



## Leslie Dale Olsen

January 23, 1935 - April 10, 2016

### Who Knew? - The Les Olsen Story

What do the following have in common: Husband, Father, Grandfather, Great-grandfather, Soldier, Insurance Claims adjuster, Teacher, Private Investigator, Counselor, Community Volunteer, Mentor, World Traveler, Golfer, Card Player and Friend? While many of his SIR friends only think of Les as a golfer and/or abridge/poker player the above are all the various “hats” that our friend Les wore during his life.

Les was born in Hot Springs, MT. He attended and graduated high school in Seattle, WA. He came to California and attended San Jose State where he met Janet in an Abnormal Psychology class during their junior year. He was abnormal but in a good way! After graduating in 1959 with a BS in psychology Les served six months' active duty in the Army and then finished with many years in the Reserves.

He and Jan were married (by Jan's father) on March 19, 1960 and they started their married life living in SF where Les worked for Liberty Mutual as a claims adjuster. During that time, he did some volunteering at the juvenile hall and decided he wanted to help those youngsters before they got there. So Les, being Les, quit work in January of 1963 and went to SF State to get a teaching credential. To do that he needed a new major because psychology wasn't a teachable major. During that next 1 1/2 years he worked part time as a private investigator. In June of 1964 he graduated.

Armed with his newly acquired teaching credential he and Jan moved to Auburn where he worked for three years as a teacher of 7th grade history at EV Cain. In 1967 they moved to Citrus Heights where he taught at El Escalon High and La Vista High. These were both continuation high schools. His work there furthered his interest in trying to help troubled students. Also, during those years he attended Sacramento State at night to obtain his Masters and Pupil Personnel Credential which would allow him to be a counselor. He then worked at Roseville High School as a counselor from 1970 to 1974. In 1974 he started at Sierra College as a Counselor.

While working at Sierra College he and Jan began the building process of their present home in Loomis and they moved into it in 1977. He remained busy up till the end lovingly maintaining that home; cutting grass, trimming shrubs, burning rubbish, collecting and splitting wood for the wood burning stoves that perfumed the air on many a crisp Loomis night. On one occasion he saw some maintenance people removing a dead oak tree from a golf course he happened to be playing. In typical Les fashion he walked over and asked what they were going to do with all that wood. "Why take it to the dump" one of them replied. So Les in his waste not want not manner convinced them to take it to his house instead, where he split it and heated his house all winter.

After Les retired from Sierra College he continued to work the "crunch times" for a couple years. Crunch times being registration and summer school. He loved his job there, mentoring and guiding young people. Is that the secret that kept him so energized . . . stay active and associate with young people? Les was never one to sit around and just relax. He was forever on the go. He loved to play golf and golfed all of his life starting with being a caddy when he was young. Unfortunately, during the years his sons were growing up he didn't golf, no time and no money, but Jan knew that eventually she would be a golf widow. His love of golf and his eagerness to help led him to, on occasion, assist the Indian Creek golf pro, Mark, at the summer golf clinics and also at Sierra College. Golf, while important, was not his only interest, he loved snow

skiing, water skiing and backpacking with the family and always had projects going on at the house and their cabin at Tahoma. He also played baseball in high school.

Les was also a driver for meals on wheels and also drove people to doctor appointments for Seniors First. In addition, he was long time blood donor - having given 30 gallons over many years! He also enjoyed going to live theater, playing bridge and of course, playing poker! One special project of Les' was the Sierra Service Project (SSP) which was incorporated in 1979 by a small group of United Methodist clergy and laypersons. SSP involves taking a group of high school kids from his church and other churches to Indian Reservations where work is done to refurbish homes and churches etc. Originally it was small with only a few churches going to one site and has now grown to 20,000 kids going over a six-week period to six or seven sites. They have also added a couple urban renewal sites like Stockton and Los Angeles. One of those formative laypersons was Les, a life-long member of The First United Methodist Church of Loomis. Les' commitment of service has been passed on to his heirs as the Olsen's' are now in their third generation of participation with Sierra Service Project. The latest and youngest participant is Parker Olsen, a 9th grader, who just returned from a week of service in Chiloquin, Oregon.

Les is survived by his loyal spouse of 56 years, Janet, two sons, Jeff and Scott, daughter-in-law Christie along with five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. He has one sister, Barbara and her three boys. Jan recalls when he joined SIR she was surprised; he was not the club type, but he truly loved being a SIR. The friendships he made were everything to him. He was a gentle man, amazingly never got mad and was never afraid to try something new. Life without seeing his infectious smile and being the recipient of one of his bear hug greetings is never going to be the same. I and all SIRs have been truly blessed by the love and friendship that Les showed all of us.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests memorial contributions in his name to the First United Methodist Church in Loomis at 6414 Brace Road, Loomis, CA 95650.

# Tribute Wall



“ *What a GIFT he has left all of us! I will truly miss him.* ”

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**Pete Morelli** - May 04, 2016 at 08:24 PM