



## Leon Morris Zimmerman

March 13, 1929 - June 26, 2020

Leon Morris Zimmerman, 91, died Friday, June 26, 2020 at the Glenn A. Kiser Hospice House in Salisbury, N.C.

Born March 13, 1929 in Morganton, N.C., he was the son of the late Anna Pliskin Zimmerman and Sam Zimmerman.

Mr. Zimmerman's survivors include his loving wife of 51 years, Phyllis Branch Zimmerman; 2 daughters, Laura Zimmerman-Clark of Salisbury (and husband, Steve Clark), and Lee Zimmerman Callahan of Alpharetta, GA (and husband, Kent Callahan); 7 grandchildren, including Blake and Bennett Clark of Salisbury, Meghan Johnson. Laura, Bobby, Jules, and Jack Callahan of Alpharetta.

In 1939 at the age of 10, Mr. Zimmerman and his family moved to Salisbury. In 1946, he graduated from Boyden High School and in 1950 he graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration.

Mr. Zimmerman's immigrant parents opened Zimmerman's Department Store in 1939, a downtown Salisbury landmark located on Main Street for close to 50 years. As a child, Mr. Zimmerman lived above his parents' store and started working in the business at a young age. Mr. Zimmerman and his

brother-in-law became co-owners and continued to operate the store together until 1988. From 1988 until his retirement in 2000, Mr. Zimmerman owned Leon's New Brands which was a retail / wholesale company also located on Main Street in Downtown Salisbury. Mr. Zimmerman's retail career included extensive travels to New York City for buying trips for the store, forging many business and personal friendships along the way.

Mr. Zimmerman was Director of the National Retail Merchants Association in the early 1970's, the Chairman of the Planning Board of the City of Salisbury from 1968-1976, a member of Temple Israel and an active member of the Rotary Club of Salisbury for many years.

Mr. Zimmerman will be remembered for the impact he had on the people he knew more than anything else. Anyone that knew him felt his love, kindness, full heart and positivity. Mr. Zimmerman was generous beyond belief and befriended so many people throughout his life. Always willing to lend a hand or literally the shirt off his back, Mr. Zimmerman's warm smile and infectious kindness touched so many in Salisbury over his 91 years. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Memorial Service: 9:00 a.m. Monday, June 29 at Summersett Funeral Home. The service will be held outdoors. Given the current pandemic, the Zimmerman family understands that many friends may not feel comfortable attending and appreciate thoughts and prayers in lieu of attendance. For those that would like to attend, the family requests everyone wear a face mask and adhere to 6 foot social distancing guidelines.

Memorials: Glenn A. Kiser Hospice House, 1229 Statesville Blvd., Salisbury, NC 28144. 704-603-3900.

Summersett Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences

may be made at [www.summersettfuneralhome.com](http://www.summersettfuneralhome.com).

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JUN **29**. 9:00 AM (ET)

Summersett Funeral Home  
1315 W. Innes St.  
Salisbury, NC 28144  
(704) 633-2111  
<https://www.summersettfuneralhome.com>

# Tribute Wall

GC

“ My condolences to the family. Leon was a neighbor for many years when we lived on E. Corriher Avenue. I remember that Leon sat on my right side in a Catawba College summer session American History class so many years ago! I suspect he was a better student than I in that class. Leon and his extended family are prime examples of tolerance and heartfelt "care" for all people, a trait to remember in these turbulent days.

---

**Grace Cooper** - July 02, 2020 at 01:10 PM

WF

“ Uncle Leon, I have never met a man as nice and polite as you. You and Uncle Billy are the greatest examples of how to treat others. I am blessed that God allowed me to be part of your family and business. I'd drive to Manhattan again in a station wagon and a Uhaul if you would of asked. I know you are in a better place As you shook the creators of the worlds hand with a smile on your face!

---

**Wm Fuller** - June 29, 2020 at 09:37 PM

CH

“ I remember meeting Leon when I was Three years old, I was sitting at the counter at Innes Street Drug Store and he came up and sat down and talked to me. It's one of my first memories of having a conversation with a grownup who wasn't a family member. He gave me my dog Mac, which we had till I was in my late teens. My love of shirtwaist dresses comes directly from the ones he gave me when I was seven, I had several in different colors, they were my favorites. Like so many others Leon gave me one of my first jobs, it was great I got to work with the wonderful Sue Ramsey helping her dress the store windows and put up displays in the Salisbury and Lexington stores. My husband worked for him and Ed Hobson making patterns for their clothes back in the early 1980s we had two young children and the extra money was a blessing. Also when I moved back to Salisbury for several years in 1999 he called up and offered me a job, I was pretty sure he didn't really need the help, I found a job soon after, but the gesture was one of pure kindness. He also looked after my brother David, which is why he will always have a place in my heart. God bless Phyllis, Laura And Lee, I hope I didn't misspell your name, and the rest of the family.

Catherine Parker Harkey

---

Catherine Harkey - June 29, 2020 at 08:53 PM

HL

“ As children growing up in Salisbury, the only place to buy our clothes was Zimmerman's. We shopped with our Mother and upon entering the front door who would come running up to greet us but Sonny. Always smiling, always so very friendly- it's no wonder his business was so popular and so successful for so many years. Our Mom and Dad thought the world of Sonny and when Mom passed in 1977, Sonny honored us by being a pall bearer. A good man who lived a good life and touched so many. Rest in Peace. George and Hardy Lentz

---

Hardy B Lentz - June 28, 2020 at 07:31 PM

BM

“ *Phyllis, Laura and family, please accept my sincere sympathy for you in your sorrow. I will always think of Leon with a beautiful smile on his face and the kindness he showed to everyone he met.*

---

**Brenda Morris** - June 28, 2020 at 07:03 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Leon Morris Zimmerman.*



---

June 28, 2020 at 03:42 PM

BS

“ *Phyllis & Family.....Sue and I are so very sorry for your loss of Leon . He was a kind soul with a big heart . May he rest in peace and may your hearts heal from that loss .*  
*Bob & Sue Strang*

---

**Bob Strang** - June 28, 2020 at 10:27 AM

CT

“ *Sending prayers and love to the family so sorry for your loss. He was well known and loved by many.*

---

**Cindy Trexler** - June 28, 2020 at 09:51 AM

SL

“ *Our condolences to the Zimmerman family, our prayers are with you.*  
*Bill and Susan Linn*

---

**Susan Linn** - June 28, 2020 at 09:10 AM

DF

“ *David Parker and Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Leon Morris Zimmerman.*



---

**David Parker and Family** - June 28, 2020 at 08:44 AM

JG

“ *i will always remember his smile and kindness.* Joel Goodwin

---

**Joel Goodwin** - June 28, 2020 at 07:50 AM

DP

“ Leon Zimmerman was a father figure to me. He showed infinite patience with my shortcomings on many occasions. He was always a gracious host and one of the more beautiful human beings I have ever known. I thought of him often. When I was in Florence, Italy in 1989, I thought of him being there when he was a young man. When he attended my wedding, I started to "well up" when I spotted he and Phyllis in the pew at Rollins College Chapel. They sat with my wife's grandfather, John LaConde, at the wedding reception. It pains me that logistics because of the COVID-19 pandemic will prevent me from attending the funeral service. I will have to visit his burial site and pay my respects at a some future date. I will be thinking of him and the family and extended family members on Monday. The fact that he will be missed will always remain an understatement to me.

*I thank Sam for inviting me to a Zoom online gathering on Friday. It was great to see Sam, Phyllis, Suzie and Jeff.*

*I fell it has been an honor and a privilege to be a part of the extended family albeit a long distance one. I will keep that family in my thoughts over the coming days and months to follow. Godspeed, Leon. I love you.*

*\_ David Parker*

---

**David Allan Parker** - June 28, 2020 at 06:51 AM

SR

“ I'm so sorry for Uncle Sonny's loss. I know him as Uncle Sonny as Susie Post-Rust's lifelong friend. Thoughts and prayers to the Zimmerman and Post family.

---

**Sabrina Rufty** - June 27, 2020 at 10:51 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Leon Morris Zimmerman.*



June 27, 2020 at 05:54 PM



“ *I worked for the Zimmermans/Posts when I was a teenager. Wonderful people. Leon always made you feel like you were a part of the family and was always fun to be around. I have great memories. Condolences to the family.*

**Brenda Clark** - June 27, 2020 at 04:16 PM



“ *Bo Butler lit a candle in memory of Leon Morris Zimmerman*



**Bo Butler** - June 27, 2020 at 03:40 PM



“ *Mr. Z was one of the loveliest humans I have known. He never failed to meet you with a smile and a genuine interest in what was going on in your life. Growing up with Lee, I enjoyed many family dinners and conversations with Mr. Z that will hold a special place in my heart forever. His positivity and cheerful spirit carries on in his daughter and my dear friend Lee, and her sister Laura.*



**Stacey Furr Wilson** - June 27, 2020 at 03:39 PM

EW

“ Elizabeth B. West lit a candle in memory of Leon Morris Zimmerman



Elizabeth B. West - June 27, 2020 at 02:28 PM

RJ

“ Rena Jenkins lit a candle in memory of Leon Morris Zimmerman



Rena Jenkins - June 27, 2020 at 10:14 AM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Leon Morris Zimmerman.



June 27, 2020 at 08:41 AM

CF

“ Uncle Leon, thank you for all the loving memories you gave our family. You always welcomed us and shared your love! You will never be forgotten!  
Heart felt love, Christy Fuller Fulcher and our family

Christy Fulcher - June 27, 2020 at 08:24 AM

LC

*Thank you, Christy. My dad loved you and always had such a great time getting our families together for holidays. We will miss him dearly. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers. Love you.*

---

**Lee Callahan** - June 27, 2020 at 08:34 PM

KH

“ *Phyllis, I am so sorry to hear of Leon's passing. Please know that my thoughts and prayers are with you.*

---

**Kay Harviel** - June 26, 2020 at 10:43 PM