



Leslie Cotten

February 11, 1942 - January 24, 2023

Leslie Alton Cotten, Sr. was born on February 11, 1942, in Corsicana, TX. He went to be with the Lord on January 24, 2023. He was 80 years old.

Les grew up in Navarro County, attending schools in Powell and Kerens. He graduated from Kerens High School in 1960. Les attended Navarro Junior College, graduating in 1974 with an Associate degree in Law Enforcement. He attended Baylor University from 1975 – 1978.

Les served in the United States Army from 1960 through 1967. He was in the 36th Infantry Division Texas National Guard, 1st Armored Division, 101st Airborne and the 25th Infantry Division. While in the 25th Infantry he served in Viet Nam in the Pleiku area. In April 1966 he was wounded by mortar fire and was not expected to survive. He was taken to Japan where he was in the hospital for four months. He returned to Viet Nam after telling doctors to either send him home or send him back to Viet Nam after getting tired of being in the hospital.

Les returned home from the Army in 1967 after his father passed to help get crops out. Afterwards he began his journey in Law Enforcement in December 1967 with the Corsicana Police Dept. He began as a dispatcher until February 1968 he moved to the Patrol Division as a Patrolman. In March 1975, he became an Investigator in Criminal Investigations Division.

Les went to work at the Navarro County Sheriff's Office in October 1982 as a Detective Sergeant in C.I.D. In October 1991 he was promoted to Lieutenant, then Chief Deputy.

In 1992, Les ran for Sheriff of Navarro County. He was elected and took office in January 1993. He served 4 terms as Sheriff, retiring December 31, 2012.

Les was a member of the Lions Club, Kiwanis Club, D.A.V., Navarro County Peace Officers Association, Sheriff's Association of Texas, National Sheriff's Association, N.R.A. Life member, Corsicana 100 Club and the Kerens Area Chamber of Commerce. He was a Master Mason in Corsicana Lodge AF&AM No. 174. He was a member of the Navarro County Historical Commission and served as Vice-Chairman. Les was a member of the Petty's Chapel Baptist Church.

Les married Cleeta Arnold on February 20, 1968. They made a life in Corsicana with their 3 children.

Les loved his family, his community and visiting with people. He loved his land and raising cattle. He enjoyed history, especially of his family and Navarro County Law Enforcement. He liked to collect about anything like badges, guns, coins, old tools and other things. He also liked researching history and had talked about writing a book on the Lawmen of Navarro County.

Les spent his life proudly serving his Lord, his country, community and family.

Les was preceded in death by his father, C.W. "Buddy" Cotten; his grandson, Cole Hawkins; son-in-law, Kraig Hawkins.

Les is survived by his wife of nearly 55 years, Cleeta; son, Les Jr. (Lori);

daughter, Lea Hawkins; daughter, Lori Hargrove (Kalen); his mother, Hazel Cotten Carver; grandchildren, Hunter Hawkins (Danielle), Haleigh Hawkins, Heath Cotten, Kaden Hargrove, Ashtyn Bybee and Andersen Bybee. Great Granddaughter, Ivana Rodriguez. Les is also survived by brothers, Wayne Cotten (Starlett) and Mike Cotten (Marilyn) and sisters, Cheryl Talley (Gary) and Mary Ann Pease (Tom); his aunt, Wanda Baggett; sister-in-law, Reba Bickerstaff; brother-in-law, Bill Bell; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Visitation will be Friday, February 3, 2023, from 5-7pm Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home. Funeral service will be 11:00am Saturday, February 4, 2023, at Northside Baptist Church.

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 3. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home, Corsicana
1530 N. 45th Street
Corsicana, TX 75110
(903) 874-4774
info@griffin-roughton.com

Funeral Service

FEB 4. 11:00 AM (CT)

Northside Baptist Church
2800 North Beaton
Corsicana, TX 75110

Tribute Wall



“ Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Leslie Cotten



Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home - January 30, 2023 at 04:57 PM

HO

Brings back so many memories of this Great Friend and All the Cotten Family ! Thanks for sharing , Blackie

Hugh Owen - February 03, 2023 at 06:51 PM



“ Leslie Cotten

October 08, 2023 at 12:04 PM

PB

“ Leslie was a pillar of the law enforcement community in Navarro County and he was the guy that would lead by example no matter what he did. He would be the role model for anyone in law enforcement. Rest in peace brother.

Paul Borsellino - February 04, 2023 at 10:22 AM

RA

“ *Big hugs and big prayers for the family! God Bless you all!*



Robert J. Aldama - February 04, 2023 at 02:57 AM

LD

“ *Les was a great lawman as well as being an Army hero. He always had time to greet me when we met around town. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family in their time of grief. Larry and Donna (McMillan) Daniels*

Laurence Daniels - January 31, 2023 at 06:17 PM

GW

“ *He was truly a man of great character. Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time.*

Gaylon and Donna Whittenburg - January 31, 2023 at 05:45 PM

MS

“ *To the family of Les Cotten
You are all in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. He was a great man and always took time to speak to us whenever and wherever we saw him. He will be truly missed*



Mike & Marsha Stearman - January 30, 2023 at 08:40 PM

JJ

“ Praying for God to give Clea and all the family peace and strength in the days ahead 🙏 Les will be missed by so many of us in Navarro County! I can't remember when I didn't know Les! Sorry we can't be with you to celebrate his life. We'll be with you in spirit 🙏🙏🙏🙏❤️
Jaynie and David Johnston

Jaynie Johnston - January 30, 2023 at 08:01 PM

RH

“ a great man a great friend too me and our family prays for his family



randy hughes - January 30, 2023 at 08:40 AM

DP

“ Will miss you, Uncle Les! 🙏💔



Debra Pulaski - January 30, 2023 at 07:43 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Leslie Cotten.



January 29, 2023 at 09:14 PM

BW

“ *Billie Murphy Weatherby lit a candle in memory of Leslie Cotten*



Billie Murphy Weatherby - January 29, 2023 at 06:52 PM

RA

“ *prayers for Leslie Cotten family a great man friend of mine and our family*



randyglennhughes - January 29, 2023 at 11:21 AM



“ *Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Leslie Cotten.*



January 29, 2023 at 04:19 AM

RH

“ *leslie cotten a great man friend to our family prayers for his family*



randyhughes hughes - January 28, 2023 at 08:56 AM

VP

“ *Leslie Cotten earned every ounce of respect he got in his hometown and county. He was borne to serve the public and he did it well. RIP friend.*

Vicky Prater - January 28, 2023 at 12:17 AM

PP

“ *Always enjoyed working with Les. He was always behind his officers and great representative of Law Enforcement in Navarro County.*

Phil Phillips - January 27, 2023 at 05:24 PM

JH

*Cleta i am so sorry for your loss. Prayers for you and your family.
Love,
Judy Sanches Hamby*

Judy Hamby - January 27, 2023 at 06:41 PM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Leslie Cotten.*



January 27, 2023 at 02:18 PM

RM

“ *Robert Brigance & John & Shirley Mueller purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Leslie Cotten.*



Robert Brigance & John & Shirley Mueller - January 27, 2023 at 10:22 AM

GC

“ *He was a such a nice man and a great friend to my Dad. Sending love and prayers to Les' family.* ”



Gena (Fluker) Caluya - January 27, 2023 at 12:09 AM

GC

“ *Gena Caluya lit a candle in memory of Leslie Cotten* ”



Gena (Fluker) Caluya - January 27, 2023 at 12:07 AM



“ *Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Leslie Cotten.* ”



January 26, 2023 at 04:47 PM

JN

“ *jerry lisa newland lit a candle in memory of Leslie Cotten* ”



jerry and lisa newland - January 26, 2023 at 04:46 PM

SI

“ *Sandy inscore lit a candle in memory of Leslie Cotten*



Sandy inscore - January 26, 2023 at 04:00 PM

MC

“ *I miss you already.
Love,
Your little brother, Michael*



Mike Cotten - January 26, 2023 at 08:37 AM

PT

Mike I'm so sorry for your loss. Leslie is a great man that will be miss by many people. God be with you and your family during this difficult time and days ahead. 🙏🙏🙏

Pam (Blue) Travis - January 27, 2023 at 01:20 PM

RG

“ *Ronnie L Garner lit a candle in memory of Leslie Cotten*



Ronnie L Garner - January 25, 2023 at 07:24 PM

HO

“ *Hugh Owen lit a candle in memory of Leslie Cotten*



Hugh Owen - January 25, 2023 at 11:16 AM

FR

Was a good man , did what he could to help.people . He'll be missed . So sorry for your loss . He always spoke to me when he came in Walmart n he was a very nice man . Prayers for the family .

Frances (Rollins).Middleton - January 25, 2023 at 07:40 PM

JB

I am very sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family and his law enforcement family. I thank him very much for his great service to the public.

Jonathan Batton - January 26, 2023 at 02:56 AM

SI

We grew up with Leslie. Went to school and church together.

Sandra Drain and Kay Drain

Sandy inscore - January 26, 2023 at 04:04 PM

JB

Such a great friend to all who ever worked with him or for him. He served his community with honor and integrity, always reaching out to brother agencies to assist anyway possible. Many memories dating back to the 60's. Prayers and comfort to his family. Jim Burdette, Tx DPS, Retired

JIM BURDETTE - January 27, 2023 at 10:42 AM

CK

*A Great Navarro County Historian !
Robert Keathley*

C. Robert Keathley - January 30, 2023 at 12:43 PM

OA

Cleta, Lori, Les Jr. Sending condolences to ya'll for your loss. Les was a military veteran and served his country well in that respect. Then he went into law enforcement and served the public in every way he could. I had a great deal of respect for him. Odis from Richland, TX.

Odis Arnold - January 30, 2023 at 02:17 PM

KW

Les (Jr): My thoughts and prayers go out to you and your family for your loss. I always had a lot of respect for your dad. He was a great man. Keith Wiley.

Keith Wiley - February 03, 2023 at 11:28 PM

LN

A fine gentleman who will be missed by many

Lowell Hudson aka Nose - February 04, 2023 at 07:13 PM