

Beat: Vips

Comedian David Brenner, Tonight Show; favorite, dead at 78

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USPA News - American comedian David Brenner, a popular guest and substitute host on "The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson," died at his home in New York City on Saturday after a battle with cancer, but had plenty of jokes in store for his last day. He was 78 years old.

"Legendary stand-up comedian and long-time `Tonight Show` favorite, David Brenner, passed away at the age of 78 after a courageous battle with his final dragon, cancer," said publicist Jeff Abraham in an e-mailed statement. He said Brenner died on Saturday at his home in New York City with his family at his side. As a final request, Brenner, whose Twitter profile said he was "born poor and funny" and said he wanted to die "just funny," asked his family to put \$100 in small bills in his left sock, "just in case tipping is recommended where I'm going," he was quoted as saying by Abraham. His final resting spot will read: "If this is supposed to be a joke - then I don't get it!" But those were not the only jokes for his last day. In the hours prior to the e-mailed death announcement, a statement was released on Brenner's official website that said the comedian had suffered a sex-related injury in New York City and was being cared for by his wife Ruth and three other women. "David Brenner, legendary Comedian and father of at least three known children, has suffered a sex related [sic] injury in New York City. He is being cared for by his wife Ruth, his 3 sons Cole, Wyatt and Slade, as well as close family and three undisclosed women," the statement said. "Any future developments will be reported to reputable news outlets starting with TMZ due to their calls of support today." The statement continued: "David's family would like to thank everyone for their good thoughts, wishes, prayers and matza balls. Everything is being done to comfort David and the family only asks that if anyone is familiar with the handling of small rodents, owns a metal detector, or has expertise in dreideling to follow up accordingly." Asked about the statement before the death announcement, Abraham said it was done "for some levity until the official statement was released." Brenner was a favorite on "The Tonight Show" with television icon Johnny Carson, making a record 158 appearances as guest and substitute host. Prior to stepping on stage, Brenner wrote, produced and directed more than 100 television documentaries, earning him dozens of awards that included an Emmy Award. Later, he also starred in four HBO Specials and authored five books. Brenner is survived by his wife, Ruth, his three sons, Cole, Wyatt, and Slade, and his grandson, Wesley.

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