



Leslie Brown

December 28, 1942 - August 23, 2025

NORWAY - Leslie 'Les' Brown, 82, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, aviator, and gifted conversationalist, passed away peacefully at his home on Saturday, August 23, 2025.

He was born December 28, 1942, in Naperville, Illinois, son of the late Leslie and Rose (Grimes) Brown.

Les grew up in Naperville, Illinois, and became deeply involved in the family business as a young man. He spent more than 35 years at the Les Brown Chair Company, where he led operations—designing new chairs, sourcing raw materials, and managing production and deliveries. In the early 1980s, the company moved its primary operations to Michigan's Upper Peninsula, where Les and Carolyn raised their family. After retiring from the business in 2000, he devoted himself to his lifelong passion: flying.

He began flying in 1963 and went on to earn numerous pilot certifications and endorsements. During the 1960s, he served in the Air National Guard as a skilled flight navigator. For more than 54 years, he was a beloved and respected flight instructor, teaching hundreds of students across Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Wisconsin, Illinois, and on the island of Culebra, Puerto Rico, where the family kept a home. His patience, encouragement, and steady hand left an enduring mark on generations of pilots.

Les had an extraordinary gift for conversation—he could connect with anyone and made every person feel seen. Generous with his time, he always put others before himself. As a husband, father, and grandfather, he set a powerful example of love, kindness, and integrity. To his neighbors, friends, and students, he was a steady presence, always ready to listen or lend a helping hand.

Les is survived by his wife of 56 years, Carolyn Brown; three sons Jeff (Shelley) Brown, Steve (Clay Bunyard) Brown, and Jon (Melanie) Brown; and four beloved grandchildren Gavin, Griffin, Ella, and Brendan Brown. He is also survived by his sister Phyllis Brown of Norway, as well as many extended family members and friends who will miss him dearly.

A celebration of Les's life will be held at a later date, with details to follow.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the EAA Young Eagles Program in memory of Leslie R. Brown.

Tribute Wall

CG

“ Carolyn, Arlene and I just wanted to know we are thinking of you . Les was an amazing person and we are so glad we got to spend some time with the both of you in Culebra. He was an extraordinary person and we won't forget him. Peace, love and our condolences.
Chris Goldmark and Arlene Fornabaio

chris goldmark - September 09, 2025 at 04:08 PM

BS

“ I met Les and Carolyn at COR weekend retreat in Norway my senior year of high school. What wonderful people! I have thought of them many times over the years. I am very grateful to have met them both. May God continue to bless the Brown family.

Bill Salfai - September 02, 2025 at 04:33 PM

CH

“ So sorry for your loss, Carolyn, Jeff, Steve, Jon and your families. I feel so grateful to have known Les for over 50 years. He was the consummate conversationalist who always made you feel seen, heard and understood.
I cherish fond memories of his empathetic and humorous view of people and the world.
Les was a true mensch.

Carol Hoffman - September 01, 2025 at 10:17 AM

TB

“ So sorry to hear of the passing of Uncle Les. Les was such a wonderful person, always giving of his time and very thoughtful of others. I hold so many memories of our families, whether in Naperville or in Norway. Jeff, Steve, John, and Aunt Carolyn: my thoughts are with you in this difficult time. — Cousin Tom

Tom Brown - August 30, 2025 at 08:01 PM

MG

“ Carolyn, Jeff, Steven and John, Sorry for your loss. We enjoyed working with Les, so many memories, and Les taking time for pilot lessons for Andrew. Maxine & Rick Gatien

Maxine Gatien - August 30, 2025 at 06:52 PM

JO

“ My deepest sympathy to Carolyn and family



Janet O'Brion - August 30, 2025 at 01:03 PM

LO

“ If you knew my Uncle Les, you had the great privilege of knowing a truly good person. He was one in a million. He was always kind, patient, welcoming, and generous with his time and talents whether helping me with an art project, riding bikes, taking me on a tour of California while in the Air National Guard, giving me a flying lesson or just listening. He had a warm smile, and he looked for the good in everyone and every situation. He had a great gift for making people feel important, valued, loved and cared for.

He never complained about his health problems and was grateful for the love and care he received from his dear wife Carolyn and their family. He always had a way of making others feel better even if he wasn't. Being a lover of aviation, he even found joy in being airlifted to a hospital for medical treatment. Now that is finding the silver lining in a dark cloud! He truly had a life well-lived. Rest well Uncle Les. You will forever hold a special place in my heart.

Linda Oestry - August 27, 2025 at 11:35 PM

ST

“ Schlyn Thiry lit a candle in memory of Leslie Brown



Schlyn Thiry - August 27, 2025 at 11:37 AM