



Clifton Lee Cleek

October 21, 1942 - September 5, 2019

Clifton Lee Cleek was born on October 21, 1942 to parents James and Jocie Cleek in Tulare, California and passed away on September 5, 2019 at the age of 76. He attended Tulare City Schools, Tulare Union High School and the College of the Sequoias. Cliff started his working career before he was out of school driving school bus for the TJUHS District where his dad was the Director of Transportation. He met the love of his life, Lorraine Dutto in 1963. Lorraine and Cliff were married on August 25, 1965. They welcomed their son Donald into the world on December 5, 1968. On their 54th anniversary Lorraine sat in the hospital, holding his hand, as they quietly reflected on their years of marriage.

During their many years of marriage, they both served as role models, not only for their son Donald, but for Cliff's much younger brother Dahl, who often sought out Cliff for his advice and counsel about the challenges a life can bring. Cliff lived his life by the "Golden Rule" and set forth an example of the way a life should be led for Dahl and others who sought his advice.

Cliff's passion for hard work, attention to details and willingness to help others led him to a 40-year career with the Southern California Edison Company. His skill set perfectly matched Edison's need for highly skilled workers. During many storms, accidents and other natural disasters, Cliff was called upon to spend countless hours and days repairing electrical systems that had been

damaged. He did so with the upmost dedication and professionalism to serve his community anyway he could. He considered himself fortunate to do a job he loved. He retired as a TROUBLEMAN.

Cliff also wanted to serve his country and joined the United States Marine Corp Reserve, which had a unit located in Tulare. Once again, his penchant for hard work, dedication and service to his country elevated him to the rank of Sergeant prior to his honorable discharge in 1970.

When Cliff was not working, he enjoyed NASCAR, vintage cars, and was an accomplished pilot flying his own airplane. He was a member of Roma Lodge #1573 for 53 years and the Olive Branch Masonic Lodge in Tulare.

However, there was nothing he enjoyed more than being with his son. It may have been a fast ride down road 96 on his motorcycle or a trip to Indiana to see his granddaughters Kathryn and Kylee, he appreciated the time he could spend with Donald. He relished the opportunity to sit in the stands to watch Donald play football or baseball. During his final days, under heavy sedation, he awoke briefly to say his final goodbyes to Donald as they shared their love between a father and son.

For the past seven years he was at home with his dog "Precious" who was always at his side. They were inseparable and depended on each other each day to take their daily walks, share their meals and afternoon naps. Precious was instrumental in helping Cliff manage his progressing dementia as they battled the disease together. He depended on her to give purpose and meaning to his life, a reason to get up each morning, talk to and cope with his illness.

Cliff was preceded in death by his parents Jack and Jocie Cleek and brother-in-law Jim Luis. He is survived by his wife Lorraine Cleek, his son Donald

Cleek (Tina) and granddaughters, Kathryn and Kylee Cleek. He leaves behind his brother Dahl (LaRayne) Cleek, sister-in-law Maryann Luis, brother-in-law Larry Dutto (Kathy) and many nieces and nephews.

Cliff lived a life of service and giving to others. He was a loving and faithful husband, a proud parent and grandparent and a loyal friend. Those who shared their love and friendship with him he would give back tenfold. His final request of his family and friends would be that in the future they may think of him to reflect on a memory they may have shared. His family is honoring his wishes for a private service.

In Cliff's memory, if you would like to donate to the Roma Lodge Scholarship Fund you can mail your contribution to Roma Lodge Scholarship Fund, 17383 Avenue 184, Strathmore, Ca. 93267, or to the Alzheimer Foundation of America <<https://alzfdn.org>>

Tributes and condolences may be offered by logging onto www.salseranddillard.com.

Tribute Wall

BJ

“ I would like to express my condolences to Cliff's family. My name is Bob "Big Bird" Johnson. I worked off and on with Cliff his whole career at SCE. We were crew members working together on various job. He always referred to me by my nickname, "Big Bird". I have many memories, but the one that Cliff always called to my attention was when we were on a four man crew consisting of Cliff, Don Clements, Billy Burcham and myself. We always played a game of cards called Hearts at lunchtime. This day Cliff had brought one of his mom's famous Pecan Pies from her restaurant. There was a piece for each of us and one prized piece left over for the winner of the card game. I was winning all the way and I could almost taste the piece of pie that I knew I would win! On the last hand, I lost!! I was devastated! Everyone had a great laugh at my expense. I heard about this loss almost everyday of my career at SCE and Cliff remembered it every time he would see me. Even years later. I mean years....later! He would come up to me and say, "Hey, "Big Bird" how 'bout a nice piece of Pecan Pie." As he lovingly laughed and walked away.

Cliff always carried more than his share of the work. He was a good example of hard work and caring for others.

May his family be blessed at this time.

Sincerely Bob "Big Bird" Johnson

Bob Johnson - September 11, 2019 at 02:07 PM