

Memorial Minute for Leslie Walden (Cleveland)
October 26, 1935 – November 14, 2023

Leslie Walden died on November 14, 2023. He was a member of Cleveland Friends Meeting.

Born on October 26, 1935, in Memphis, Tennessee, Leslie lived in various Southern towns growing up, and graduated from John Harris High School in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The next three years Leslie spent in the U.S. Army, learning radar and the German language. After the service, he attended Franklin College of Indiana, graduating with a degree in English, journalism, and German.

Leslie had the mind of an engineer and the heart of a romantic. He could have been happy with any number of careers, but

journalism turned out to be his life's work. First working at a local Indianapolis TV station, he learned to do many jobs, including playing Lowell L. Owl, a tree puppet. Working at Channel 6, then a Time-Life station, Leslie accompanied a reporter to India, Pakistan, and Vietnam, sending back reports that included Indira Gandhi's first interview as Prime Minister of India. This work led to awards and eventually a move to Detroit, in 1966, where he worked at WJBK, Channel 2, and from which he retired. He was a union man during those Detroit years.

Leslie was a lifelong seeker of truth; this was his intent in every news story he covered. He was always learning something new. He loved the sailing assignments that included the Port Huron to Mackinac Race and a reenactment of the last voyage of the Edmund Fitzgerald, sans sinking. A long-distance drive was never turned down.

In 1967, he and his wife, Margaret, joined the Detroit Monthly Meeting, where he served as clerk, along with other roles. Leslie cared for his mother-in-law for her last two years, while Margaret was still working at Friends School in Detroit. He was a great reader; for years, his favorite book was Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*. Leslie was involved in several writing, editing, and photography projects for his local meetings as well as for Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. With Sharon Ottenbreit, he created a children's book on homelessness and helped to present it to classrooms.

In 2013, he and Margaret moved to Cleveland to be close to their daughter, Heather Blonsky. They joined Cleveland Friends Meeting in 2014. Despite an aversion to committee work, Leslie served cheerfully on the Library Committee, helping to catalog the collection and even donating the computer that held the catalog. Leslie is fondly remembered at Cleveland Meeting. His easy ways and good humor are sorely missed. As a photographer, he noticed the small details of life and made his observations known, if one were listening. When COVID struck, he especially missed sitting in the circle of worship on First Day.

Leslie Walden died peacefully at age 88 in the memory care unit at Brookdale Westlake Village (Ohio). Although vascular dementia overtook him his last year, he never lost his chances to make jokes or to say, “I love you.” Leslie is survived by his wife of 65 years, Margaret; four children – Andrew, Jonathan (Miriam), Sarah Feitler, and Heather Blonsky (Amelia); and four grandchildren – Ninevra Walden, Kai Feitler, Bean Feitler, and Andrew Blonsky. One grandchild, Olive, preceded him in death. His sisters, Carol Swindell and Dorothy Lohmeyer, also survive, as well as several nieces, nephews, and cousins.