

Leo Bramel

October 10, 1952 ~ March 21, 2025

“It’s not the notes you play, it’s the notes you don’t play.” ~Miles Davis

On March 21, 2025, our beloved father, husband, grandpa, brother, and friend, Leo Bramel, played his last notes. Leo was born to Raymond “Red” Bramel and Lilian Marie Bramel (nee Cook) on September 10, 1952. Raised in sunny southern California, Leo spent his youth at the beach, playing guitar, and spending time with his 11 brothers and sisters, most of whom were older.

In 1971, after high school, Leo joined the United States Army. With his skills in target practice and potato peeling finely honed, Leo returned to civilian life, started working as a mechanic and spent his free time playing guitar and drifting happily. He thumbed rides up and down the west coast, bought a Harley Davidson, and collected memories. If you wanted to know what it was like to ride down the Avenue of the Giants in the bed of a kind stranger’s truck on a clear summer night and look up at the stars above the faraway treetops, Leo could tell you.

In 1976 Leo met and fell in love with Charlotte Ann Pearson. They were married in December 1978, and just over a year later Leo swapped his Harley for diapers when Nancy Ann was born. Leo, Charlotte, and Nancy listened to music and played in the sunshine until 1994, when they traded beaches for mountains and moved to Utah.

Throughout his life, Leo was endlessly curious. He collected hobbies like a bee collecting pollen and was never afraid to ask a stranger how they got that scar, what music their band played, or how much it costs to get a tattoo that big. Ford, Dick Simon, and UPS all owe Leo a debt of gratitude for keeping their trucks on the road. If you ever needed help with your car, he would happily tell you “No, but I’ll show you what to do and watch you do it.”

Leo found renewed joy as each of his grandchildren were born. As “Papa,” to Isaac, Penelope, and Finn, he now had more people he could teach a C chord, tell a silly joke, and share an ice cream sandwich with (keep yours in sight, he likes to steal bites). Leo knew he was doing things right when Isaac got his car stuck in the mud in the middle of the salt flats, and the first person he called was Papa.

Leo is survived by his wife and best friend, Charlotte, his daughter Nancy Bramel (Bruce Franson), all three grandkids, and more friends and family than we can count. Now we just need to figure out what to do with eight guitars and a garage full of tools.

A Celebration of Life will be held from 2-4 p.m. on Saturday, April 19, 2025 at 356 E. Empire Spring Drive, in Saratoga Springs, Utah.

Papa will eventually be placed at the Veterans Cemetery and Memorial Park at Camp Williams in Bluffdale, Utah, with full military honors.

Please send condolences and share memories to leoplaysguitar1952@gmail.com.

“Time you enjoy wasting, was not wasted.” ~John Lennon