



Lawrence 'Larry' B. Varnes

January 21, 1945 - January 9, 2023

Lawrence 'Larry' Burke Varnes, 77, of Grand Island, passed away on Monday, January 9, 2023, with his loving family by his side. A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 5th, at the Embassy Suites in Denton, Texas. Online condolences may be left at giallfaiths.com. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests making a donation to the Alzheimer's Society in Larry's honor. Larry was born on January 21, 1945 to Robert and Frances (McWaters) Varnes and raised in Los Angeles, California. He received his education from Cal State University of Northridge (CSUN) with a bachelor's degree in marketing. Soon after graduation, Larry joined Grey Advertising, where he worked his way to Chief Operating Officer of the West, due to his incredible work ethic and strategic mind. He worked for Grey for over thirty years, retiring in 2007.

Larry then became a professor at CSUN where he taught and mentored many students in Business and Advertising. He enjoyed sharing his knowledge and experience with the next generation and maintained those relationships throughout the years.

After 60 years as a California native, Larry and his late wife Maureen moved to Texas for a new adventure, spending time with friends in Denton and traveling the world. After losing Maureen, Larry was lucky to find another love of his life in Kaye Dotson. Kaye and Larry married in June 2018 and Larry was always eager to tell their romantic love story of how they met on a church cruise along the Aegean Sea in the Mediterranean. Kaye and Larry split their

time between Texas and Nebraska.

Larry was extremely involved with his community. After losing his father to Alzheimer's, Larry served on the National Alzheimer Association board where he eventually became Chairman and helped lead their efforts to end the disease. Additionally, he was on the Homeowners Association Board at Robson Ranch for 6 years and served as chair of the City of Denton's Community Development Advisory Board for 5 years. During his time in Grand Island, he attended GI Free Church.

Though he wore many hats throughout his lifetime, Larry's favorite title was 'grandpa'. He loved keeping up with his 20 grandchildren and traveling the world with his wife.

Despite his many accomplishments, Larry was never one to brag and will be remembered for his eagerness to mentor others, his big bear hugs, and calming demeanor.

Those left to cherish his memory include: his wife, Kaye; his children: Kristy Varnes-Sundberg, Ken (Jen) Varnes, Vanessa (Adam Grambo) Carlson-Burnaby, Jaime (Juan Capdet) Carlson; Step-children: Dawna-Kaye (Charles) Green, Michelle (Stephen) Fortner, Gregory (Anna) Dotson, and Timothy (Michelle) Dotson; Grandchildren: Annika (20), Ella (17), Jake (17), Mason (17), Anders (15), Lena (15), Kylie (14), Raif (14), Jordi (8), Santiago & Lorenzo (18 months), Harry (10), Alex (8), Geoffory (24), Dominic (21), Giancarlo (16), Allison (10), Weldon (18), Emiley (14), and Henry (4).

Larry was preceded in death by his previous wife and life partner, Maureen Ojeda Varnes, and his parents.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

FEB 5. 2:00 PM (CT)

Embassy Suites
3100 Town Center Tr.
Denton, TX 76201

Tribute Wall



“ *Lawrence 'Larry' B. Varnes*

October 08, 2023 at 11:02 PM



“ *Larry was a great neighbor. Always, pleasant, considerate, thoughtful, supportive with a lot of insight about many things. There is no doubt that he made a positive impact on many people throughout his life. He is and will be missed.*

Allen Bishop - January 21, 2023 at 07:30 AM



“ *I was on the Alzheimer's Association Board with Larry. He was the Chair and I was the Treasurer and head of the finance committee. Larry devoted many hours to the cause, first at the LA chapter and later at National. He led by building consensus and not by giving edicts. Very classy man and wonderful Board chair. The Association's HQ was in Chicago and he flew there often. He would fly in and take the El train to downtown office. Once he came up from the subway right into the middle of the celebration of the White Sox winning the World Series. Roughly a 100,000 people partying and Larry calmly made it to the office. Larry kept his cool and enjoyed the unexpected crowd. I will always remember the dedication he brought to his position. Very conscientious, a true leader!*

Mike Urbut

Michael Urbut - January 20, 2023 at 06:09 PM

SL

“ I am truly bummed to hear of Larry's passing. I worked with Larry at Grey Advertising in the '80s and he was the consummate pro. I learned so much from him, and he didn't even know it. He was an inspiration to many of us; showed us how being smart and competent didn't mean being ego maniacs or jerks. What a gentleman and one-of-a-kind human being.

My deepest condolences to his family. The world is a lesser place without Larry Varnes.

Sophie (Kwan) Lafferty - January 17, 2023 at 03:53 PM

PB

“ We were blessed to have Larry & Maureen as neighbors in TX. Wonderfully kind man who will be missed by all who knew him. Our sincere condolences to Kaye & all of Larry's beautiful family.

Pam & Norm Beatty - January 15, 2023 at 05:33 PM

DM

“ My sincerest condolences to all of Larry's friends and family. I'm certain that he will be missed by many for a very long time. I worked with Larry at Grey Advertising for 20 years when he was the account supervisor and I was an art director serving our our clients, Taco Bell, and later, Church's Chicken. There were few in our business who were as respected as Larry. He was calm, clear thinking, compassionate and understanding. He was also a very strategic thinker often approaching problems from a sensible yet unexpected direction. Time and again he defused situations by coming up with ideas that were logical and inarguable. Larry often made working in that highly volatile industry palatable. He was a mensch! Doug Morris



Doug Morris - January 14, 2023 at 02:32 PM

JC

“ As neighbors of Larry's in Robson Ranch we have very happy memories of times spent with the Varnes at social events and in their home. We appreciated Larry's willingness to serve our community in his leadership positions. We want to extend our deepest sympathy to his family on their loss.
Janie and Tom Cindric

Janie and Tom Cindric - January 14, 2023 at 08:40 AM

CG

“ I was an account exec. at Grey in the '80's when Larry was in marketing research at Grey. He was such a big help and wonderful to work with. I will always have fond memories of those times. RIP

Carol Naylon Garris - January 13, 2023 at 10:28 AM

JA

“ I had the pleasure and honor to work closely with Larry for 22 years at Grey Advertising. Throughout that time, Larry was a dear friend and business partner.

Among Larry's many great qualities, was an innate ability to connect with people. Larry was an extremely approachable, wise, and kind man. Both employees and clients gravitated to Larry...if you had a problem, needed reassurance, or wanted to discuss a work issue, you knew Larry would be a patient and thoughtful listener who would offer wisdom and optimism.

Larry wore "many hats" at Grey...and was enormously valued for his Strategic thinking, client-relationship skills, leadership, and willingness to take on difficult assignments...small and large.

Larry's impact at Grey was immense...but, the love and warmth so many of us felt for Larry defined his special place in our lives. He touched us all, and will be dearly missed.

Jeff Alperin

Jeff Alperin - January 12, 2023 at 05:09 PM

LL

Very sweet. Larry was a true pro.

Larry Steven Londre - January 13, 2023 at 03:12 PM

DM

Spot on, Jeff. Thanks

Doug Morris - January 14, 2023 at 02:40 PM