



## Leonard Jinkens Paxton

June 20, 1920 - December 3, 2017

Leonard J. Paxton, age 97, of Bolivar, Missouri, passed away Sunday, December 3, 2017, at Citizens Memorial Hospital, in Bolivar.

Leonard Jenkins Paxton was born on his Uncle Holly Morton's farm located near Wheatland, MO., on June 20, 1920. He was the oldest of five sons born to Raymond William Paxton and Nellie Pencelia Jinkens Paxton. Two brothers, Bob and Eugene, and one younger sister, Louise Patton Cochran, are still living in Calimesa, California. Two brothers, William Leslie, Clinton, and one sister, Lorane Flint Gamblin, are deceased.

Leonard and Lorane moved with their parents to Southern California at a very young age. Their father found work with Standard Oil of California, and then later as the manager of hundreds of acres of orange groves in the foothills of the San Bernadino mountains near East Highlands. Leonard and all of his brothers grew up working with their father during the 1920's and 30's in the large groves. They built many of their own go-carts from large wooden orange crates, and attached metal wheels salvaged from the Gold Buckle orange packing plant warehouse. They also assisted their parents with work chores at home related to cultivating a large garden, and raising chickens. All seven of the Paxton siblings attended Redlands Public Schools from grades K-12..

Leonard graduated from Redlands High School in the Class of 1938. He was

active in the FFA and was skilled in the industrial arts. He went to work at the Gold Buckle for the first year out of high school lifting heavy crates before the days of a forklift! He made enough money to travel to Wheatland, MO., the following summer to visit his mother's sister, Aunt Verdie Jenkins Costelow, and her husband, Uncle John. It was Aunt Verdie who introduced Leonard to a lovely young woman next door on the neighboring farm owned by the Harrison family from Minnesota. Mom Audie Harrison, and Aunt Verdie "played cupid," as the family story goes. These two young people continued to write love letters back and forth for the next year while Leonard worked and lived in the East Highlands area close to his family.

Leonard bought a new 1940 Ford and drove back to the Harrison farm to court Virginia Leigh Harrison. It was not long until Leonard proposed marriage, and Virginia said, "Yes." One old photo shows them sitting on a wooden fence next to Bagnell Dam. It was taken in Nov. 1940, only a few weeks before their wedding at Rev. Jim Wright's Wheatland parlor on Dec. 4, 1940.

The newlyweds carefully packed Virginia's beauty shop equipment from where she operated her business on the Wheatland Square, and traveled back to East Highlands, CA. It was here they brought their new baby daughter home from the Redlands Community Hospital two years later. She was Evelyn (Evie) Paxton Jones born on Dec. 19th, 1942.

Following the birth of their only child, Leonard was drafted into the U.S. Army to serve during WWII. He drove Virginia and Evie back to the Harrison farm near Wheatland where they lived almost one year. Leonard was training with the U.S. Army at Camp Shelby near Jackson, MS., when he found a small cabin for Virginia and Evie to join him. They rode the train from Springfield, MO., to Mississippi.

As the war progressed, Leonard was assigned to security duty at Lawson

General Hospital on the outskirts of Atlanta, GA. Leonard received an outstanding marksmanship award upon the conclusion of WWII, as well as an honorable discharge from the U.S. Army. Leonard's mother had four sons all serving at the same time throughout the world who returned safely following the end of WWII!

After driving to Michigan to pick up a small travel trailer at a factory, Leonard drove his young family back to California. Leonard and Virginia then lived more than thirty years. They moved back to Michigan in order to follow their daughter and her husband in 1968, and subsequently on to Central Florida near Leesburg.

After selling two new homes, they moved temporarily to Aurora, Colorado, to assist Virginia's mother in her elder years. They made their final move to Bolivar, Mo., for their retirement location, and remained for more than thirty years in their Lakewood Hills home.

Leonard retired first from a career in security working at various USAF bases in California and Michigan. He then drove a school bus for Lake County Public Schools in Florida. He enjoyed the children, and the opportunity to remain active, so also went to work for the Bolivar Public School District driving a rural bus route many more years. He drove the bus across the historic 100 year old Francka Bridge the last year it remained open, and had many stories to share about that adventure.

Virginia entered full time nursing care at CMHF on Locust St. in October 2004, and Parkview Healthcare Facility in January 2005. It was a great loss for Leonard after having loved and cared for Virginia almost 70 years of marriage.

Leonard made a decision to live full time at Parkview Healthcare Facility in

February 2013 following another mini stroke, and fall at home. The family is extremely thankful and appreciative for Kathy Borawski's eight years of love, care, and outstanding attention to Leonard, as well as for so many caring neighbors who often checked on him or answered a phone call when he needed help!

Leonard Paxton is survived by his daughter, Evie, and "his favorite son in law" T.W. Jones, of Colorado Springs, Colorado., as well as their two adult sons, Jason W. Jones, and Jeremy V. Jones, from Colorado. Jeremy and Janna, his wife, have two children, Aspen, and Paxton Jones, Leonard's two great grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial donations be made to the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Cemetery Maintenance Fund in care of Butler Funeral Home, P.O. Box 11, Bolivar, Missouri, 65613. An additional option would be gifts to the Gideon's, P.O. Box 244, Bolivar, MO., 65613. The family is extremely grateful for all prayers and condolences in memory of their father, grandfather, and great grandfather. "We give thanks to God."

Visitation for Leonard J. Paxton will be Saturday December 09, 2017 from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., with Funeral Service to follow at 11:00 a.m., with burial at Macedonia Cemetery in Hickory County.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 9. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Butler Funeral Home - Bolivar  
407 E. Broadway  
Bolivar, MO 65613  
(417) 326-5233  
<https://butlerfuneralhome.com/>

## Funeral Service

DEC 9. 11:00 AM (CT)

Butler Funeral Home - Bolivar  
407 E. Broadway  
Bolivar, MO 65613  
(417) 326-5233  
<https://butlerfuneralhome.com/>

# Tribute Wall



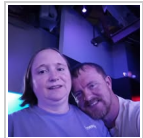
“ Leonard Jinkens Paxton

October 05, 2023 at 05:18 AM



“ Leonard Jinkens Paxton

January 26, 2023 at 04:15 PM



“ Al Rice lit a candle in memory of Leonard Jinkens Paxton



Al Rice - December 19, 2017 at 11:02 AM



“ Maria Talbot lit a candle in memory of Leonard Jinkens Paxton



Maria Talbot - December 10, 2017 at 05:14 AM

DV

*“ What a great man, I had the pleasure to get to know Leonard over the last 2 yrs. and he always had a smile , he loved his family and would tell a great story, and no matter how he felt would always be kind and give you that wonderful smile. I thank god I was able to meet such an extraordinary man. Denise Vest*



**Denise Vest** - December 08, 2017 at 12:31 PM

BD

*“ Leonard J. Paxton was my Uncle. He will be missed. He also told a Funny joke when we would visit him in Bolivar Mo. My prayers go out to his Family and all of my cousins. Love Hugs Barby Daniel.*

**Barby Daniel** - December 08, 2017 at 12:32 AM



*“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Leonard Jinkens Paxton.*



December 06, 2017 at 05:08 PM

DT

*“ My prayers for Evie and TW and the children, and all of Leonard's family. I knew Leonard when I was a little girl and teenager. I would go home from church with Evie on occasion, and we would spend the afternoon together. Leonard was always a kind and gentle man. He will be missed greatly, but I know he is rejoicing in his new "forever" home. Blessings on all of you!*

**Doris Perry Marner Townsend** - December 06, 2017 at 04:59 PM

RF

“ *My heart goes to all of you, I just enjoyed sitting and talking to the hole family. The 2 of them are together again, Romona Fletcher*

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**Romona Fletcher** - December 05, 2017 at 08:36 PM