



Eric Gerard Benson

April 26, 1953 - December 24, 2022

Eric Gerard Benson left us suddenly on December 24, 2022. He was 69. Son of Gertrude (Phillips) and Frederick Benson, beloved husband to Anne Higley and loving father to Katie and Brian.

Eric was also Erik. His mother preferred the Irish spelling, but his father stuck to his roots and spelled his son's name with the more Swedish k on the birth certificate. He just never told anyone until much later, when at 16, Eric filed for his driver's license. ("Surprise, you're really Erik!")

Born and raised in Jackson, Michigan, where he attended school at St. Mary's Star of the Sea and Lumen Christi High School, Eric moved to Delphos, Ohio, his senior year of high school and graduated from St. John's High School. He attended the Lima branch of Ohio State University (and no, we're not inserting the "The" there!), earning his bachelor's degree in political science from Toledo University, and later, his master's degree in Labor and Industrial Relations from Michigan State University.

After meeting Anne at MSU, they married in 1981 and proceeded to follow the recession around the country, first in Houston, Texas, where Eric worked for Oteco Oil Company, then to Maryland outside Washington, D.C., where he began his health care human resource career at Suburban Hospital. After moving to Oak Park, Illinois, in 1987, Eric worked for Martha Washington Hospital, Ravenswood Hospital, and Advocate Health Care in Chicago. In 1999, he and Anne moved downstate with Katie and Brian to Charleston, Illinois. Eric proudly served as vice president of Sarah Bush Lincoln Health

System in nearby Mattoon until his retirement in 2019.

After retiring, Eric joined Anne in Bloomington, Indiana, where he served on the boards and committees of Constellation Stage and Screen, South Central Indiana Human Resources Association, Stone Belt Arc, Inc., and Beacon, meeting new folks and making friends wherever he went.

Though his ticker was cantankerous, he was a man with a huge heart. He loved his wife and children so much, but he made room in that all too large heart for the Detroit Tigers and Lions (as much as it pained him many years); the antics of the stock market; British murder mysteries and John LeCarre novels; York, England; long weekends with family at the Stratford Festival in Ontario; the music of Motown; March Madness; Tom Izzo; the joy of children; Spicewood II's annual luminaria; and, of course, a good story. He had a few to tell through the years.

Gone before him are his parents Gert and Fred, brother Mark, niece Rachel Campbell, grandniece Hannah Campbell, grandnephew Teddy Campbell, and brother-in-law Michael Campbell.

Left to celebrate his life are his wife Anne, his daughter Katie and son Brian as well as his brothers John, Fritz, Tony, Chris, Mike, and his sister Mary. He left us too soon and the world will feel his loss.

Eric would recommend that those who knew and loved him attend a live theatre performance. Look up Mark "the Bird" Fidrych. Watch a minor league baseball team. Include others. Read about the world. Travel. Laugh. Make someone smile.

The family thanks cardiologist Dr. Lakshminarayanan for many years of keeping the ticker running and the nurses and staff of IU Bloomington Hospital's ICU for their kindness.

Eric's life will be celebrated at a memorial service in Jackson, Michigan, in the spring. In lieu of flowers, we suggest donating to Constellation Stage and Screen (or your local community or regional theater); Stone Belt Arc, the Arc of Indiana or the national Arc.

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory, 4155 South Old State Road 37 in

Bloomington have been entrusted with arrangements. Online condolences, photos and memories may be shared with family and friends at allencares.com

Tribute Wall

CB

“ Cecilia Buckley lit a candle in memory of Eric Benson



Cecilia Buckley - January 04, 2023 at 09:05 AM

CB

“ Anne, I'm so sorry to hear about your loss. My heart goes out to you, Brian, and Katie - sending thoughts of peace and love to all of you. - Cecilia Buckley

Cecilia Buckley - January 04, 2023 at 09:05 AM

SM

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Stephen Marine - January 03, 2023 at 12:36 PM

SM

“ Eric and I met in 1973 at the Lima Branch of Ohio State U. Sitting on a stone wall resting between classes we struck up a conversation, and, as they say, the rest is history. Friendship was immediate. He visited me in Bellefontaine, and I him in Delphos, where I would stay up late discussing Latin literature with his mother Gert. In late summer 1974 with friends Dave and Doug we meandered our way to Fort Collins, Colorado, to visit two other friends, stopping at Mammoth Cave, Kentucky; Dubuque, Iowa, to visit friend; Hannibal, Missouri, to “experience” Mark Twain; and “camping” at highway rest areas along the way. In Colorado we did all the things 20-year-olds did in the early 70s. But we also spent days hiking trails and camping in Rocky Mountain National Park. I describe this trip because it sealed a life-long friendship. During the years with children around the same age, we visited each other regularly in Toledo, Oak Park, Bloomington, Louisville, and Cincinnati. Eric was one of the kindest and most genuine people I’ve known, and a true friend in every way. I will miss him dearly, and send my wishes for strength and solace to Anne, Katie, and Brian.

Steve M.

Stephen Marine - January 03, 2023 at 11:49 AM

CB

Thanks for the kind words for a person who truly deserves it. Eric never had a negative word to say about anyone, a gift he learned from his parents; and definitely not from his brothers. He never sropeod talking about the Marine Family and always laughed asking how could Steve and Tom actually be brothers!!!

He will be missed Steve.

Eric's brother Chris.

Chris Peter Benson - January 06, 2023 at 11:25 AM

MC

Steve, on behalf of the Benson family, thank you for such a beautiful tribute to my brother. The pictures posted gave us all a trip down memory lane and it was so nice to hear how you met Eric and how your friendship continued through the years, Chris said how he knew you and your brother, Tom, through Eric. Christopher said that Eric got a chuckle of the dynamics between the brothers, Chris said Eric thought you and he were "laid back" and Chris and Tom were "out there". Yes, he will be truly missed, we loved him dearly as well.

Mary Benson Campbell

Mary Campbell - January 06, 2023 at 02:51 PM



I am saddened to know I will no longer have a late-night telephone partner-in-crime with the sole purpose of trying to confuse someone (my brother) on the other end. Once Eric visited me in Fort Worth, TX, and helped me move ... really. He just wanted to help. Later, the first of those phone calls occurred, and the Confusing-Telephone-Bandits were born. I also felt a kindred-spirit with Chris, who lived a parallel life universe ... we both pitched one-hitters against Celina and had older brothers that we admired and revered.

Thomas Marine - January 19, 2023 at 10:24 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Eric Gerard Benson.*



January 03, 2023 at 09:27 AM

GR

“ *I am so sorry to hear of Eric's passing. Cherish the many wonderful memories that you have as you cope with missing his presence. My thought and prayers are with you all.* Gail Richard

Gail J Richard - January 02, 2023 at 09:13 AM

CD

“ Eric was a treasured member of the Constellation Stage & Screen Board of Directors. His gentle presence and clever wit were always appreciated, and his expertise made us stronger as a team. Eric’s loss is deeply felt by all who knew him. Our love and condolences go out to Anne, Katie, and Brian and Eric’s memory will be treasured.

Caroline Dowd-Higgins and Von Welch – Constellation Stage & Screen

Caroline Dowd-Higgins - December 30, 2022 at 01:01 PM

KF

“ Anne, I'm so sad and shocked to hear of Eric's passing. May God give you, Katie and Brian peace that passes all understanding. He was a wonderful husband, father and person who made this world a better place.
Much love from our family to yours.

Kristin and Bill Gharst Family - December 29, 2022 at 10:33 AM

KF

“ Kristin Bill Gharst Family lit a candle in memory of Eric Benson



Kristin and Bill Gharst Family - December 29, 2022 at 10:29 AM

TL

“ Anne, moving to Charleston some 25years ago was really tough for my son with Asperger's and myself. Eric gave me a pep talk and told me about you and the resources available in the area. He was an awesome HR director.

Tamara Lentz - December 28, 2022 at 04:07 PM

BL

“ I know Eric for 20 years.He was one of the reasons I came back to SBL.He would periodically talk to me about coming back here.He was always happy and cheerful.What a wonderful man he is.May his soul rest in peace.

batlagundu lakshminarayanan - December 28, 2022 at 02:55 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Eric Gerard Benson.



December 28, 2022 at 02:14 PM

WA

“ Anne, as I started to read this, I could hear your voice in my head, and it was as if you were reading it to me. What a wonderful tribute to Eric. I am so sorry for the loss you, Katie and Brian are experiencing. I am praying for your comfort and strength in these days ahead.

--Wilma Ausbrook

Wilma Ausbrook - December 28, 2022 at 02:11 PM

VB

“ Our department at SBLHC reported to MR Benson, I think we called him Eric, too. I remember him laughing a lot-don't remember him any other way but nice or funny. His memory will live on at SBL. I know he will be missed so very much —I wish you, his family, peace and happy memories. Take care.

Valerie Boroughs - December 28, 2022 at 02:09 PM

GA

“ I loved Eric's exuberance and our chats/Swedish joke sessions. It's not everyone who can make you happy just seeing them walking toward you! He was a wonderful soul. My heart is with you and family, Anne.

gayeharrison - December 28, 2022 at 12:24 PM

CC

“ The Delphos Saint John's class of 1972 sends peace and prayers at this time to his family and friends. Eric was such a fun guy in school, had a great laugh and sense of humor, and was also very kind. Know that we are so very sorry for your loss.

Cheri Patton Core - December 28, 2022 at 11:19 AM

MB

“ I'm so sorry to hear about Eric, I worked with him at Sarah Bush Lincoln during his time there. He was an easy person to talk with and I always enjoyed hearing his laugh. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

*With sympathy
Mary Bovard*

Mary Bovard - December 28, 2022 at 10:06 AM