



Raymond Lashley

August 1, 1923 - May 29, 2017

Raymond (Ray) Lashley noted engineer, inventor, politician, Cowboy Poet and Author, Husband, Father, Grandfather, and Great Grandfather died on May 29th, 2017 in Grand Junction, Colorado. He also raised his beloved Appaloosa horses for over 45 years on his farms in Utah and Grand Junction. He is survived by his wife of over 55 years Joan; his daughter Lyn and her husband Tom Mars of Pennsylvania; his daughter Mary Etta Lorenzana and her husband Joseph of California; his son John Titsworth of Colorado; his sisters Lily Price and Violet Coffey of Missouri; and grandchildren: Kolt Loughran, Blake Loughran, Dalton Titsworth and Kaitlin Titsworth Huelskamp; and great grandchildren: Kane, Katie, Nathaniel, and Chase. He was preceded in death by his parents Arthur R. and Nancy Rich Lashley; brothers Amos, Victor and Vernon and sisters Elyeen, Fern, Vesta and Glenna. Mr. Lashley grew up in Des Arc, Missouri on a farm in the Missouri Ozarks. His first paying job, at the age of 8, was driving a four-horse team for .35 a day. He went on his first of many trail drives at the age of 14. Soon after the beginning of WWII (at the age of 18) Mr. Lashley joined the US Navy and served for the duration of the war. Earning many medals and battle citations in both the Atlantic and Pacific campaigns, he left the service in 1947. Following the war he became an engineer, specializing in instrumentation and weaponry testing, often working on classified weapons systems at the Naval Missile Center in California and the Deseret Test Center in Utah. He held numerous patents for his inventions including one for an early rotary drive motor and a high speed rail system that drew national attention during the search for a US based "bullet" train. His system operated at speeds exceeding 200 miles an hour but government fervor fell off due to the massive infrastructure investments needed in any new rail system. Dad maintained an active interest in politics and the affairs of his community, state and nation. He was an ardent "letter to the editor" submitter to many local, regional and national publications. He was not content just to "write" about politics, so he served as Co-Chairman of the Colorado Reform Party in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Besides his family and his Appaloosas his greatest love was being a Cowboy Poet and published author. Even back on the farm in Missouri he was known and recognized for his ability to memorize and recite poetry. His first recognition as a Cowboy Poet came during a 1983 Chief Joseph Trail ride where he recited poetry around the camp fire for his fellow riders.

Word of mouth of his abilities led to his invitation to participate in the first National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada in 1985. That first year drew a few hundred people. Today it is the largest Cowboy Poetry event which draws thousands to it every year. Dad participated in most of the National Gatherings and was an invited performer for the 25th anniversary celebration. He briefly considered becoming a professional Cowboy Poet but had just retired after 40 years of military and government service and decided to continue reciting just for the love and fun of it. Still, he accepted many professional engagements, performing at numerous Poetry Gatherings in most of the states west of the Mississippi and a few east of it. He published several books and made several CD recordings of his original Cowboy Poetry. Until his health began to decline he could perform over three hours of his own and other's poetry from memory.

A private family graveside service was held at the Mountain View Cemetery in Des Arc, MO and a memorial service will be held in Grand Junction, CO at a later date.

Comments



“ Uncle Ray my favorite Uncle! Although not by blood he may as well have been. Uncle Ray and Aunt Jo. Love and miss you all. Will always remember the night under the Willow Tree when I got tangled up in the sleeping bag and Uncle Ray saved me by dumping me out of it. And the old car next to the carport we had many a childhood adventure in. ROAD TRIP!!! Many Many Happy Childhood memories! Thank You O. C.

Richard Cordon - June 20, 2017 at 09:18 PM



“ I can still smell your pipe! And feel the warm hugs you gave me when Dick and Fosteen would bring me out! I remember asking to ride the horses, and the model for your monorail, and the way I never wanted to leave when it was time to go. Sending my love and prayers to Jo.

Michelle A.



Michelle - June 11, 2017 at 11:17 PM