



Richard Eugene McKee

March 26, 1936 - October 15, 2021

Richard Eugene McKee was born to Clarence E. McKee and Luella Eby McKee on March 26, 1936, in Ogle County, Illinois. His father was a tenant farmer prior to enlisting in the Sea Bees, serving in the South Pacific during World War II.

Dick grew up in rural Polo, Illinois, by the Rock River. His early jobs included mowing lawns, delivering papers by bike and at age fourteen car hopping at a drive-in at which he dropped the tray at his first customer's window. Luckily, it was on the outside of the car. At age 18, he left home to support himself. Upon graduating from Polo High School, he enlisted in the US Army, serving in Korea at the 38th Parallel with the 57th Battalion, 7th Army as a Fire Direction Controller. The GI Bill enabled him to go to college at Long Beach State University, receiving a teaching credential, and later a master's degree.

Dick's entire teaching career was with the Anaheim Union High School District teaching US History and later, serving as a school counselor. He also held a Family and Marriage license for a private practice, and did volunteer work counseling young people. In 1962, he met Sondra Kay Schmitt, a fellow teacher, and an owner of a red MGA. It so happened Dick owned a red Sunbeam Alpine which led the two of them to road rallies, love, and marriage. Dick retired in 1997, after 36 years of service, and he and Kay lived in Huntington Beach for 38 years. Upon Kay's retirement in 2002, they came to

Etna to live the kind of life of which both had experienced as youngsters. Dick had grown up directly in that kind of environment and even Kay could claim a bit of that having grown up in Anaheim when it was not a city, but a town surrounded by orange groves.

Dick was particularly fond of all kinds of music and had acquired a large collection of CDs to which he spent many hours listening. He loved visiting 49 of the states (missed Maine) as well as Canada and Mexico. In their move to Etna, they brought 2 mules with them with whom they participated in parades and competed in various competitions, including the Bishop Mule Days in 2002. Dick's little oak wagon and team won him a second place against larger and more experienced drivers. Then there was the Geriatric Ward which included a 46-year-old retired US Forest Service mule, a 25-year-old one eyed Morgan and Emilee, a mule with an attitude, age 25. Dick considered himself qualified to be a part of that group as well.

Above all else, however, Dick's favorite pastime was his family of which he was so proud. Dick was a warm and loving man who touched so many lives with his intelligence, laughter, sense of caring and love. Upon retiring, Dick was treated to a retirement party by the staff of the school at which he was serving his final years of counseling. They presented to him a 60 double paged book in which members of the staff drew pictures, wrote down jokes they had shared, reminisced about incidents of time with Dick, photographs, etc. Each had taken much time to show their love for Dick. What better testament to the quality of one man?

Dick was preceded in death by his parents, Clarence E. and Luella Eby McKee; a brother, Charles McKee; nephew, Steven McKee; aunt Irene Eby-Wise; and by in-laws, Rel, Nancy, Walter and Ferne Schmitt.

Dick leaves his wife of 59 years, Kay; son Sean E. McKee (Jamie) Grants

Pass, OR; daughter, Erin H. Fowle (Jeff) Etna, CA; sister Lili Staff and family (Phil) Eau Claire, WI; granddaughter, Sarah McKee, Grants Pass, OR; grandson, Kyle Fowle, Etna CA; and nieces and nephews, Cecelia McKee Grants Pass, OR, Lu McKee and Family, Noblesville, IN, Jeff McKee, FL, Philip McKee, IN, David McKee, IN.

Dick will be inurned with military honors at Etna Cemetery on Saturday, November 6, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

Tribute Wall

JS

“ Next door neighbor for over 40 years in Huntington Beach, Dick (and all the McKees) are held in the highest esteem. So many good memories. One could only hope to find someone of his caliber to have as a friend/neighbor. By-the-way even after nearly twenty years their house is still referred to "the McKee house" by many if not most of the neighborhood.

John Seymour - December 12, 2021 at 12:00 AM

NS

“ We wish we could be there in person. Uncle Dick was a great person and he will be sorely missed.



Nate, Kaya, Loren & Theo Staff - October 31, 2021 at 12:00 AM

LP

“ Kay, Erin and family, I am so sorry for your loss of this wonderful man. I remember how kind and supportive he was at the workshops and playdays years ago when many of us were trying to improve our horsemanship. Blessings linda Priem

linda j priem - October 29, 2021 at 12:00 AM

KG

“ What a rich life he led- condolences to the family and friends. -
Kathy Graves

Kathy Graves - October 29, 2021 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ Sent with love and remembrance,

Dayna and Jim Stagg - October 29, 2021 at 12:00 AM

AM

“ We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ Girdner Funeral Chapel

A Memorial Tree was planted for Dick McKee - October 28, 2021 at 12:00 AM

KN

“ RIP. So very sorry for your loss. 🙏🙏🙏🙏

Kristen Naylor - October 28, 2021 at 12:00 AM