



Leon Duane Crossman

June 18, 1939 - February 9, 2024

Dr. Leon D. Crossman, (84), of Richfield, Minnesota, formerly of Midland, Michigan and Miller, South Dakota, passed away peacefully on February 9, 2024, after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease.

Leon was born and raised in Miller, SD and helped on his family's commercial chicken farm, The Crossman Hatchery. He attended South Dakota State University, earning both a BS and MS in Engineering Physics. He was a red shirt walk on for the SDSU basketball team and played in the National Collegiate Basketball Championship Final Four in 1961. He joked that they needed his GPA on the team, so they gave him the chance to play. His coach said it was the only time he saw Physics professors attending games and cheering for the team. While at SDSU, he married his first wife, Barbara, also from Miller, SD and they welcomed their two daughters, Leann and Marylou Kristine.

Leon earned his PhD in Solid State Physics at Iowa State University in 1967. While going to school in Ames, Iowa the family lived in a very small trailer. Because of this, he never wanted a recreational camper because he said he already did that while attending college.

After interning at Dow Corning Hemlock Semiconductor, upon graduation he was hired and moved his family to Midland, MI. During his career, Leon held

both technical and leadership roles, starting as a Research Physicist and Manager of Semiconductor Silicon Research and working his way to Vice President and Executive Director of Science and Technology. During his tenure, he attended the Sloan School for Senior Executives at MIT and the Japanese International Business School. He was on the Iowa State University Physics and Astronomy Advisory Council, on NASA's Enabling Propulsion Materials Advisory Board, a Corporate Representative to the Industrial Research Institute, and on the Council of Chemical Research. After retiring in 1999, he was a consultant for the Dow Corning Technology Advisory Board for seven years.

He attended the Presbyterian church his entire life, starting as a child at the First Presbyterian Church in Miller. While in Midland he and his wife Barbara were active members of Chapel Lane Presbyterian. Leon volunteered as Sunday School Superintendent, High School Sunday School Teacher, Elder and Deacon. He also led the committee to expand the church building.

He was dedicated to his family, going on Girl Scout camping trips with the girls, teaching them pinochle on game nights, passing on his love of basketball, teaching them how to golf and always planning the next family vacation.

His first wife, Barbara passed away in 1990. Leon was blessed to find love again and married Patricia Duffey Closs in 1993. With six adult children between them, they built a life filled with family, and frequently travelled to Michigan, Minnesota, and California for grandchildren's birthdays and activities. They loved escaping the winters to warm weather destinations and spending summers at the cottage in Northern Michigan with family.

Leon travelled extensively for work and pleasure, visiting numerous countries and nearly all 50 states in the U.S. He also enjoyed playing golf, reading,

playing cards/board games, and watching sunsets. He was passionate about Michigan State football and basketball.

He was first diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2014. He and Pat moved to Minnesota seven years ago to be closer to family. He never complained about the devastating challenges of this disease and managed it with grace and strength, fighting until the end.

Leon is best known for being a kind man who rarely said anything negative, was supportive, patient and kind. He personified I Corinthians bible verse: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

Leon is survived by his wife of 30 years, Pat (Duffey Closs) Crossman; daughter Leann (Joe) Bigos and grandchildren Andrew (Holly) Bigos, Philip (Christina) Bigos and great-grandson Zeke, and Kimberly (Michael) Messenger; daughter Marylou Kristine (Tom) Crossman-Little and her stepchildren Dr. Nicole Hoiland and her children Morgan and Kian, Matthew Little, and Kristin (Andrew) Nelson and their children Kael and Ethan.

Leon is also survived by stepchildren Diane (Jon) Herrmann and grandchildren Jack and Alex; Brian (Pam) Closs and grandchildren Daniel and Nick; Susan (Collin) Nelson and grandchildren Emily, Sara, and Jacob; Carol (Jeff) Plotnik and grandchildren Anna and Matthew.

He was preceded in death by his parents Mildred Emma (Peterson) Crossman and Leeland Leroy Crossman, stepsister Luella (Casey) Schultz, and his first wife of 30 years, Barbara Lou (Hurlbut) Crossman.

In lieu of flowers, our family asks that you donate to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research or Presbyterian Homes of Bloomington where Leon received excellent care in his last year of life. Our heartfelt gratitude extends to the caregivers from Care Builders, Presbyterian Homes, and HealthPartners hospice care. We will be forever grateful for the care, kindness, and compassion they showed Leon and our family.

A memorial service will be held at Washburn-McReavy Funeral Home in Edina, Minnesota on May 11th at 1pm, with a visitation at 12pm. The service will be livestreamed for those who cannot attend in person.

Cemetery Details

Hillside Crematory

2610 19th Ave NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 11. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Edina Chapel
5000 West 50th & Highway 100
Edina, MN 55436

Memorial Service

MAY 11. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Edina Chapel
5000 West 50th & Highway 100
Edina, MN 55436

Tribute Wall



“ Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels created a Memorial Service for Leon Duane Crossman in memory of Leon Duane Crossman



Washburn-McReavy - February 12, 2024 at 01:11 PM

RA

“ Ruth A. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Leon Duane Crossman.

Ruth A. - April 26, 2024 at 12:03 PM

DA

“ Leon was one of the best people I ever worked for at Dow Corning. We often joked that he came from small Miller and I from larger Sioux Falls; he studied science at large SD State and I engineering at small SD Mines. What a great person and a terrific role model for everyone; we often shared training sessions and discussed how to apply them in work and life. Leon used to tell me "Doug,. you're doing your ;job when you're invisible." He personally wrote the company PR about a couple of my honors. I have so many fine memories of Leon, such as when he asked me for honest answers to tough problems....and welcomed them wholeheartedly. Blessings and comfort to his families. Doug Aldrich, Arvada, Colorado

Doug Aldrich - February 24, 2024 at 02:47 PM

FS

“ A big man with a big heart full of love, his Spirit lives on forever, never to be forgotten. Leon is a human model to be cherished and loved. We need more of his kind to bring peace to the world. I marveled at his capacity to love, help, and teach others the kindness of human love. His spirit lives on forever! Frank Stewart, an admirer of his!p

Frank Stewart - February 24, 2024 at 02:19 PM

JF

“ Was sad to read in the Midland newspaper that Leon had died. He was an important mentor to me at Dow Corning and always had friendly and useful advice whether the topic was science, leadership, company politics, human nature, or life in general. Leon, as a colleague, boss, friend, and fellow retiree always had encouraging and inspiring words ready for any situation. Whether in his office, at a restaurant on the other side of the world, or on an exercise machine at Campus Ridge, Leon was able to come up with words demonstrating amazing understanding, memory, analysis, and insight. He will be missed but will live on in our memories. Jim Falender

Jim Falender - February 24, 2024 at 10:05 AM

RP

“ I, like Leon, was born and raised in South Dakota and moved to Midland, MI, and worked at Dow Corning from 1982-2000, in several engineering and technology roles. Leon was in senior leadership roles I so I did not have an opportunity to work with him directly. But, his influence extended to me and many others in exactly the ways you described him,

“Leon is best known for being a kind man who rarely said anything negative, was supportive, patient and kind. He personified I Corinthians bible verse: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

I am so thankful for his wonderful example of true leadership. He has been a blessing to many. We would all do well to aspire to be more like him. May God comfort your family.

Rich Palmer

Rich Palmer - February 24, 2024 at 09:34 AM

IN

“ 1 file added to the album Leon Crossman



Info - February 20, 2024 at 09:38 AM