



Jack Leroy Tatum Sr.

March 12, 1937 - February 24, 2020

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Jack Leroy Tatum, Sr., 82, was born in the year 1937 to his father Jack Tatum 1st. (who died before Jack turned 2yrs old) and Bette Keys into a Delaware Indian (Lenape) family in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. His grandmother was Jeannette Whiteturkey Parks, and Great Grandmother was Katie Whiteturkey. Jack's surviving children are Jack Tatum Jr., Desiree Tatum Gall, and James Tatum the youngest. Jack was raised by his traditional Native American grandparents on their Indian allotment in rural Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

At the age of 14, he moved to the West Coast to live with his mother and stepfather, a career Marine Corps officer. In 1956 he graduated from high school and married his high school sweetheart Valerie Evans with whom he had three children. The same year he joined the U.S. Air Force and attended electronics school in Biloxi, Mississippi where his first son Jack Jr. was born.

Jack graduated as a U.S Air Force Radar Repairman and was assigned to the Air Control and Warning Command. He was selected to attend Analog/Processing School and was reassigned to maintain the Semi-Automatic Ground Environment Equipment (SAGE) being installed across the United States. While assisting the install at the Hannah Radar Station in Peoria ILL, his daughter Desiree was born. Jack also attended Bradley University majoring in mathematics.

In 1960 Jack left the Air Force and took a position as a computer technician with General Electric Computer Department. While attending UCLA and living in Los Angeles his third child, James, was born. Jack traveled to several states and numerous installations where he taught company courses on software development & installations and wrote custom software systems for GE and its customers.

In 1966 Jack took a new position to develop and integrate the first large scale flight simulator system. Jack enjoyed an exceptional 37-year career in the computer and communication Industry traveling across the United States and Europe. One of his favorite assignments was developing and installing missile impact prediction application for NASA, and a 2 year on-site position in Rome, Italy developing the first International Telex Gateway for all of the European continent.

After returning from Europe in 1981, Jack developed a beach front property in the Santa Monica Bay area of Redondo Beach, California. He sold this property and started Cherokee Data Systems, a development and consulting firm. That same year he became an avid yacht racing enthusiast, forming Corinthian Yachts Inc.

In 1990 he returned to his Oklahoma roots and became involved with his tribe, the Delaware Tribe as Systems Administrator. In 1991 he was elected to the Delaware Tribal Council and served as Chairman of the Culture Preservation and Economic Development programs. In 1992 he served as the chairman of the Bartlesville Indian Summer Festival.

Jack was instrumental in initiating numerous culture preservation programs for his tribe including Lenape language classes, taught by his Great Aunt Lucy Blalock, one of the remaining fluent speakers of the time.

In 1993 Jack resigned his position on the Tribal Council to attend Harvard University where he became directly involved with the Internet. While working on the Internet he began to understand the impact of this new information technology on the world. "We have the power to control our own destinies", he once said. Jack's dream was to bring this technology to his tribe and to rural Oklahoma communities. He did so by starting a new company named "Cowboy Net"; this company is still running today.

Jack loved riding bicycles and during his senior years he won the Oklahoma State Championship in the Senior Olympics. He began to suffer from Parkinson's Disease and developed bone cancer. He succumbed to his illness while a resident of the Nowata (OK) Nursing Facility with his family and beloved friend Suzanne Weaver by his side.

Jack Tatum was truly an amazing man and will be missed by many!

Events

FEB **Delaware Indian Services** 05:30PM - 11:59PM

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Delaware Tribal Center

5100 E. Tuxedo Blvd., Bartlesville, OK, US, 74006

Comments



“ I road bikes with him for years Big Dog

Norman Hinsdell - February 25, 2020 at 05:30 PM