

James Bracken Lee

April 28, 1930 ~ December 26, 2021

James Bracken Lee, a man with a generous heart, passed away peacefully at home on December 26. A new General has entered heaven. James was born April 28, 1930 in Price, Utah to Margaret Draper and J. Bracken Lee. James graduated from Carbon High School in 1948 and was appointed to the West Point Military Academy. He graduated from West Point with honors in 1952. He was commissioned Second Lieutenant and served in the Korean War. When he completed his active military duties, he returned to Salt Lake City and worked for Kennecott Copper Corporation as a civil engineer. In 1957, he went to Stanford University Law School and later transferred to George Washington University College of Law, graduating In 1960. Returning to Utah, he clerked at the Utah Supreme Court. He joined Parsons Behle Evans & Latimer in 1961, a small firm of six lawyers. He was instrumental in the growth of the firm and served as President from 1979 to 1993 and retired in 2020.

James loved the law. His service over the years to the Utah State Bar was legendary. He served as a Bar Commissioner and as its President, and he was recognized for numerous leadership roles. He mentored many young lawyers, emphatically promoting the careers of women lawyers. In 1998 he was the first male recipient of the prestigious Dorothy Merrill Brothers Award for the advancement of women in the legal profession. The Utah State Bar gave him its Lifetime Achievement Award. He was a founding member of the Utah Legal Services serving as Chairman of the Board in 1978. He was appointed by the Utah Supreme Court to Chair the Lawyer Discipline Committee. He was a member of the Board of the American Bar Association from 2000 to 2003. He served on the ABA Federal Judiciary Committee from 2003 to 2006. He received the Fellows of the American Bar Foundation's Outstanding Service Award in 2005. He was a founding member and Board President of Florence J. Gillmor Foundation 1987 - 2019. In 2016 he
was honored by Westminster College with a Doctorate of Public Service. He gave his all to the legal profession and received multiple awards for his remarkable service to the community over 50 plus years.

James also loved the military. He was deeply committed to his military assignments. He was a graduate of the U. S. Army War College. He served for over 30 years in the Utah National Guard and was President of the Utah National Guard Association in 1966. As a Colonel he taught leadership skills to guard members. He was Commander of the XI Corp Artillery. He retired as a Brigadier General in 1983.

James was a member of the Wasatch Masonic Lodge No. 1 for 66 years. He held a 32nd Degree and Knight Commander of the Court of Honor of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, achieving the same degree as his father and grandfather.

James hiked all the mountain peaks in Utah more than once and belonged to the historic Wasatch Mountain Club for many
years serving as their legal counsel.

He married Jeanne Mitchell in 1961. They were later divorced. In 1978 he married his loving partner, Evelyn Brown Lee. They were soulmates and loved each other unconditionally for over 43 years . Together they travelled extensively, enjoyed river rafting, tennis, hiking, politics, lively discussions and laughter. James loved parties and his many friends. He enjoyed a glass of good wine and joyfully entertained with enthusiastic storytelling. He was proud of his children and loved them deeply.

The family would like to thank his wonderful law partners, Raymond Etcheverry and Frances Wikstrom for their enduring love, commitment and assistance especially during the past year of his illness.

James is survived by his loving wife, Evelyn, and his devoted children, James M. Lee (Judith), Bonn, Germany; Johanna Lee (San Antonio, Texas); Jennifer Brown Christiansen (Kurt) Dover, New Hampshire; and Dr. Jonathan H. Lee (Denison), Ashland, Oregon. His grandchildren (Rachel Christiansen, Ian Christiansen, Elsa Lee, Greta Lee, River Echohawk and Rainn Echohawk); his sister Jon L. Taylor (Lewis); brother-in-law Victor Wilson (Yolanda), as well as many loyal friends, nieces, nephews and cousins.

As per James's wish he was cremated, and there will be no funeral service. A celebration of life will be held later. Those who wish to make donations may consider his favorite organization "and Justice for all".