



Gary Don McLain

August 26, 1941 - December 6, 2023

Gary Don McLain or "Papa" as most know him, passed away the morning of December 6th, 2023 at the age of 82. We lost a great man, a cheerful soul and the best Donald Duck impression you've ever heard.

Gary was born in 1941 in Tipton, Oklahoma. At age five, his sister, Sonya McLain (Stokes), parents Alva and Sue packed into the family's 1939 Chevy Business Coupe. Sitting on makeshift back seats for hours gave Gary plenty of time to bug his older sister which he did the whole way to California.

In 1959, Gary graduated from Redwood High School. He attended COS and graduated in 1961. Shortly after, he began his career with the US Postal Service. As everyone's favorite mailman, he brought packages and joy to neighborhoods across the Valley. He retired in 1996.

Gary's heart was his most commendable characteristic. His unconditional love began when he met the love of his life in high school: Ilene Ritchie. The two were inseparable from the start and were married on December 29, 1959. They shared a life full of love and were blessed with three sons: Kevin (Kim), Chris (Jamie) and Ryan (Sarah). Grandchildren Sean (Lenka and great granddaughter Skye), Erik (Kayla), grandson Landon and granddaughter Kaley. As true soulmates they created 63 years of memories.

Gary loved riding his Honda motorcycle alongside his buddies and could point out the make, model, and year of any car they passed. You could often find him at a car show, mingling with old friends and greeting strangers in his traditional McLain way. A man of customs, he would plant an orange tree with each grandchild when they turned age five. This included a bumpy ride in the bed of his red truck. He enjoyed traveling with family and friends, especially road trips.

Gary loved to attend all sports and activities his sons and grandchildren were involved in. He was always there to root them on. Also, a prolific storyteller, he was well known for his scary campfire stories and character voices. A true kid at heart, dancing to the Twist any chance he got and cherished the precious opportunity of sharing some giggles with his only great granddaughter Skye.

Gary was a member of Visalia First and had been active as an usher and enjoyed helping with the senior activities. He once formed a Kazoo band to perform and participated in Hee Haw skits for fun. He loved the Lord and his church family. His devotion to his faith was a guiding compass of light in his daily life.

Whether you smell the faint scent of oranges or hear the guitar riff of Johnny B. Good in the distance, Gary has left his mark for all of us to remember. Similar to how he ate his ice cream (with every topping option imaginable), his impact on us all encompassed a little bit of everything sweet in this world. Genuine, delightful, praiseworthy and adored. It'll be hard to forget a man like that.

We love you, Papa.

Viewing will be held 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM Thursday, December 21st, 2023 at Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel, 127 E. Caldwell Ave., Visalia. Graveside

services will be held 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Friday, December 22nd, 2023 at Visalia District Cemetery, 1300 W Goshen Ave, Visalia. Reception services will be held 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM Friday, December 22nd, 2023 at Crowdaddy's, 333 E Main St, 2nd Floor, Visalia.

Services have been entrusted to Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel. Memorial Tributes and condolences may be offered by logging onto www.salseranddillard.com.

Previous Events

Viewing

DEC **21**. 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM (PT)

Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel
127 E. Caldwell Ave.
Visalia, CA 93277

Graveside

DEC **22**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (PT)

Visalia District Cemetery
1300 W Goshen Ave
Visalia, CA 93291

Reception

DEC **22**. 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM (PT)

Crawdaddy's
333 E Main St, 2nd Floor
Visalia, CA 93291

Tribute Wall



“ *Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Gary Don McLain*



Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel - December 19, 2023 at 03:09 PM