



John Lepper

July 9, 1934 - May 15, 2022

John Richard Lepper, of Broken Arrow, passed away Sunday, May 15, 2022 at the age of 87. He was born July 9, 1934 in Numa, Iowa to Claude and Ethel (Jennings) Lepper.

John earned his Bachelor's degree in History at Bethany Nazarene College (now Southern Nazarene University) and did postgraduate studies in Education at Northeastern State University. He was a teacher and administrator in the Broken Arrow Public School system for many years, retiring in 1993.

John was a very gifted athlete, excelling in basketball (as a shooting guard), baseball (as an outfielder) and fast-pitch softball (as an ace pitcher).

After his senior year in high school, he was offered a contract with the Boston Red Sox organization but chose instead to get a college education.

He was on the team that won the National Youth Championship in Fast-Pitch Softball in 1952 and was sought after for the next several years to pitch for regional tournament teams.

He was a renowned "control" pitcher and won championships in church and commercial/industrial leagues in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, throwing for Tulsa Central and Regency Park Nazarene, ONG, Phillips 66 and Teamsters.

He enjoyed traveling to historical destinations and cruising the world with wife Barbara and other family members after his retirement.

He had a lifelong love of southern gospel music, was an avid coin collector and spent the last several years researching family genealogy, discovering

that his great-grandfather (33 times) was King Robert IV of France Capet. John regularly attended Okmulgee High Class of 1952 functions, and was the unofficial “gang-leader” for several men’s breakfast clubs.

In addition to his career in education, he was a top-producing agent for National Life Insurance Company and was co-owner of Crossroads Distributing Company, a wholesaler of Christian recorded and printed music. At the risk of offending any friends and family who cheer for opposing schools, he was a longtime OU Sooners fan, particularly the football, basketball and women’s softball teams.

He had an unwavering Christian faith and was a member of Tulsa Central Nazarene and Liberty Baptist church since the 1960s.

Those left to cherish his memory are:

Daughter Christie Friend and husband Doug of Tulsa; son Rick Lepper and wife Renee’ of Tulsa; step-daughter Lori Herbel and husband Randy of Broken Arrow; step-sons Stuart Sullivan and wife Sally of Tulsa, Todd Sullivan and wife Rhonda of Tulsa;

Grandchildren Chevy Thomason and wife Amber of Edmond, Jacob Sullivan and wife Brooke, Joshua Sullivan, Kathryn Herbel, Benjamin Herbel and wife Rebecca, Bethany Herbel, Ashley Bell and Alex, Katie Gold and Quinton, Taylor Herndon, Heather Agnew and Justin, Dyanna Gerdes and Joe, Grant Sullivan and Courtney, Jessica Sullivan, Skyler Sullivan and Amanda Sullivan; Great-Grandchildren Finley Thomason and Axyl Thomason; mother of his children Emily Griggs; his “sweet lady” companion for the past few years Nancy Parker, and lots of extended family members and friends.

John is predeceased by his parents, his wife Barbara Lepper, sister Wanda Harvey, brothers James and Jerry Lepper.

A memorial service honoring his life will be held at 6:30pm on June 6, 2022 at Tulsa Central Church of the Nazarene, 7291 E. 81st Street, Tulsa.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUN 6. 6:30 PM (CT)

Central Nazarene Church
7291 East 81st Street
Tulsa, OK 74133

Tribute Wall



“ *John Lepper*

October 23, 2023 at 01:21 AM



“ *John and I met at Okmulgee High School, Class of 1952. He pitched for a fast-pitch softball team that won the National Championship. I learned at one of our regular high school reunions, that for every birthday, he would throw as many pitches as his years. I hope he was able to throw 87 pitches last summer!*

Donald L. Hendrickson

Elaine Hendrickson Parry - May 22, 2022 at 09:15 PM



“ *My friend John Lepper was a steady and true Christian Gentleman who was an example to many of us. He had a broad range of knowledge and interest of sports, finance, education and ethics and he demonstrated compassion as well. My colleagues and I were always enriched to have him at our breakfast table. We will cherish our memories of our fast pitch softball friend and no one can take his vacant chair.*

Hiram E. Sanders - May 17, 2022 at 10:49 AM



“ *It is our honor and privilege to serve the Lepper family and to provide this permanent tribute website in memory of John.*



Hayhurst Funeral Home - May 15, 2022 at 09:35 AM