



## Charles Leslie (Les) Skidmore

July 22, 1929 - April 25, 2022

Captain Charles Leslie Skidmore, retired USAF and Civil Service, passed into the arms of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on Monday, April 25th in New Braunfels, Texas, with both of his daughters by his side.

He is preceded in death by his beloved wife of 57 years, Elsie B. Brown Skidmore, originally of Paige, Texas.

“Les” was born in Geneva, Ohio on July 22nd, 1929, son of Charles Guy Skidmore and Alta Leslie Bishop, both deceased.

Les is survived by his two daughters, Lesley Mergele (Joe) of New Braunfels and Sherry Phillips (Matthew) of Austin, and four grandchildren, Sara Mergele Czeiszperger (Dan) and A.J. Mergele, Mark D. Phillips (Natalie) and Rick Phillips (Amy). He is also survived by his five great-grandchildren, Wesley, Tyler, and Colton Williams (Sara), and Madison and Jack Phillips (Mark), and nieces and nephews.

At the young age of ten during the Depression, he began to work delivering newspapers, selling magazines and cigarettes, setting double line bowling pins at Geneva-on-the-Lake, and selling tickets at a Greyhound Bus station. He also worked at his father’s small grocery store in Geneva until he graduated from Geneva High School in 1947.

Les then entered Miami University of Oxford, Ohio, in 1947 and by the summer of '48, the Korean Conflict broke out. By the end of his second year, Les applied to the USAF to become an Aviation Cadet. He was appointed to the Air Force and officially inducted as a Cadet in November 1949. He

attended and graduated from Ellington AFB Navigation School in Houston, Texas. He was then commissioned as a Second Lieutenant Navigator in February 1951 and was assigned to the Air Rescue Squadron in Harmon Field, Newfoundland, flying mostly SB-17's and SA-10 amphibians. During that time, his squadron conducted search and rescue operations out of Lages AFB, Azores. As a navigator, without instruments or GPS at that time, Captain Skidmore flew off the coast in the North Sea doing grid searches for downed military and civilian ships and planes. He used sextants, maps, stopwatch, a compass, and the stars in the sky as his guide.

His next tour of duty was the 56th Air Transport Squadron at Kelly AFB in San Antonio, Texas, where he flew the C-54, D-97 and C-130. It was there that he met his future wife, Elsie, and they were married on June 20, 1953. Their daughters, Sherry and Lesley, were born in 1954 and 1955, respectively. He was assigned to the Air Force Institute of Technology in May 1957 and proceeded to the University of Oklahoma at Norman to complete his Bachelor of Business Administration in 1959.

Les was then assigned as Administrative and Personnel Officer to the 1240th AACS squadron in Athens, Greece. He and his family, their dog, Julie, and their new '59 Chevrolet sedan, boarded a military transport ship in Brooklyn, NY and sailed for eight days before reaching their first port at Cadiz, Spain. Subsequently, they sailed into Barcelona, Spain, Piza and Naples, Italy, Tripoli, Libya and finally into Athens where he and his family lived for three years. He also had detachments in Crete and Izmir, Turkey.

From there he was reassigned to the Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps Detachment 710 at Gettysburg College, PA, where he was the Executive Officer and Professor of Air Science instructing college AFROTC juniors.

After retiring in 1965, the family returned to San Antonio. He was then hired at Kelly AFB as a contract negotiator in Procurement until his second retirement in November 1987. As a civil servant working for the military, he traveled to Honduras, Central America and landed one time on a military base under

gunfire.

Les proudly became a born-again Christian in 1985 and attended Cornerstone Church with Pastor John Hagee where he and Elsie attended/taught weekly bible studies and were cell leaders in the Cornerstone Government of XII. Les also ushered during the 11:00am worship services. Les and Elsie enjoyed traveling in their motorhome and many happy years leading a quiet retirement in San Antonio.

Our family would like to thank Hope Hospice, New Braunfels, for their diligent service to Les since February 2022. Special thanks to Tina, RN, Vanessa, Pastor Tom, Nicole, Rich (volunteer) and the On Call emergency RN's. Additionally, we would like to thank the volunteer veteran group from Hope Hospice who blessed Les with a private bedside ceremony thanking him for his military service and presenting him with personal gifts.

We would also like to thank Sandra LeBlanc, Executive Director of Elan Westpointe, New Braunfels, and their amazing staff where he spent the last six months of his life. We would especially like to thank caretakers Morris, Maya, Abby and Lelaine for their tireless compassion and care.

Visitation will be held at Mission Park Chapel North on Saturday, April 30th from 1-3pm followed by a service at 3pm. Burial will be on Wednesday, June 8th, at Ft. Sam Houston at 11am with military honors.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his memory to Options for Life, 1126 N. Loop 337, New Braunfels, Texas ([optionsforlifemb.org](http://optionsforlifemb.org))

# Cemetery Details

## Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery

1520 Harry Wurzbach  
San Antonio, TX 78209

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**APR 30.** 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels Cherry Ridge  
3401 Cherry Ridge Dr  
San Antonio, TX 78230  
(210) 349-1414  
<https://www.missionparks.com/>

## Funeral Service

**APR 30.** 3:00 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels Cherry Ridge  
3401 Cherry Ridge Dr  
San Antonio, TX 78230  
(210) 349-1414  
<https://www.missionparks.com/>

## Interment

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JUN 8. 11:00 AM (CT)

Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery  
1520 Harry Wurzbach  
San Antonio, TX 78209

# Tribute Wall

AP

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



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**Amy Evans Phillips** - April 30, 2022 at 09:52 AM

AP

“ *I only had the pleasure of knowing Grandpa Les a short time but he was a wonderful man. One of my favorite memories was having him teach me how to play, “Joker” over Christmas. He had such a quick mind and was able to calculate plays before any of us knew what had happened! Rick and I also loved to play Poker with him. Grandpa Les usually won but we had fun nonetheless. We love you!*

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**Amy Evans Phillips** - April 30, 2022 at 09:43 AM

JH

“ Uncle Les RIP. I will always cherish the great memories of numerous family gatherings. Grateful for all your prayers over me and my children in person and in private. Thank you and Aunt Elsie for leading me to Cornerstone Church years ago where I really came to know God’s Word! 🙏🙏 You were a brilliant scholar in all things and respected your opinions of life and politics. I highly appreciated your service as an officer in the USAF and your dedication to our country.

You touched my heart when you sent me a birthday card that I received the day that you passed. I will treasure it and keep it in my Bible ❤️

Love you and will miss you until we all gather in God’s Kingdom! 🙏🙏

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Joan Huebner - April 29, 2022 at 12:03 PM

LM

“ I’ll miss are daily visits, Dad, but I am so happy you are home free now with Mom in Heaven with our Lord Jesus.

I will love you always and forever. Bye for now ❤️



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Lesley Mergele - April 29, 2022 at 11:19 AM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Charles Leslie (Les) Skidmore.



April 28, 2022 at 11:16 PM



“ I love you, Sam, and I am so proud to have been your daughter. You were a proud patriot and veteran. You were a good man and good father. Rest In Peace, Dad.

**sherry phillips** - April 28, 2022 at 11:15 PM



“ Les was always there when we needed help over the years . He was incredibly smart navigating planes in the night sky before the days of GPS. He read everything and was a great joker and dominoes player . We visited recently and I am glad he is at peace now.

**matt phillips** - April 28, 2022 at 11:04 PM



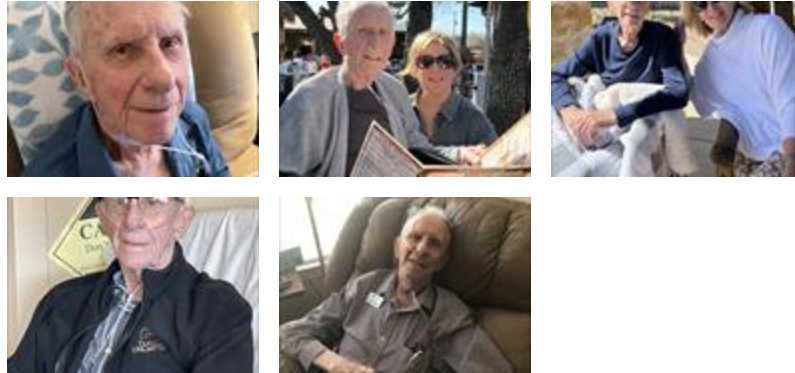
“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Charles Leslie (Les) Skidmore.



April 28, 2022 at 02:48 PM

LM

“ 12 files added to the tribute wall



Lesley Mergele - April 28, 2022 at 01:35 PM

BZ

*He will be missed and remembered by his loving family.*

Brenda Zachman - April 28, 2022 at 10:54 PM

SH

*We will miss you so much Sam. Give mom a hug for Lesley and me when you get to heaven.*

sherry - April 28, 2022 at 11:04 PM

LM

“Dad, words aren't enough to express how much I will miss you after spending the last six months by your side. It has been a privilege to be one of your two daughters and it has been an honor to help care for you and share in your last days filled with stories, games and time together. I just wish there would have been more of everything, more stories, more games, more time, but you needed to go, Dad. It was time. You suffered enough pain and loss on this earth and you are free of it all now in the presence of our God and Savior, along with His holy angels and with Mom again. That makes me so happy for you.

*I promise I will always tell people that you were 92 and 1/2 like you always let people know! You were right, getting old is NOT for sissies, and you were as strong as they came. You were a survivor from a young age, never complaining, working so hard and always being such a gentleman. You always said "thank you" for anything I did for you, but I want to thank YOU and my God for giving me this extra time to spend with you. You NEVER complained and never wanted to bother anyone. You were a proud man that always wanted to do things on your own (which included disarming your bed and chair alarms constantly!) You were always wanting to be independent and could be quite the stinker, but you couldn't figure out how to disarm the motion detector I installed last! You were always so darn smart, so I had to be smarter than you, which was not easy:)*

*I love you so much, Dad, and I want to thank you again for being a loving and supportive father, as well as a faithful and devoted husband to mom. I can't wait to see you whole and strong again when we join together eternally with our Lord Jesus, who deserves ALL the praise for blessing your life and ours all these years. Love you always and forever:)*

*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. (Psalm 116:115)*





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**Lesley Skidmore Mergele** - April 28, 2022 at 01:25 PM

LM

*So proud of you, Dad* 🙌

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**Lesley Mergele** - April 29, 2022 at 05:35 PM