



Joe E Lee

April 13, 1928 - April 29, 2020

Joseph “Joe” Edmund Lee, 92, died the evening of April 29, 2020, in Prescott, Arizona surrounded by loved ones. Joe was born April 13, 1928, to Charles Henry Lee and Maria Rumaldita Aragon in Costilla, New Mexico. Born into the Great Depression, Joe learned the value of hard work and perseverance at an early age. He was a natural student and received high marks in school while also working to help support the family. Joe left home at the age of twelve in pursuit of work, which he found as a laborer for farms, railroads, mines, and manufacturing operations; however, each one ended in dismissal when the employer inevitably found out he was a minor. Out of options, Joe moved to Courtland, California with his sister Mary and her husband. In time he found work as a truck driver and married his first wife, Josephine.

In February, 1951, he enlisted in the United States Air Force, where he served honorably as a mason while stationed in Germany and a ball turret gunner while stationed in Korea during the Korean War. Joe suffered two broken legs while traveling back to the United States on a cargo plane and spent the final four months of his service rehabilitating in Honolulu, Hawaii. Joe would often recount his thanks and appreciation for the healthcare providers that pushed him to walk again.

Joe returned to New Mexico following his divorce from Josephine. It was in there that he met Fidencia “Fidie” Martinez. In his journal he wrote “she and I did the jitterbug all night and that was the night I met my little sweetheart.”

Joe, Fidie, and Fidie’s three daughters moved to the Grand Canyon National

Park in 1959. It was at the Grand Canyon that Joe and Fidie built a legacy of hard work and family that continues today. Joe was hired by Mr. Guthrie, a man for whom he had immense love and respect, as the lead custodian for the Grand Canyon School District. In Joe's time working for the school and living in the Grand Canyon community, he played a pivotal role in many lives. He logged over one million miles without an accident while driving the school bus, taking children to and from school and sporting events all over Arizona. He took immense pride in the maintenance and condition of the school, especially the condition of the gymnasium floor. Joe and Fidie retired to Chino Valley, Arizona in 1992, after 32 years of meticulous care of Grand Canyon School, the teachers and coaches, as well as the children of the community. Joe's work ethic was fueled by the love of family and his faith in God. He took tremendous pride in the accomplishments of his children and grandchildren, often traveling long distances just to spend a couple hours at a game or recital. He loved fishing, storytelling, reading, and spending time with family and friends. He was a man of high ideals who exhibited compassion, loyalty, and strength of character through good times and bad. He maintained a wonderful sense of humor, always willing to share a joke and a laugh. He was quick to lend a hand or a dollar to someone in need and all were welcome under his roof. He consistently did the little things the right way, learned from his mistakes, and persisted to build a life that was meaningful and impactful to those that were fortunate to know him.

Joe is preceded in death by his parents, wife Fidie Lee, son Joe "Ray" Raymond Lee, and siblings Henry T. Lee and Mary Lee Chacon. Joe is survived by: first wife, Josephine Lee, and their four children Charles "Chucky" Lee, David Hernandez, Edmond "Punky" Lee, and Leroy Lee; siblings Robert Martinez and Susie Apodaca; step-daughters Veva Slayton, Annabelle Palmer, and Geraldine Ortiz; children Daniel Lee, Bernice Shanks, Judy Walker, JoEllen Lee-Mathews, Debbie Hookano, and Katie Thomas, and; over 40 grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. at Sunrise Funeral Home located in Prescott Valley, Arizona. Due to the current Covid 19 Virus Executive Order, The Burial Ceremony is private and will be attended by only immediate family members. In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Grand Canyon Chapter of the American Legion Post 42 where Joe was a previous Commander.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 7. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (MT)

Sunrise Funeral Home and Crematory
8167 E HWY 69
Prescott Valley, AZ 86314
(928) 772-7475
info@sunrisefuneralhome.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Joe E Lee*

January 30, 2023 at 05:11 AM



“ *VIVA LA RAZA JOSE! robert wilson- lochbuie, colorado*

robert wilson - November 08, 2020 at 09:09 PM



“ *Joe Lee was the essence of Phantom Nation. He was the heartbeat of Grand Canyon school district.*

dlopez - May 08, 2020 at 08:01 PM



“ *I was a lucky recipient of Joe Lee's generous spirit and support on many levels. I was also blessed to know and love many of his children. To live such a life and leave such a legacy is truly remarkable and I and my children's lives were enriched in our early Grand Canyon years because of him. RIP*

*Becky Crumbo
Ogden, UT*

Becky Crumbo - May 08, 2020 at 01:48 PM

CN

“ Our Condolences to Joe's family. You are in our prayers. May Joe RIP.



Carmen & Roy Sanchez, Albuquerque, NM - May 07, 2020 at 11:19 PM

AF

“ Our condolences to Judy walker and all her family. We remember when he played the guitar for us, and he was so excited to give Gustavo fish that he had caught days before. RIP señor Joe and go dance a lot with Fidle.
❤️ Sincerely Flores family



alejandra flores - May 07, 2020 at 01:31 PM

CD

“ May you rest in peace mr. Lee growing up you were like my second dad how I wish I could have seen you before you left this world I know you're with mrs. lee hide in your glory you are no the paradise of God Joellen and all the family my deepest condolences

Caroline Duran - May 06, 2020 at 12:12 PM

FC

“ MY UNCLE JOE WAS MY MOTHER MARY CHACONS BROTHER. I RMEMBER HIM AND ALL MY COUSINS VISITING US ON THEIR TRIPS TO LAKE TAHOE CALIFORNIA. IT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF MY YEAR. WHAT I REMEMBER MOST ABOUT MY AWESOME UNCLE WAS HIS COMFORTING WORDS AND KIND SUPPORT TO ME AS A CHILD AFTER BEING REPRIMANDED BY MY FATHER WHO WAS A STRICT DISCIPLINARIAN. MY UNCLE JOE LOVED AND UNDERSTOOD CHILDREN LIKE NOBODY I HAVE EVER KNOWN. I LEARNED FROM HIS EXAMPLE WHICH MADE ME A BETTER FATHER TO MY OWN CHILDREN. I LOVE YOU UNCLE JOE AND WILL SEE YOU AGAIN IN HEAVEN....FRED CHACON 🙏

FRED CHACON - May 05, 2020 at 11:47 PM

BM

“ Our deepest condolences to the Family. You are in our prayers.



Benigno & Ida Maestas - May 05, 2020 at 08:09 PM

CH

“ Catherine Hillan lit a candle in memory of Joe E Lee



Catherine Hillan - May 05, 2020 at 07:33 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Joe E Lee.*



May 05, 2020 at 04:11 PM



“ *Kristi Carpenter (Wolfskill) lit a candle in memory of Joe E Lee*



Kristi Carpenter (Wolfskill) - May 05, 2020 at 04:08 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joe E Lee.*



May 05, 2020 at 04:07 PM

MT

“ Our condolences to the entire family. I don't have enough words to express, in my opinion what Joe meant to me.

In a sense he was my hero. He was smart, and highly intelligent and played a great part in influencing my life to become a better man. He was my good buddy in every sense of the word. I met Joe when I was 19 years old we became friends immediately. My greatest memory was getting together having a few drinks listening to him play his guitar and sing. He is going to be missed. But he is in Heaven playing and singing with his honey. May they both RIP.



Manuel Trujillo - May 05, 2020 at 03:41 PM

DT

Our condolences and prayers going out to the whole Lee family. I met Joe when he started dating my beautiful cousin Fidie. Then they moved to Arizona where my Mom and I used to cry because they had moved so far away from us. But they would come pretty often to visit us in Cebolla New Mexico. We also moved to Grand Canyon when we were recently married then came back home to Cebolla, New Mexico. Then years passed and we moved back to Grand Canyon, Arizona where we would all get together and party. Joe & Fidie were a band they both were great singers and Joe loved to play the guitar and we would dance the night away when we lived in Grand Canyon, Arizona. There are a lot of memories that I have of both of them that I could go on and on. All I can say is thanks Joe and Fidie for the beautiful people on my life. The love and memories I have I will cherish them forever and love you guys forever. RIP 🙏🙏 JOE & FIDIE LEE .
Love cousin Dorothy ❤️❤️

Dorothy Alire Trujillo - May 05, 2020 at 07:50 PM

GO

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Geraldine Ortiz - May 05, 2020 at 03:15 PM

GO

“ My name is Geraldine, Joe raised me from a baby, I'm very grateful that he brought us to the beautiful Grand Canyon and worked so hard to provide for our family. I'm especially grateful for the 7 amazing siblings me and my two sisters were blessed with. When we moved to Arizona our mother missed her family in New Mexico so Joe would pack all us up and take us to see our New Mexico family. Joe you will be missed.

Geraldine Ortiz - May 05, 2020 at 03:09 PM

PA

Love you Geraldine . what a tremendous loss for you and all who ever had the joy of knowing him

Pat - May 05, 2020 at 09:34 PM

JE

Hi Geri, it's Janie. My deepest condolences to your entire family and all your siblings. I have many memories of Tio Joe. He was one patient and kind man. I remember your family coming to visit my dad, Tia Fidia's brother, in Ensenada. He tended to his kids in many, many ways, getting bags and sacks down from a big old station wagon, packing and unpacking stuff, helping in the kitchen. I remember he loved Coronado bologna and had to have some as he hit New Mexico! He adored your mom and was very apparent about it. I hope they're together again holding hands. Thank you, Tio Joe, for the memories.

Janette Estrada-Martinez - May 06, 2020 at 03:24 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Joe E Lee.*



May 05, 2020 at 02:40 PM



“ *I am so sorry about the loss of your dad Katie but we know he is in the best place one
Can be, wiith Jesus Christ!*

God bless you & your family

Bryan

bryan - May 05, 2020 at 02:38 PM



“ *Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Joe E Lee.*



May 05, 2020 at 02:37 PM



“ *Katie and family, you are all in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. My years at the bank in TN, Katie has told me many fine stories of her father. Those memories are to cherish forever! Robin Young*



Robin Young - May 05, 2020 at 02:26 PM



“ *Sacred Duty Spray* was purchased for the family of Joe E Lee.



May 05, 2020 at 01:45 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Joe E Lee.



May 05, 2020 at 01:35 PM



“ *-your GCW family purchased the Beautiful Dreams* for the family of Joe E Lee.



-your GCW family - May 05, 2020 at 12:40 PM