



H. J. "Bud" Leam Jr.

January 21, 1925 - January 1, 2018

Bud Leam, 92, was born to Harry J., Sr., and Myrtle Leam in Jackson, CA. He passed away at his home in Turlock on New Year's Day.

Bud moved with his family to a ranch in Lone when he was in the 6th grade, and with a passion for athletics he lettered in all five sports at Lone High School. At Sacramento JC, he studied aeronautical engineering before being called into service in April 1943.

In the US Army Air Corp, Bud received radio training in Sioux Falls, SD, followed by gunnery school in Harlingen, TX, after which he spent 45 days aboard ship bound for Bombay, India. From there he was sent to China to take a position as a radio operator with the 27th Troop Carrier Squadron in the 14th Air Force, known as the Flying Tigers. In December 1944, he miraculously walked away with broken ribs, cuts and bruises from a C47 after it crashed in the Himalayan Mountains.

Bud racked up some 600 combat hours and 196 combat missions flying the Himalayan Hump and throughout China. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with Cluster and Air Medal with Cluster along with other ribbons and awards.

From Calcutta, India, he boarded a ship bound for the States and after 63 days landed in San Pedro, CA. In transit, the war ended and after being sent to Camp Beale, CA, Bud was discharged in Oct. 1945.

Bud always said he had more time aboard ship than some sailors.

Back in Jackson, Bud went on a double-blind date with an old friend on New

Year's Eve 1945, where he met his wife Carol. They were married July 21, 1946.

In 1949, Bud went to work for General Pacific Telephone as an installer and repairman in Jackson, and in 1955 he was promoted to management. Soon after he was loaned to Turlock, and in Aug. 1956 the Leam family moved here permanently.

Bud held numerous management positions between Modesto and Turlock, and he retired in Oct. 1983. He loved to travel, play golf, and attend 49er games; he was a season ticket holder for over 20 years.

In Jackson he was a charter member of the Amador Co. Jaycees, Jackson Quarterback Club, and Amador Co. Mountain Men. Locally, he was a charter member and past president of the Turlock Jaycees and Turlock Toastmaster Club. He was also a member of the 49er Gold Rushers in Stockton.

Bud was active in Scouting, both at the Cub and Scout levels (Troop 451), and coached Little League. He also loved to snow ski and snowmobile. He was a charter member and past president of Sierra Snow Sports, a snowmobile club, and served on the board of the CA-NV Snowmobile Assn.

His military affiliations included his membership in the 14th Air Force Assn., Hump Pilots Assn., CBIVA, and American Legion. He was a charter member of the Distinguished Flying Cross Society, and he was very active in his own outfit, the 27th Troop Carrier Foundation. For the "27th" he served as director, VP, and President, and for many years he was in charge of their reunions.

But for all of his volunteerism, he was most proud of being called "The Voice of the Bulldogs." He served for 32 years (1962-1994) as the announcer for the Turlock Bulldog football team.

In later years, Bud was a charter member and director of S.I.R., Branch 143. He still loved sports and played golf into his 90s, and he kept his great sense of humor and still loved to tell jokes and stories. He also made sure all of his grandchildren knew about Pearl Harbor and WWII with many stories about his experiences during the war. Proud to be a member of the Greatest Generation, he took the entire family to Hawaii to see Pearl Harbor.

Bud is survived by daughter Nancy Leam, sons Roger Leam and Robert Leam (Heather), grandchildren Traci Neto, Eddie Neto (Sean), Chad Leam (Rebecca), Rory Leam, Brianna Leam, Madison Leam, and Allison Leam, and great-grandchildren Karri Neto and Easton Leam.

Besides his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife of 70 years, Carol Leam, on Jan. 5, 2017, as well as his only sister, Margaret.

Memorial contributions may be made to American Legion Rex Ish Post 88, 75 Bothun Rd., Turlock, CA 95380 or United Samaritans Fdn., 220 S. Broadway, Turlock, CA 95380.

Visitation will be held from 3 to 7 p.m. on Thurs. (1/11) at Turlock Funeral Home with a funeral service to be conducted at 10 a.m. on Fri. (1/12) at the same location. A lunch reception will follow at the funeral home.

Private entombment will take place at Turlock Memorial Park.

Cemetery Details

Turlock Memorial Park

575 N. Soderquist Rd.
Turlock, CA 95380
(209) 632-9111
<http://turlockmemorialpark.com>

Previous Events

Funeral Service

JAN 12. 10:00 AM (PT)

Turlock Funeral Home
425 North Soderquist Road
Turlock, CA 95381
(209) 632-9111
<https://turlockfuneralhome.com>

Reception following interment

JAN 12 (PT)

Turlock Funeral Home
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Turlock, CA 95381
(209) 632-9111
<https://turlockfuneralhome.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *H. J. "Bud" Leam Jr.*

January 28, 2023 at 09:01 AM



“ *Rick and Gerri Cassinelli purchased the Basket o
f Memories for the family of H. J. "Bud" Leam Jr..*



Rick and Gerri Cassinelli - January 09, 2018 at 03:37 PM