

IN THE CARE OF

Lake Lawn Metairie Funeral Home & Cemeteries

## OBITUARY

*Marshall Byron Oreck*

JANUARY 1, 1929 - FEBRUARY 26, 2021



**M**arshall Byron Oreck was born on January 1st, 1929 in Duluth, Minnesota. According to his own account, he was the second baby born at the hospital in the New Year, just narrowly missing out on a year of free diapers. That was like Marshall though, never needing anything in excess, never needing a big fuss over himself. He was the youngest of three boys born to Abe Oreck and Sheba Polinsky Oreck. Growing up, the Oreck brothers, David, Robert and Marshall, were truly a force, always finding themselves in a little bit of mischief, and always fiercely protective of each other. Marshall was a member of the boy scouts and in 1944 earned an Eagle Badge, the highest award in scouting. As a child he loved the outdoors, a love that carried into

adulthood as evidenced by the time he spent tending to his many plants. He learned the art of practical jokes from his older brothers and blossomed into a pro-prankster himself – a quality he also bestowed on each of his five children and nurtured in his nephews and nieces. We would list some out, but we cannot divulge his secrets so they can continue to

be passed down from generation to generation. Let's just say, if dining with an Oreck, always check your pockets before leaving the restaurant. After graduating Central High School, Marshall moved to the Twin Cities to attend college at the University of Minnesota where he belonged to Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity and graduated with a degree in business. Following college, he moved to New York City in 1952 to serve in the Coast Guard during the Korean War. While in the service, he was given the unique opportunity to be the official photographer for diplomats and took pictures of notable historical figures including Winston Churchill, President Harry Truman, President Dwight Eisenhower, among many others. After the service, Marshall lived in St. Paul before moving back to New York City to pursue a number of business ventures, including a baseball card company. In 1964, he along with his eldest brother David, started Oreck Corporation. He and David worked together to build the Oreck brand of vacuums into a premium brand and a household name. Marshall and David worked side by side at Oreck Corp. for five decades. Over all of those days in all of those years they had lunch together more days than not. Marshall never planned on retiring – he loved working with his brother and keeping his mind active. While he did spend the lion's share of his time at the office working, he also enjoyed writing his kids notes on his typewriter, often including some sort of tchotchke (yiddish for a small object that is decorative rather than anything at all functional) along with a fake bug just to prank them from afar. He took real delight in the phone calls he received from said children, detailing their reactions to the correspondence. Throughout his life, Marshall made sure to also keep in excellent physical shape. From New York to New Orleans he was always a member of a gym, getting in exercise every day after work. On the weekends, Marshall was known for his long bike rides down the levee and neighborhood walks through Audubon Park. Marshall was also known as a lover of animals, and they in turn loved him. In his 90+ years on this earth, he cared for a number of pets, ranging from a turkey named Tootsie to cats named Smokey to dogs named Oscar. He also often snagged a couple of his wife Julie's tennis balls to play with the neighborhood dogs in their yards. In his later years, he amassed a number of shiitzus, none of which he claimed to want, but ironically they were sometimes all he wanted to talk about. He was never one to shy away from adventure, which may be why he became a father to five children, and three step children, all of whom have their own fun stories about a caper with their Dad. From running out of gas on Montauk highway to getting kicked out of a bar, Marshall shared special moments with each of them, never backing away from the chance to make a memory. His penchant for hijinks actually extended well beyond his children, and if you sit any kid niece or nephew down, they won't be short of stories to tell about a time they had with Marshall. While generally quiet and reserved, Marshall loved to tell a good story – even if he had to fabricate it a bit. He wasn't the loudest person in the room, but boy did you feel his warm presence. He was a truly compassionate man, often putting others' needs ahead of his own. One of the words used most to describe him was, and is, kind.

Marshall was a mensch. He was one of those people that everyone agrees is just a spectacular human, universally loved, always putting a smile on people's faces. His presence will be sorely missed by family, friends and generally anyone who ever had the privilege of spending some time with him. He is survived by his wife Julie, his brother David Oreck (Jan), his children, James Oreck, Michael Oreck (Sue), Alden Oreck (Tiffany), Zoë Oreck (Hayter) and Sophie Oreck. His grandkids, Stephanie (Matt) Weiss, Allison (Phillip) Shatzman, and Millicent Oreck and his great grandson Blake Weiss. He is also survived by his beloved nephews, nieces, grand-nephews and nieces. He was the son of the late Sheba and Abe Oreck, brother of the late Robert Oreck and Uncle of the late Steven Oreck A graveside service for immediate family only will take place at Metairie Cemetery on Sunday February 28, 2021 at 2pm (CST) with Rabbi Katie Baumann and Rabbi David Goldstein officiating. Memorial to Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans or The Jewish Endowment Foundation of Louisiana preferred. To attend the service virtually, please go [www.tourosynagogue.com](http://www.tourosynagogue.com) where it will be live streamed. To view and sign the guest book, please visit [www.lakelawnmetairie.com](http://www.lakelawnmetairie.com)

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# Services

*Graveside Service for Family Only*  
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