



Earl Leroy Howser

May 31, 1936 - May 20, 2024

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Earl Leroy "Lee" Howser. He left this world on May 20, 2024, just a few days before his birthday of May 31. A truly remarkable soul, Lee was a community leader, a man whose generosity knew no bounds, and a loving father. "He was a kind and generous dad, far beyond what his children deserved!" his daughter, Julie, lovingly said.

Lee married Norma Jane Amos in 1957. They were married for 64 years when Norma passed in 2021. Their three children, Christopher Lee, of Traverse City, Steven Daniel, of Jackson, and Julie Ann, of Charlotte, survive him, along with grandchildren Ryan, Nathan, Michael, and Addison. Three great-grandchildren, Xander, Avery, and Ryleigh, complete the Howser family.

Lee came from very humble beginnings but bettered himself through education along the way. After his high school graduation, where he was salutatorian, he was recruited to play basketball at Lincoln University in Missouri. He then attended Missouri University, where he received his master's degree, and later his Ph.D. at Michigan State University.

In his early days he was a television personality on KRCG-TV in Missouri. In 1964 he taught school and was the head basketball coach in Jefferson City, Missouri. Lee served as the president of Jackson Community College from 1993-2001, and the Howser Child Development Center at JCC was named after Lee and Norma when he retired. He was instrumental in the creation of the center, in order to provide single mothers with safe and free childcare to

give them the opportunity to seek better employment.

Lee Howser accomplished much in life. He worked with General Colin Powell, for instance, on his "Promise to Youth Alliance," a program to improve the life of America's at-risk youth. He helped establish Michigan Education Foundations at Jackson Community College and later at Charlotte Public Schools, raising millions of dollars. Working with astronauts McDivitt, Worden, and Lousma, he helped found the Michigan Space Center in Jackson. Lee founded the Jackson Enterprise Group, an economic development model. He served as president and chairman of the Jackson United Way. He actively supported many non-profit organizations, such as the Jackson Symphony Orchestra, the Shakespeare Festival, the Jackson Balloon Festival, the Ella Sharp Museum, the American Cancer Society, the Courthouse Square Museum, and many more.

On a fun note, each year Lee enjoyed Halloween at his daughter's "Halloween House" in Charlotte, Michigan. He loved interacting with people and talking to the children. He would dress up to greet them at the door, sometimes as Elvis, other times as a spider.

With a love for animals, the Howser home was a sanctuary for various furry friends brought home by his children as they were growing up; "It didn't matter what you dragged home, or where you found it, a lost animal was always welcome. You knew you could take it to the vet and Dad would pay."

Lee will be dearly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him. His spirit lives on in the countless lives he touched and the legacy of kindness and compassion he leaves behind. As we mourn his loss, we should also celebrate the incredible life he lived and the positive impact he had on the world around him.

You are encouraged to share memories of Lee on his tribute page at www.PrayFuneral.com, or by attending memorial services to honor Lee's life. The memorial will be held on Sunday, June 2, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at Pray Funeral Home in Charlotte. A visitation will be held just prior to the service from 1-3:00

p.m.. The funeral will be webcast so you may watch it from any computer, smartphone, or mobile device that has internet access. Go to www.prayfuneral.com, click on Lee's tribute, then click on Photos and Videos from your computer (or Media from your smart phone). In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Howser Child Development Center through the Jackson College Foundation. The family is in the care of Pray Funeral Home, Charlotte.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 2. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Pray Funeral Home
401 W Seminary St
Charlotte, MI 48813

Memorial

JUN 2. 3:00 PM (ET)

Pray Funeral Home
401 W Seminary St
Charlotte, MI 48813

Tribute Wall



“ Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Webcast in memory of Earl Leroy Howser



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - June 02, 2024 at 02:04 PM

JC

“ I first met Lee, as I knew him, in the basement of the old building in Charlotte that we used as a work out gym. I was fascinated by his stories of his life and awed by his willingness to go above and beyond to help young people grow. After I moved to Arizona, he kept in touch with me, and what he was involved in. When I would come back to visit family and friends in Charlotte, we always had a standing date at the new exercise center to catch up on happenings. I lost my partner just over 6 months ago, and, unfortunately hasn't stay in touch with anyone. I was saddened to hear of his death from an old neighbor, but I know he is bound to be happy reunited with his wife and their multitude of animals. Your family is very fortunate to have such a loving and caring person. I will always remember him as a wonderful friend. Jackie Couzens, Surprise, AZ. June 1, 2024

Jackie Couzens - June 02, 2024 at 12:11 AM

PH

“ So sad to learn of Lee's passing. I always looked to him for his expertise on community college issues, he was so knowledgeable. He positively touched the futures of many Jackson County leaders. May God reward him.

Phil Hoffman - May 25, 2024 at 08:02 PM

KS

“ Julie and your entire family. We are so sorry for the loss of your father. Please take comfort that your dear Mom and Dad are back together in eternity having every little cat or dog following their every move. 🙏

Kathy and Chris Smith - May 25, 2024 at 10:05 AM

GP

“ We first met Lee and Norma about 1960 when Lee was hired as head of public relations and marketing at Jackson Community College. George was Chair of the College's Board of Trustees. We became friends of Lee and Norma almost immediately. The friendship continued as Lee rose through the College ranks. Lee became the Board's chief negotiator with the College's two unions. George and Lee worked very closely together during collective bargaining with the unions. When JCC President Clyde Letarte was elected state representative George urged the Board to hire Lee, by then a vice-president of the College, as his successor. The Board agreed and in 1993 Lee became president. During Lee's eight year tenure as JCC president we became very close friends with Lee and Norma. We attended community college meetings around the country together and several times spent time vacationing together after the meetings. Norma was the nicest and most gracious first lady ever to serve as hostess at Wickwire House, the home of the College president. Because of George's mobility problems we are unable to attend the memorial service for Lee. We do plan to view the service through the internet. We want to express our condolences to the entire Howser family. George and Donna Potter



George and Donna Potter - May 24, 2024 at 03:49 PM