



## Joe Gill Lessert

May 4, 1933 - April 1, 2015

Joe Lessert, age 81, went to be with the Lord on Wednesday, April 1, 2015 surrounded by his loving family after a courageous battle with cancer. A memorial service celebrating his life will be held at 2:00 pm, Wednesday, April 8, 2015 at Marvin United Methodist Church in Tyler with Dr. Doug Baker and Reverend Gerry Giles officiating. Friends are invited to a reception in Pirtle Hall, Marvin United Methodist church, following the service to meet with the family. A private burial will be held before the service under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home.

Joe was born May 4, 1933 in Ponca City, Oklahoma to the late Joseph Walter and Dora Gill Lessert. His grandparents were pioneers in the opening of the Cherokee Strip, which later became part of Oklahoma. Joe graduated from Ponca City High School in 1951.

He graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 1955 with a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration. He was the President of Phi Delta Theta fraternity. While at OU, he met the love of his life, Virginia Sloan. They were married on June 26, 1955. Joe received an ROTC 2nd Lieutenant commission in the United States Army, Artillery Division, and served two years in Fort Chaffee, Ark. Thereafter, he joined the reserves and attained the rank of Major.

He returned to Ponca City and worked in the family's business, Gill-Lessert Funeral Home. Joe then moved to Houston where he began his long career with IBM. His career in marketing with IBM took the family to New York, West

Virginia, Dallas and, finally, to Tyler in 1985 where he was Regional Marketing Manager. Joe retired from IBM in 1992. After retirement, he earned his Master's degree in Technology at UT Tyler and formed an ISO 9000 consulting company. He taught continuing education at Tyler Junior College. Joe participated in nonprofit and civic organizations and was on the board of directors of some that included: Jr. Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis and Rotary. He was an advisor for the Boy Scout Explorer post making two trips to Philmont Scout Ranch. He was a proud member of the Texas Society Sons of the American Revolution and of the Society of Mayflower Decendants, the Order of the Rose and Willow Brook Country Club. He also served on the following boards: West Virginia Appalachian Craftsmen, East Texas Symphony, Tyler Museum of Art, Literacy Council of Tyler, TISD Foundation, Young Audiences of East Texas and Junior Achievement of Tyler.

He was a youth and adult Sunday school teacher, a choir member, an usher, a Deacon, an Elder and a Trustee in their various churches. He served on the board of the Presbyterian Men's council for Mo Ranch, Hunt, Texas. He was a member of Marvin United Methodist Church and the Pairs and Parents Sunday school class. A gifted and inspiring teacher, Joe had a unique ability to give insight to complex Biblical concepts.

Joe was devoted to his family. Time with his children and grandchildren was a source of much joy. He is survived by his wife of almost 60 years. They have two children; daughter Andrea and her husband David Wigglesworth of McKinney; and son, Todd Lessert of San Antonio; three grandchildren, Mary Kate Repasky, Claire Wigglesworth, and John Carter Wigglesworth. He is also survived by a sister, Saraellen Woodard, and her husband Jim, a brother, M.G. Lessert and his wife Virginia. Joe's extended family has provided delightful fun and caring through the years.

If desired, contributions may be made to The Hospice of East Texas Foundation, 4111 University Blvd. Tyler 75701, Marvin United Methodist Church, 300 W. Erwin, Tyler 75702 or the charity of your choice.



# Cemetery Details

## **Rose Hill Cemetery**

2400 S. Donnybrook  
Tyler, TX 75702

# Tribute Wall

ME

“ Joe and son Todd were always a presence at MoRanch Men's Conference each spring. Joe was a leader at Philmont Boy Scout camp when my son Charlie was there. Joe and I served on the Board of Trustees at First Presbyterian Church and his leadership was always wise and beneficial. Joe was a gentleman and good friend and we will all miss his presence. My prayers are with Virginia, Andrea, and Todd

*Marshall Ewing April 8, 2015*

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**Marshall Ewing** - April 08, 2015 at 01:30 PM

JS

“ I was very sorry to learn of Joe's passing. I got to know him when I was new to Tyler, and he was a strong presence in my life during that time. Joe was a true gentleman, a positive influence, and a strong supporter of good causes. He will be greatly missed.

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**John Sims** - April 06, 2015 at 02:40 PM

CB

“ Great picture and always fun at Cultu-Mea parties. Will miss him.  
*Dave and Carolyn Bain*

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**Carolyn Bain** - April 04, 2015 at 11:07 AM

FT

“ I offer my deepest sympathy to the Joe Lessert family....I've cut Joe's hair for over 30 yrs and have so much enjoyed our relationship as a client and as a good friend.....I will miss those enjoyable visits we have had.....

*Godspeed Joe....*

*Frank Tannery*

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**Frank Tannery** - April 03, 2015 at 07:31 AM