



## Don J. Leshner

June 23, 1926 - May 13, 2022

Don J. Leshner, age 95, passed away on May 13, 2022. Beloved husband of Dorothy for 65 years. Loving father of Christopher (the late Kathy) Leshner, Daniel Leshner and Polly (Larry) Meerschaert. Proud grandfather of Erik (Casondra) Meerschaert, Mary (Greg) Behler, Susan Leshner, Amy (Michael) Konja and Megan (Kyle) Greger. Great grandfather of Logan, Henry, Charles, Emma, Grace and Aubrey. Don was a retired Berkley school teacher along with being a varsity football and baseball coach. He was a long time member of The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks in Royal Oak, MI. Don was a World War II United States Navy Veteran. Don was an avid athlete his whole life. He attended the Great Lakes Naval Academy where he played football. He traveled playing softball with the Diamond Die Softball team, as well as bowling into his early 90's. Though with all of his accomplishments in 95 years the one he held close to his heart, fulfilling a lifetime dream of seeing the Chicago Cubs win a World Series. A visitation will take place Sunday (May 15th) at the Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home 8459 Hall Road (3 Blks E. of Van Dyke) Utica, at 1:30pm - 8:00pm. Funeral Service will take place on Monday (May 16th) at 10am at the funeral home. Donations may be made to Corpore Sano Hospice or the University of Illinois Athletic Department. Please share a memory at [www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com](http://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com)

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY **15**. 1:30 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Wm Sullivan and Son Funeral Home  
8459 Hall Road  
Utica, MI 48317  
(586) 731-2411  
utica@sullivanfh.com  
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

## Funeral Service

MAY **16**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Wm Sullivan and Son Funeral Home  
8459 Hall Road  
Utica, MI 48317  
(586) 731-2411  
utica@sullivanfh.com  
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

# Tribute Wall

DS

“ My condolences to the family. Mr. Lesher was my all time favorite teacher and coach. He was my 6th grade science teacher and coached me for three years at Berkley. His love for science and teaching showed through every day - very positive and encouraging. My father, also a Navy vet, would run into him at the Elks club where they shared stories and interests. My life certainly took the path it did because of his mentorship and the friendship I had with him. He was a great, upstanding person that I think about often.

*Dick Sterry, Burton 1963, Berkley 1969*

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**Dick Sterry** - May 18, 2022 at 02:26 PM

SB

“ My condolences to Mr. Lesher's family. I know you will hold his memories dearly. Mr. Lesher was my 6th grade science teacher, and absolutely the best teacher I ever had. I don't remember being tested or judged on how many facts I remembered or questions I answered on a quiz - but I do remember how he encouraged my interest in science from chemistry to astronomy, always providing extra materials and books for whatever I showed interest.

I do especially remember how he was generous in sharing with me materials for the home laboratory I set up - even though some of those materials were rather hazardous - like sodium (explosive when mixed with water <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STeJV2hdQs>) and magnesium ribbon (super flammable <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rnblw1ohNC8>). He trusted me - and I didn't burn down the house in Huntington Woods! And even when I was off to Norup I went back to Mr. Lesher to discuss what experiments I could do.

There is no question in my mind that it was from Mr. Lesher's 6th grade science class that I went off to study science including at the Berkely High Science Research Project where we were building a cyclotron through getting my PhD from MIT in computer science. And I was definitely channeling Mr. Lesher when I started doing experiments with my daughter (of course no sodium or magnesium on her own!) leading (I think directly) to her PhD in Applied Physics from Harvard. And of course in just the last few weeks I did experiments with my 6-year old granddaughter making organic bioplastics (from just glycerin, gelatin, cornstarch, and vinegar) molded into little toys and then extracting her own DNA (one of her favorite songs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZK6YP1Smbxk>).

I was just one of thousands of Mr. Lesher's students - on behalf of them all - Thank You and Bless You

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Sheldon Borkin - May 16, 2022 at 05:18 PM

MR

*I could not possibly improve on this. He was a real mensch.*

**Mike Richmond** - May 16, 2022 at 09:30 PM

RL

“ *Dan, Polly and Family,*

*I am very sorry to hear of your loss. You were fortunate to have such an influential father who was a great teacher, but also a great supporter of your participation in sports. May your memories carry you through this period of loss. Don Lesher was a wonderful father.*

*Richard Lasley*

**Richard Lalsey** - May 16, 2022 at 12:19 PM

DL

*Thanks Rich, he was a great guy and will be missed. Hope you are doing well....Dan*

**Dan Leshrt** - May 16, 2022 at 02:49 PM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Don J. Lesher.*



May 15, 2022 at 10:48 AM

LZ

“ Always blessed to have called him our Uncle.  
Love, Chris, Laura and Ally❤️



Laura Zuidema - May 15, 2022 at 12:28 AM

JG

“ Coach Lesher was my football coach at Berkley back in the late 60's. He was a true inspiration and leader. He will be missed.

james gillespie - May 14, 2022 at 02:54 PM

BS

A very dedicated educator and inspiring coach . After high school we had some competitive racquetball matches at the ymca in Royal Oak.A very proud life he lived.

Bill Spurgeon - May 15, 2022 at 09:50 PM



“ Tranquil Seas was purchased for the family of Don J. Lesher.



May 14, 2022 at 01:09 PM

BS

“ I knew Don many years ago from the Royal Oak Elks Lodge. We bowled on the same league. He was an all around great guy an a pleasure to call a friend! Prayers of comfort for family and friends.

Bob Stewart - May 14, 2022 at 11:36 AM



“ *Fiery Lily and Rose was purchased for the family of Don J. Leshner.*



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May 14, 2022 at 08:54 AM



“ *Mr Leshner was my 6th grade science teacher at Burton in 1969/70. One of my favorite teachers. My condolences to his family.*

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**Priscilla Porter Adkins** - May 13, 2022 at 10:41 PM



“ *Of the many years of knowing Mr. Leshner a few things come to mind - kindness - his ever present pipe - backyard neighborhood movies and oh yeah...THE CUBS!!! You were a terrific Dad to my dear friend Polly.*

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**Gina Gilbertson** - May 13, 2022 at 10:25 PM



“ *I had the honor of working with Don's daughter Polly with moving her dad to American House. I quickly fell in love with Polly and Don. Don was one of the sweetest men I had the privilege to know. Always had a smile, kind words to give and thankful. He quickly captured my heart and he will truly be missed. On behalf of the leadership team and staff at American House, our sincere condolences to the entire Leshner family. Don will always have a special place in our hearts <3 and Polly..... you know how I feel about you and always will be here for you! Kim Alexander Sales/Marketing Director*

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**Kim Alexander** - May 13, 2022 at 09:15 PM

IS

“ *What a Sweet Man. I loved caring for him. He was Kind, Fun, and I loved all the stories he had. He loved his food especially sweets. Loved his darling daughter Polly. Waited for his daily hugs and kisses from his Dorothy. He will be missed so much by all his Grandchildren. Great Grandchildren. So many caregivers that just adored him even the kitchen people at the American House loved him. He lived a Wonderful Full life filled with love and so many beautiful memories he has left for all of us. He will be forever loved and missed by many. Rip Papa. We love you. Xoxo*

Iva schmitt - May 13, 2022 at 07:26 PM

PM

*You brightened his days Iva 🥰*

Polly Meerschaert - May 13, 2022 at 08:50 PM

AB

*He was my 6th grade teacher at Burton and for the rest of my student career I never had a better teacher. He has always held a special place in my heart for bringing this shy little girl out of her shell. He is one of those rare teachers that truly left a lasting mark on a student's life. Rest In Peace mr Leshner-I'll never forget you*

Ann Dulworth Berry - May 14, 2022 at 07:16 AM



*I am seventy-two years old. Mr. Leshner was my 6th-grade teacher and he is the only teacher that I remember by name. The impression he made on me has lasted for close to sixty years! He was so dynamic and likable. I also remember that I must have been talking out of turn during his class. He had a row, the last row of desks on the Northside of the classroom. He designated that row as the "MAGPIE ROW". I remember that to this day! I believe he intended it as a punishment, but it was doled out in such a manner that I felt no shame or recrimination by it.*

Laura Levine Gumina - May 16, 2022 at 04:49 PM