



## Philip Warren Benson

February 7, 1937 - September 23, 2020

Mr. Benson passed away Wednesday, September 23, 2020, surrounded by his loving family. On February 7, 1937, Phil was born in Ludington, Michigan, where he enjoyed a happy and adventurous childhood under the watchful and adoring eyes of his mother, Rose; grandmother, Sarah; and Aunt Lil. Phil's love of Ludington was passed on to his children through memories created over many summer weekends spent at the state park. In 1957 Phil married his childhood sweetheart and love of his life "Libby" (Alice Elizabeth) Matthews. Phil and Libby relocated to the Grand Rapids area in 1960, eventually building a home in "The Village" in Rockford. Phil and Libby hold fond memories of the friends they made while raising their children in "The Village". Phil and Libby were one of the founding families of Our Lady of Consolation. Despite not being Catholic himself, Phil served as a member of the OLC Parish Finance Council and dedicated his time and resources to support the parish in establishing the original education endowment. In 1978 Phil's family proudly witnessed his conversion to Catholicism and joining them in full membership of the Catholic faith. Together, Phil and Libby embraced 63 years of marriage, raising three children and fostering countless more through Catholic Charities of Grand Rapids. Phil attended Central Michigan University, graduating in 1958 with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. He also earned the designation of Distinguished Military Graduate of the Army ROTC. Upon graduation, Phil was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps and served until his honorable discharge as a Captain of the U.S. Army Reserve in 1966. Phil began his professional career at Lear Siegler Incorporated in 1959, quickly working his way up the accounting department's ranks. In 1973, Phil left Lear, accepting the position of CFO at RoseJohnson Incorporated in Grand Rapids. Following a successful career in finance, Phil opted for early retirement from professional life in 1992. Soon realizing the retired lifestyle was a bit bland for his tastes, Phil ventured into the world of small business ownership, acquiring two UPS Stores in the Grand Rapids area. He thrived in this hands-on business setting and found immense joy and value in fostering relationships with his staff and regular customers. Phil proudly served as owner and operator until 2017, when he retired his signature black UPS polo shirt and lovingly passed "the stores" to new ownership at the age of 80. Finally ready to embrace retired

life, Phil spent the past few years with Libby at their home in Rockford, quietly tending to the yard or simply "looking at the lake" and enjoying the peaceful calm.

Phil was a man who refused to take himself too seriously, preferring to add a humorous spin to life's ups and downs. Phil was quick to flash his generous grin or offer a hearty chuckle (even when the joke wasn't all that funny). Phil was a gentle, peaceful man. He will be greatly missed and lovingly remembered by all fortunate enough to know him.

Phil is survived by: his wife, Libby; children, Laura Milliken of White Lake, David and Laurie Benson, and Martin Benson, all of Grand Rapids; grandchildren, Erin (Brandon) Pollack of Colorado Springs, Allison (Matt) Nikitin of Howell, Matthew (Samantha Thompson) and Samuel Milliken all of White Lake; MaryRose and Cyril Benson of Grand Rapids; Taylor and Noah Wustman of Grand Rapids; great-grandchildren, Reagan Milliken, Evelyn "Evey" Nikitin, (and Baby Nikitin in March!). Phil was preceded in death by his mother, Rose Benson; his father, Stanley Benson; and his aunt, Lily Hansen.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held Thursday, October 1, 2020, at 11:00 am at Our Lady of Consolation Catholic Church with Rev. Tony Russo presiding and Rev. Louis Anderson concelebrating. The family will greet relatives and friends one hour before the Mass on Thursday at the church.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a charitable contribution in Phil's name to the Alzheimer's Association – Greater Michigan Chapter, West Michigan Office, 4081 Cascade Road SE, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49546.

# Events

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**OCT**   **Visitation**                      10:00AM - 11:00AM

**1**  
Our Lady of Consolation Catholic Church  
4865 11 Mile Rd NE, Rockford, MI, US, 49341-8477

**OCT**   **Mass of Christian Burial**                      11:00AM

**1**  
Our Lady of Consolation Catholic Church  
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# Comments

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“ What a great obituary! Phil lovingly opened his home to foster children, including me when my options were limited. My wife and I were beneficiaries of the OLC Education endowment that he was instrumental in setting up. He introduced me to Ludington State Park which remains my favorite place in the world. That smile and laugh of his will stay with me forever. He was just a great model for all fathers out there.

Mrs. B, Laura, Dave, Marty - be proud of this guy. I love and promise to pray for you all during this tough time.

**Paul Wyatt** - October 01 at 01:13 PM

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“ I'm so sorry to hear of Phil's death. I'm his half sister and it's equally sad that our side of Stan Benson's family was rarely acknowledged by Phil, and never by his family. I will, though, inform his Benson cousins, of his passing. Julie Benson Mantyck

**Julie Mantyck** - September 27 at 05:19 PM



“ Julie, thank you for expressing your sadness. The remainder of your comments are neither welcome nor appropriate. Kindly take your vitriol elsewhere as we will continue to celebrate Phil with the love and joy he deserves.

**Erin Pollock** - September 29 at 06:51 PM



“ That was very rude, Julie. His passing is not about you, so don't make it about you. Keep it to yourself.

**Taylor Wustman** - October 01 at 04:44 PM