

## BERNARD "BENNY" LEONHARD '71



Born July 15, 1953, the 5th of 6 children of rose Marie Leonard. All 8 of us lived on a 133 acre farm close to Portage Des Sioux, MO. All 6 kids went through 8 grades at St. Francis School in Portage Des Sioux. Two of his sisters went to a convent to become nuns, and the other 4 graduated from Duchesne High School. I graduated in 1971.

My dad died of cancer when I was 13, but he and mom taught me well; instilling in me a great work ethic, a love of the outdoors, especially hunting and a love of god and the people around me. Those

lessons have served me well in life.

After graduating from Duchesne, I chose to go to a trade school instead of college. After the 1st year of trade school, that great work ethic I had kicked in at a summer job at Archway Fence and Pool, and they offered me enough money to stay with them and not finish trade school. But 6 day, 70 hour work weeks got old in a hurry, so in June, 1973, I joined the Air Force. I wanted to see this beautiful country we live in, and I got my wish. First stop Texas, then Colorado, and finally Idaho. I was a bomb loader on F111 swing-wing bombers. I was destined to go to Thailand in October 1974, then then Uncle Sam chose to downsize the regular Air Force and build up the Air National Guard and I took that option, serving in the Missouri ANG from October 1974 until March 1980. During that time I went to bases in Nevada, Arizona, Wisconsin, and Italy; loading ammunitions on F100 Super Sabres and F4 Phantoms. The Air Force was a great learning experience, and I'm glad I served.

While serving in the Air Guard, I also landed a job at UPS as a delivery driver in 1975, working there until retiring in August 2017. During those 42 years, I drove 4.5 million miles, mainly over the road, without an accident or injury. He received the National Safety Council's Midwest Driver of The Year award in 2017.

I married the love of my life, Jan Meyer on October 4, 1980. We were engaged after only 6 months of dating and are currently working on our 39th year of marriage. While Jan tolerates my hunting, we both love traveling, fishing, gardening, and the St. Louis Cardinals.

We have 2 children: Kimberly born in 1984 and Bradley born in 1989. Both are Duchesne graduates. Kimberly is married to Landon Shierholz for 3 ½ years and is a school teacher in the Francis Howell School District. Bradley works for the St. Charles County Highway department.

Jan is a beautician at 5th Street hair Design and I am trying to stay on "her good side" as a retiree. We reside close to St. Charles and attend St. Charles Borromeo Parish. Jan graduated from Duchesne in 1976.