



## Thomas Leslie Litzinger

August 23, 1927 - February 25, 2024

Thomas Leslie Litzinger MSGT Retired USAF (Age 96)

Thomas Leslie Litzinger peacefully returned home to the Lord, and his beloved on the evening of Sunday, February 25th, surrounded by the love of his children and grandchildren.

Tom was born in Waite Park, Minnesota on August 23, 1927, to Regina and Leslie Litzinger. He grew up in a rural setting, attending Tech High School in St. Cloud MN, and graduating in May 1945. With World War II still on, Thomas made the decision to enlist in the US Navy in June of 1945, where he served two years before being released into the Navy Reserves. He then worked on the Great Northern Railroad, until the Korean War began in 1950. Switching his branch of services to the United States Air Force, where he then pursued the greater half of his career in the rescue and survival field (SERE). For 26 years serving in the Air Force, his military travels took him to the Marshall Islands, Alaska, Greenland, and South America. During which time, Thomas adopted and constructed many of the teaching techniques still used today. And was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, as well as numerous other awards.

In 1956 Tom met the love of his life Evelyn Stewart of Reno, Nevada. After a year-long courtship, they married in 1957 in Waite Park, Minnesota. Starting a

family shortly thereafter, he and his beloved had 8 children. After serving at two previous bases, Tom was stationed at Fairchild AFB in 1968. After 30 years of total service to our country, Tom retired from the military in August of 1975, settling and making a home in Medical Lake, WA.

After retiring from the military, Tom finished his B.A. degree in Fine Arts and went on to complete his Master's Degree in American Frontier History in 1979. Going on to teach Botany at EWU for a short time. He was also a very accomplished artist completing pieces at the local St. Anne's Catholic Church, as well as the local Middle School gym. Participated in numerous Western Art Shows, as well as designed and constructed the Fairchild Air Force Base survival training lab and museum, where until recently his work stood for all these years. In addition to this, exhibits at Stead AFB, Nevada, the teaching lab and school at Eielson AFB, Alaska, as well as the Museum of Native American Culture at Eastern Washington University.

He was an outdoor enthusiast who fiercely loved hunting, fishing, and camping with his family. Was passionate about sports, especially baseball and football, and loved old John Wayne movies. And was an extremely proud patriot of his country. Loved traveling with his wife Evelyn, and spending time with his grandchildren. Found great joy in spending time in his studio painting, drawing, and working with his model train set he proudly designed and constructed.

Tom lost his wife Evelyn of 62 incredible years in June of 2019. And missed her presence dearly. In his final years, he would discuss her daily, and would always tell his family she was waiting for him.

Tom was a truly remarkable man both professionally and personally. He had the best stories, wittiest humor, and a heart that radiated selflessness. He leaves behind a remarkable legacy that will be missed and discussed for

many years to come.

Those left to cherish his memory and carry on his legacy are: Jacqueline (Dennis) Ochs and Edward (Tara) Litzinger. Theresa Litzinger. Margaret Litzinger. Joseph Litzinger. Fran Litzinger. Barbara (Brad) Houser. His 12 grandchildren, Amber (Mark), Jason, Jacob (Dalene), Cassie (Chase). Mason, Ava, Emily, Chelsea, Alex, Derek (Sarah), Jamie (David), Tiffany. His 18 great-grandchildren Cory, Taylor, Hannah, Dante, Tylee, La Roux, Elodee, Farryn, Ryatt, Easton, Stetson, Thorin, Ember, Ryan, Faith, Taylor, Bailey.

And is preceded in death by his wife Evelyn Mae Litzinger, his son William Litzinger, brother James Litzinger, sister Carol Gross, as well as his granddaughter Madison Rae Litzinger.

A Funeral Mass will be held at St. Annes Catholic Church on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at 9:00 am in Medical Lake. Followed by Internment at 11:15 am at Washington State Veterans Cemetery in Medical Lake, where burial and honors will take place. And a reception to follow at the hall of St. Annes Catholic Church.

# Cemetery Details

## Washington State Veterans Cemetery

21702 W Espanola Rd.  
Medical Lake, WA 99022

# Previous Events

## Funeral Mass

MAR 13. 9:00 AM (PT)

St. Anne's Catholic Church  
708 E Lake St.  
Medical Lake, WA 99022

## Interment

MAR 13. 11:15 AM (PT)

Washington State Veterans Cemetery  
21702 W Espanola Rd.  
Medical Lake, WA 99022

# Tribute Wall

BL

“ My dear cousins, I wish I could be there to offer you all comfort & support as you say goodbye to your dad. My heart hurts knowing how much pain you are all feeling. Uncle Tom was a great man & I always looked forward to either visiting when he came home to MN or I drove to WA with my dad to see him, your mumma & of course all of you. I never tired of he & dad reminiscing of their antics as kids growing up in Waite Park or laughing at he & dad's appetites!!! They certainly had a loving bond as brothers & that brings peace to my heart. What a sight that must have been when your mumma, my dad, Aunt Carol, Billie, grandma, grandpa & all those who went before him were there to welcome him at Heaven's door! Uncle Tom, you are now at peace. Rest easy dear uncle. I love & miss you. My thoughts & prayers will be with you, my cousins. Miss you all too. Sending hugs & love. Your cousin, Brenda

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**Brenda Litzinger** - March 13, 2024 at 09:44 AM

BH

Thank you so much Brenda. I could just imagine the welcoming he got. Miss him so much.

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**Barb Houser** - May 02, 2024 at 01:07 PM

FL

“ I will miss my dad forever. My heart feels empty and hurt without him. Often, I would call him throughout the day just to hear his voice and tell him that he is loved.

I enjoyed my special times on weekends with him. He loved cinnamon rolls, donuts, pumpkin bread and German Chocolate Cake!

We watched Seahawks, Mariners and Yellowstone-he loved his sports. We would sit outside and watch videos of bears, moose, deer and sharks. He loved shark week!

Thank you for being the best dad and for the laughs we shared. I love you very much, dad! A life lived is a life loved!

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**Fran Litzinger** - March 08, 2024 at 01:18 PM

BH



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**Barb Houser** - May 02, 2024 at 01:07 PM

JK

“ Tom was always my magical big brother. When I was 10 or so he showed me how to do a " spit & polish shine" on his shoes before he dressed up in his uniform to go out on the town. When he met Evelyn he told us she was his Prairie rose. Rest in peace, big brother.

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**Judy (Litzinger) Kipka** - March 05, 2024 at 05:18 PM


FL

Thank you for sharing Aunt Judy.

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**Fran Litzinger** - March 08, 2024 at 01:09 PM

BH

Thank you Aunt Judy. Miss him so much 

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**Barb Houser** - May 02, 2024 at 01:08 PM

CF

“ *The Litzinger family goes way back with mine .I babysat for Tom and Evie when they came back to Mn to visit , little Eddy ,Terry and Billie ,I think that was the visit when Billie stuck part of a crayon up his nose. Oh those patient parents. My sister Joyce remained friends with Tom and Evie and was godmother to one of the children . Tom’s grandmother Frances was my mom’s midwife. Tom took a bunch of us little/young kids into the woods in the back of a pickup truck to pick choke cherries and hazelnuts on one of the Minn visits. Know and I’m sure you do that your parents were just amazing beautiful people. I missed seeing him his last visit to Minn but he did see Joyce . Tom grew up with my siblings in Waite Park. We are so sorry for your loss and we’re so blessed to have had Tom and Evie in our lives.*

*Charlene Spsychala Skeate. St Cloud Mn*

charlene skeate family friend - March 05, 2024 at 02:26 PM

FL

*Thank you! My dad was incredible.*

Fran Litzinger - March 08, 2024 at 01:06 PM

BH

*I love hearing stories like this about my parents, Thank you! Yes, they were amazing and I will miss Dad so much.*

Barb Houser - March 08, 2024 at 03:09 PM



*I agree with my sisters above. I love hearing the stories of my parents in younger days. It’s amazing how time flies and now they are gone. I will cherish the memories and know they will be there to welcome me when my time on earth is over. 🙏🙏🙏*

Jackie Ochs - March 24, 2024 at 11:23 PM

BH

“ I love you so much Dad. I will miss you so much and all the wonderful advice you would give me. Thank you for coming with multiple times on my territory routes. I sure enjoyed the company on those long drives. I will always cherish those times spent together. Give Mama a big hug for me and tell her I love her. Love you Dad  
❤️

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**Barb Houser** - March 04, 2024 at 12:33 PM

D"

*I will miss Tom very much. Not only a lifelong friend but a great mentor "growing up" as survival instructor. Rest in peace Tom on that mountain top.*

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**Dennis "Smitty"** - March 04, 2024 at 09:11 PM

BH

*Thank you Smitty*

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**Barb Houser** - March 08, 2024 at 03:12 PM