



# Leslie Robert Ballou

AUG 26, 1948 - MAY 9, 2013



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## **Leslie Robert Ballou**

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**L**eslie Robert Ballou, Ph.D. died at his home in Memphis on May 9, 2013. Les was a retired research chemist with the Veterans Administration Medical Center and Associate Professor in the Departments of Medicine and Molecular Sciences at the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center. He is survived by his wife of 30 years, Rebecca (Becky), his son Jeffrey, and his cousin Shirley Pasqua of La Canada Flintridge, California. Les was born in Glendale, California in 1948, the son of the late Robert C. and Evelyn Spelbring Ballou. After graduating from Hoover High School in Glendale, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, serving in the Eighth Army Band in South Korea. He attended California State University at Northridge, where he earned bachelor and masters degrees in biology. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, and accepted a post-doctoral fellowship at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, where he met and married Becky. At the time of his retirement, Les's primary research interest was in the area of arthritis, and specifically, the role of COX inhibitors in inflammation. During his career he published more than 50 peer reviewed papers, including collaborations with the late Nobel laureate Sir John Vane. He received the Virginia P. Engleticheff award for Outstanding Research in Arthritis. Les also mentored a number of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows, many of whom are making important scientific contributions in their respective positions. During his scientific career he was an invited speaker at several national and international conferences, traveling to Europe, China, Korea and Thailand, and he also served as Chair of the Cell Biology and Biochemistry study section of the National Arthritis Foundation. He co-authored the chapter on nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs in the 2009 version of Kelley's Textbook of Rheumatology. An avid golfer, Les also loved fishing, travel, music and sports, and he had many friends from all walks of life. After his diagnosis of pancreatic cancer in January 2011, he fought the disease with strength and



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determination, while continuing to focus on enjoying activities with family and friends and pursuing his many interests. Les is also survived by his sisters-in-law Cameron Wright of Tarpon Springs, Florida, Paige Wright of Memphis, and Megan Baker of Orange Park, Florida, brothers-in-law Andrew Corn and James Baker, and niece Jessica Baker. The family will receive friends from 5-7 p.m. Tuesday, May 14 and the funeral service will be at 1 p.m. Wednesday, May 15 all at Memorial Park Funeral Home. The family requests that donations in lieu of flowers be made to the charity of the donor's choice. Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery, 5668 Poplar Ave. Memphis, TN 38119, (901)767-8930, "Behind the Stone Wall".



## Tribute Wall

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BP

**Bob Pueschel** posted:

We all know Les was in the Army band but his abilities in music have been overshadowed by those in science. He was a superb musician. One day in high school Les casually picked up a sax and, just warming up, created the most breathtaking, electrifying sound. I remember standing there with my mouth and eyes wide open, and Les was completely casual, just business as usual. I've been haunted by that music for almost 50 years now. A few years ago I asked Les if he remembered that incident. Nope. Just another day in school to him. We lost more than a scientist. Bob Pueschel Santa Barbara

May 14 at 11:37 AM

DS

**Diane Spears** posted:

Les was one of the nicest, kindest and smartest people I ever knew. And, I really liked him for being a great husband to Becky and a devoted dad to Jeff. He was not only a research genius who was willing to share his knowledge with non-scientists. He was also a brave, defiant warrior in his battle with an encroaching cancer. I believe the words "complete admiration" sum up my regard for Les. With great memories of a great person, Diane C. Spears

May 10 at 8:44 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Leslie by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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