



Major Leonard T. Ashburn Jr.

October 29, 1930 - September 12, 2021

Leonard T. Ashburn, Jr., 90, died peacefully at home in Indianapolis, Indiana, on September 12, 2021. His wife and daughters were by his side in presence and prayer. Funeral services will be held on Thursday, September 16 at 11:30 a.m. at Second Presbyterian Church Sanctuary. Visitation will be from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in McFarland Hall.

Len was born in Norfolk, Virginia, on October 29, 1930, to Elizabeth and Leonard Ashburn, Sr. He grew up in Norfolk and graduated from Granby High School in January 1949. He briefly attended The College of William and Mary before joining the U.S. Air Force. He later earned a Bachelor's Degree in History from the University of Nebraska at Omaha in 1968 while on active duty.

After two years of enlisted service in the Air Force, Len entered flight training and graduated in 1954 with his pilot wings and a commission as a second lieutenant. During his twenty years in the Air Force, he flew the KC-97, B26 and C141, was a flight instructor in the B25 and served as a safety officer. Among other places, he was stationed at Reese Air Force Base (AFB), Texas; Malmstrom AFB, Montana; Harmon AFB, Newfoundland, Canada; Pope AFB, North Carolina; Dover AFB, Delaware; and Tinker AFB and Altus AFB, both in Oklahoma. He accumulated 6500 flight hours during his career, which spanned the Korean and Vietnam Conflicts.

When he retired from the Air Force in 1971, he moved his family to Indianapolis to be near the racing capital of the world and to indulge another lifelong passion--auto racing. Since attending his first Indianapolis 500 in 1956, Len missed only a few races. He's a Lifetime Member of the Indianapolis 500 Oldtimers Club, with over 40 years of service at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway (IMS). He served in credentialed roles in Timing and Scoring and as a photographer at the IMS for decades. He was an early adopter of online race reporting with Prodigy Motorsports. He and his wife Linda opened a special risk insurance agency across from the IMS that served the racing industry.

His love for motorsports extended to air racing. He was a member of the Reno Air Races Timing and Scoring Team for 26 years. He volunteered for the Contest and Records Board of the National Aeronautic Association (NAA), which coordinates and certifies national aviation and space records. In 1990, Ashburn chaired the 36th reunion of his Pilot Training Class held in Reno, Nevada, during the Reno Air Races.

In community activities, Len was the founding President of the Speedway Kiwanis Club from 1987-1989. For over forty years, he was a dedicated member of Second Presbyterian Church, involved with the Sunday usher staff and the sanctuary choir. He also participated in Maennerchor, a German men's choir founded in 1854 (disbanded in 2018 after 164 years).

He is survived by his beloved wife of 42 years, Linda Weaver Ashburn, and five daughters from his first marriage; Elizabeth (Ken) McDonnell, Margaret Ashburn, Laura (Tom) Breece, Angie Mulkey, and Claire (Mark) Shervanick; also 11 grandchildren and 2 great-grandsons; and his sister Sarah Holder of Raleigh, NC.

Following the services, Len will be buried at his family plot in Norfolk, Virginia. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that gifts in memory of Len be made to the Salvation Army by Clicking Here (<https://give.salvationarmyusa.org/give/164006/#!/donation/checkout>) or the United Service Organizations (USO) by Clicking Here (https://secure.uso.org/1911_AMT/?sc=WEBDONATE&show_amount=true).

Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Sproles Family Funeral Home. You may offer the family a personal condolence at www.sprolesfamilycares.com.

The Sproles family and staff are honored to serve the family of Leonard T. Ashburn, Jr.

Cemetery Details

Elmwood Cemetetery

238 E Princess Anne Rd
Norfolk, VA 23510

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP **16**. 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Second Presbyterian Church
7700 N Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46260

Service

SEP **16**. 11:30 AM (ET)

Second Presbyterian Church
7700 N Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46260

Tribute Wall



“ *Sproles Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Major Leonard T. Ashburn Jr.*



Sproles Family Funeral Home - September 15, 2021 at 02:04 PM

DS

*Linda,
I am so very sorry for your loss. I'll be keeping you in my thoughts and prayers. 😞
Always,
Darlene Elliott Gerlach Scales*

Darlene Scales - September 29, 2021 at 06:22 PM

RH

“ *Among his many accomplishments and attributes, Len was a genuine friend. He will always be remembered with love.*

Ruby Hill - September 16, 2021 at 02:07 PM

NB

“ *Len was a wonderful neighbor and friend. We have lots of fond memories of him.
To Linda and the girls we are so sorry for your loss, we will always love you and be here for you.
Rest In Peace Len and fly high.
Jerry and Nory Baker*

Nory Baker - September 16, 2021 at 12:55 AM



“ 67 files added to the album Life Tributes



Sproles Family Funeral Home - September 15, 2021 at 01:47 PM



“ Love and prayers to the Ashburn Family 🕯️🙏❤️ Mary and John

mary - September 15, 2021 at 10:29 AM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Major Leonard T. Ashburn Jr..



September 15, 2021 at 10:02 AM

SA

“ Leonard was a true patriot and servant, but more importantly, he and Linda love(d) people. I have fond memories going to Reno with my dad, Bob Andrews, and being welcomed with open arms by Leonard and Linda. They also came down to his house in Georgia numerous times and I always enjoyed it. He and my dad were close friends and spoke often. Although miles separated them, they were bonded in their hearts. I am sad that Leonard is gone, but I am glad that he is not in pain anymore and is in the loving arms of the Lord. May God bless and comfort his family during this time and always . I am so sorry for your loss. With deepest sympathy, Scott Andrews

Scott Andrews - September 14, 2021 at 11:57 PM

CM

Even though Pam and I never met any of you, Leonard was always telling Bob Andrews and I how much you all accomplished in life and the wonderful family you are, we feel like we new you, Leonard was a joy to be around and he and I loved the oyster stew at the Nugget Hotel in Reno when we were at the Reno Air Races. We are honored to have known him and will miss him always. Linda we love you and want to stay in touch.
Custer and Pam

custer mayo - September 15, 2021 at 12:36 PM



“ Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Major Leonard T. Ashburn Jr..



September 14, 2021 at 11:43 PM

SL

“ *Len was an amazing man and always such a delight to have at our Family gatherings.. you will forever be missed and in our Hearts...*

The Breece Family.

sherri Lytle - September 14, 2021 at 02:35 PM

LB

“ *28 files added to the album DAD*



Laura Breece - September 13, 2021 at 09:39 PM

LB

“ *27 files added to the album Memories Album*



Laura Breece - September 13, 2021 at 09:35 PM

LB

“ *Len will be sorely missed by many in the racing community. His mild demeanor was second only to his dedication and love of the sport. Len was instrumental with my growth in auto racing through several channels including insurance needs and timing/scoring needs. He and Linda were always there to offer support and advice. I am honored to have known Len and work with him through the years. Prayers of comfort for the entire family.*

Larry Boos - September 13, 2021 at 09:18 PM

LR

Len was a loyal singer in the bass 2 section at Second Presbyterian. I have enjoyed the honor of singing with him for many years. Loved his many stories of racing and Air Force.... A fellow vet. I'll miss you Len.

Larry Robertson - September 14, 2021 at 12:34 PM