



Leland "Lee" Updegraff

September 21, 1920 - September 28, 2020

Leland Boyd "Lee" Updegraff went to be with the Lord on September 28, 2020, with his daughter Karen by his side. He is predeceased by his parents, Daniel Burton and Nellie Corley; his beloved wife of 52 years, Catherine Verna; and four sisters and four brothers. Lee is survived by his daughter, Karen Sue Ashcraft; granddaughters Catherine (Donovan) and Karen Lee (Pete); three nieces and many grandnieces and grandnephews.

Lee was born on Sep 21, 1920 on his parents' homestead in Ulysses, Kansas. In 1924, the family moved to San Diego, where he was raised. His oldest brother, Burt, introduced him to Charles Lindburgh in 1927, when Lee was only six years old. Before Lindburgh left San Diego on his historic solo trans-Atlantic flight to Paris, he let Lee sit on his lap and peer through the periscope on his now-famous plane, the Spirit of St. Louis.

Lee graduated from San Diego High School in 1938 and began flight training while attending San Diego State later that year. He flew with the Civil Air Patrol until World War II, when he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps and served as a pilot in the war.

In 1944, he married Catherine "Kaye" Verna, the love of his life. Their only child, Karen, was born in 1945. After the war, he returned to San Diego State on the GI Bill, graduating in 1947. Sears, Roebuck & Co. was quick to recruit

him, and he worked there as a Division Manager for 39 years. He began in the Hollywood store, where he sold appliances to the likes of Roy Rogers and Dale Evans. He was transferred to Riverside, then to Fresno and Hayward, where he opened the Southland Mall store in 1958. Ultimately, he settled his family in Fremont, where he lived until 2019. He served his community, for example, as a life member of the Elks and Centerville Lion's Club, and volunteering for the Senior Center until he was 94.

Lee always loved flying, and his daughter adored flying with him in his Aeronca Chief plane, which they took to San Diego to visit his mother. Lee flew until he was 86.

Lee is known and beloved for his kindness, loyalty, sincerity, wry sense of humor, photographic memory, and voracious appetite. He was an epic dancer, an avid golfer, and a skilled waterskiier. He traveled the world, first with his wife and, in his later years, with his daughter. He was a devoted and loving husband, father, and grandfather. He was also devoted to the Lord and attended Grace Baptist Church in Niles until he left Fremont.

In October of 2019, he moved to Denver, CO to be near his granddaughters, which rekindled his connection to fond memories of Lowry Air Force Base, Buckley Field, and the Lakeside ballroom. Sharing stories of his time there during WW II made him smile to his final days. He will be vividly remembered and dearly missed by all who know and love him.

Tribute Wall

ME

“ Karen, we are so sorry for the loss of your Father. We are all sending our love to you and your family.

Melissa and your friends at Chili's Fremont



Mel - October 14, 2020 at 08:42 PM

SK

Dear Karen I just came across this and I have tears your dad such a sweet man he was nothing but a gentleman to my family and my mother he is one of the kindest most giving tender hearted loving man I have ever met. I have thought of him many times and you and pray you find peace during this time I'm so glad he got to spend time with Granddaughters he spoke so fondly of them and you all the time God bless you during this time and know I will hold you in prayer

sandi kellman - November 11, 2020 at 12:31 PM

CW

“ Karen...what a beautiful service that was for your father. To know him was to love him! I am so grateful that my father and I had the pleasure of calling him our friend and we loved the lunches we all spent together at the senior center. It also warmed my heart to see our two dads getting together to watch football. I will never forget Lee...he was such a special man! Thank you for inviting me to his service! I will miss him for sure! With love to you and your family! Love, Carole Glasgow Wiegand & Glenn too!



Carole Glasgow Wiegand - October 14, 2020 at 04:44 PM

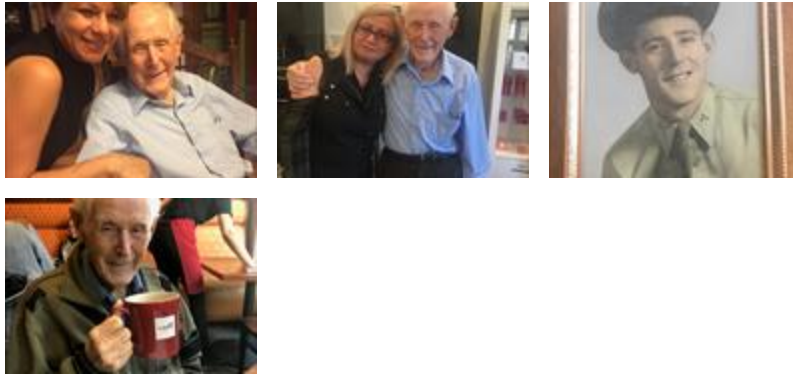
BI

“ I am sorry to hear of the passing of Lee. We had Bible classes on Thursday A few years back. I moved up to Idaho a few years ago, and lost touch with Lee. He was a walking history book for me. GOD BLESS till we meet again with our LORD! Love Bill Mertens

Bill - October 13, 2020 at 10:32 PM



“ 4 files added to the album Memories Album



Fremont Chapel of the Roses - October 13, 2020 at 12:22 PM

AM

“ 5 files added to the album Memories Album



Art Murphy - October 09, 2020 at 05:40 PM



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Fremont Chapel of the Roses - October 09, 2020 at 12:26 PM



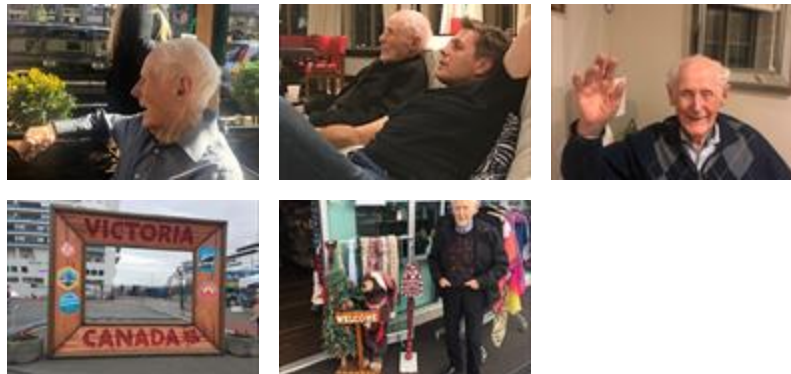
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Fremont Chapel of the Roses - October 08, 2020 at 05:31 PM



“ 113 files added to the album Memories Album



Fremont Chapel of the Roses - October 08, 2020 at 01:06 PM