Mom over with a corsage of carnations, which you continued to give her on all special holidays until she passed in 2001.

Dad, our family would be remiss if we didn't say that with your passing, we are heart sick. We have all turned to you for your wisdom, integrity, guidance, love, and your undying patriotism to our country. You embraced your family with endless love.

Wife: Anita Self-Whittle (deceased)

Children: Becki Whittle-Goslow and (Bill Goslow, deceased), BethAnn Cooley, (deceased) and husband Len, John Whittle and wife, Denise

Grandchildren: Tim, Matt, Chris Cooley, Jennifer Kreft-Yarrow, (and Scott Yarrow,)

Brian Kreft (and Ediyana Kreft), and James (and Chandra) Whittle

Great grandchildren: Logan & Sean Cooley, Alex Cooley, Alex Yarrow and Emery Kreft

Dad you were loved by your family and community. You have had a huge impact and made a difference in the lives of many. We love you Dad, Becki and John

A military memorial service will be held at McHenry Funeral Home. September 15, at 8:30 A.M. Followed by a private family service at Willamette National Cemetery in Portland at 12:30 P.M.

The family asks that you support a veteran through making a donation to: South Willamette Valley Honor Flight, 2217 40th Ave. S.E. Albany, Oregon 97322



# Previous Events

## Memorial Gathering

SEP **15**. 8:30 AM - 9:00 AM (PT)

McHenry Funeral Home  
206 NW 5th St.  
Corvallis, OR

## Graveside Service

SEP **15**. 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM (PT)

Willamette National Cemetery  
11800 SE Mt. Scott Blvd  
Portland, OR 97086

# Tribute Wall

“ Once again totally dedicated to the memory of an American, a teacher,  
a father, a fisherman, a veteran, a visionary, a leader, and our gift.

*With Love In Memory of Lester Whittle*

*Omaha Memorial (Unfinished...Forever!)*

*We all watched Peyton Manning , advancing on the land  
We heard him barking O-ma-ha, not the city but the sand  
An homage to souls of valor, ridding Normandy of scourge  
Did you see them die on Omaha, in the nascent Nazis purge*

*I saw ten steps on Omaha, taken oh so few  
With a pack so heavy ladened, ten steps for me and you  
This soldier has gone nameless, as he falls into the sand  
He has fallen for this nation, for a little piece of land*

*He has fallen without answers, knows not to win or lose  
He had no time to ponder, no time to pick or choose  
He has fallen without knowing, who will win the day  
He has died for all our people, restricted in no way*

*You cannot be a soldier, and choose for whom you die  
You cannot portion valor, into segments as a pie  
You cannot put to pieces, where your mortal gift shall go  
For all citizens of your nation, your sacrifice shall know*

*He has fallen for all people, that women/men be free  
He has fallen for all people, no color could he see  
He has no time to vote, or choose within our midst  
He has no time to snarl, or raise an angry fist*

*We cannot put to pieces, this gift that we have got  
We cannot be divisive, and choose for whom he fought  
We are united by his duty, his blood we all must share*

*We were his pack of burden, and there is not one to tare*

*So how do we say thank you, all voices have a say  
So how do we pay homage, to those who died that day  
Tell every American soldier, all genders, race and creed  
If you die on distant soil, the nation owns that deed*

*Today I see that nation, one group that owes the few  
The few who gave us freedom, regardless of their hue  
To those who would divide us, with endless rancorous blasts  
Hear the cadence that is O-ma-ha, and protect the glory past!*

*Epilogue:*

*Soldiers do not die in segments, like days or months or years  
For if one dies for country, time is marked in tears  
Once a heart stops beating, for family, friends or land  
There is no time direction, for a clock to move its hand*

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**Wayne Spletstoser** - September 21, 2022 at 07:21 PM

“ Becki, John, and family,

*Please accept my sincere condolences with the passing of your father, Les.*

*I also regret not being able to attend his memorial service. Marge is having medical challenges, and I had to take her to her heart doctor at the time of Les' service. She got a pacemaker yesterday. All is well.*

*I had such respect for Les both as a man and a teacher. I stopped often at the end of a day and chatted with him. He was a font of knowledge and wisdom which this whipper smapper (at the time) soaked up. And, of course, I loved Bill Goslow too. Two great loses.*

*Becki, I hope you are well and dealing with your health challenges.*

*To say Les influenced me would be an understatement. I so respected his efforts to honor vets and laude his work. As part of that, I wrote a poem which I now dedicate to Les. I read it at the 75th Anniversary of D-Day, which he organized and MC'd.*

*Here it is with additional comments. It is for Les. It appeared in the GT. It hurts to loose such leaders.*

*Editor McInally,*

*Perhaps this would be once again appropriate for the GT on the 75th Anniversary of D-day. Your article today was so moving. Those men were such Allied heroes. I recently shared this with my neighbor who is a Viet Nam Vet. He replied with a deeply moving commentary on how much he suffers from survivors remorse and wonders why he was spared. Whether British, Canadian or American, no matter when or where, whether vanquished or victors, and no matter their gender, these soldiers must always be appreciated and never forgotten. Always vote and do so in their memory.*



*Thanks, Wayne Spletstoser  
Shedd, OR*

*Omaha American*

*Who was he? Have you seen the film?  
Omaha Beach, Normandy, June 6, 1944.  
I have watched him countless times.  
He exits his landing craft burdened by pack.  
Burdened by expectation, burdened by fear.  
Trudging laboriously through surging surf.  
Expectation demands so much.  
He gives his all. He reaches the sand.  
Thirty seconds onto Normandy ready to fight.  
Then he collapses. It is over. He is done.  
No mother's voice to console...valor unrequited.  
Just a potent projectile taken for us all.  
He knows not of the outcome. He sees no tears shed for him.  
There is no comforting voice. There is no appreciative moment.  
Just darkness. Just silence. Just sacrifice.  
Others go on. He remains on the sand. Nameless to us all.  
An American on Omaha Beach. He has nothing more to give.  
He gave all that he had. And he does not know more.  
He knows not of victory. He knows not of conquest.  
He just tried!  
Will thanks make it better? I do not know!  
He lies there on the sand. Vanquished for you and me.  
Lost in time, lost in space and bereft of further touch.  
Lost is God's embrace.*

*We must not forget. Who was he?  
He is every American soldier in one.  
He is sacrifice too awful to comprehend.  
We are too inadequate to appreciate.  
He is the American Soldier...and now I add, he is Les Whittle.*

*Thank You.  
Wayne Spletstoser 2016*

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**Wayne Spletstoser** - September 21, 2022 at 06:58 PM

MA

“ *My Condolences to All,*

*Les and his family were court-side teammates at OSU Women's Basketball Games to me and my wife Patricia. We enjoyed stories & actions of each other, players, referees, and other spectators continuously. Les greatly wanted me to visit him at his home in Corvallis or to a veteran type activity. His daughter Becky was a class mate of mine back in the days at CHS. Becky and her (late) husband Bill made sure of getting Les to the games and other outings.*

*Les will be missed by us all.*

*Mark Avery*

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**Mark H Avery** - September 11, 2022 at 11:19 PM

HH

“Memories are magic,” said Bear.

“I think they’re sad,” said Rabbit. “How can something sad be magic?”

“Not all memories are sad. Some are happy and full of love,” replied Bear.

“But they are still memories. They’re gone, and that’s sad,” said Rabbit.

“Sad is if they never existed,” said Bear. “Memories are proof that those we have loved existed. We can make them appear whenever we need them. That’s magic.”

Thank you Les for all the memories.  
Love, Herb and Joan Huddleston

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**Herb and Joan Huddleston** - September 11, 2022 at 05:03 PM

JS

“ I first remember Les as a member of the Izaak Walton League of America. Then I was well aware of his herculean efforts with the Corvallis Memorial Day celebration. And then I learned he was the father of Becky, a fellow teacher. Small world here in Corvallis. Smooth sailing Les.

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**John Snelling** - September 11, 2022 at 11:49 AM