

Gone But Not Forgotten

Remembering Jerry Best With a Cajun Boil

Jerry Haviland Best was like so many with a military past, whom had served in many places and in a war that none of us would like to admit this country was a part of. But none the less, Jerry proudly entered the Marines at the age of 20. During that time there was an 18-month period in which he served his country on the front lines of Vietnam. This experience would be the answer of how he would spend the rest of his life.

Completing his duty overseas Jerry found pleasure in traveling and discovering the country that he had so diligently protected. Ultimately, this would direct him to Arizona, where he would meet the love of his life, Margaret "Meg" Mudgett. On March 15th 2003 in Mesa, AZ, the two became one. Approximately a year after that they moved to Corvallis, Oregon. Consuming and surrounding his life with the outdoors, whether he was fishing, prospecting, or enjoying the wind on his iron steed (Harley), Jerry lived life to the fullest.

On April 11th, Jerry went on to higher places to ride his iron steed forever, leaving the battle of cancer behind.

On May 21st 05, Saturday, a celebration of Jerry's life was held at Bob "Hardbite" Dolan's house. Approximately 50 bikers left at 2PM riding to Tortilla Flats; one of Jerry's desired routes on his motorcycle. They returned back to

Hardbite's house around 5:30. Hardbite and his sister, "TuniBabe" from Colorado collaborated with Meg to have this event; which was one of Jerry's favorites and he was a part of in the past, especially the ride and Cajun Boil.

When Flaky and I arrived, Hardbite, Chris, and Jerry's family members were preparing the tables for a buffet style meal, while the food was still cooking. As the sun was setting, it was time for a small service led by "Showup" (Chris) and to take a moment for Jerry, and to remember him as a dedicated Marine who was committed to this country. Family members, vets, and close friends shared their moments they had with him.

After the service, Hardbite got the large stock pots off the fire and drained them, while others were helping get other food entrees out in the middle of all the banquet tables. As each pot of Cajun Boil mixture was poured in the center of each table, mouths started watering and the feast was on! In a big mound in front of you was crab, jumbo shrimp, andouli sausage, corn on the cob, potatoes, and homemade cornbread on the side to complete the meal. If you've never had a Cajun Boil, then you are really missing out on a great feast. This was Jerry's favorite meal and he loved getting together with friends.



After the meal was over everyone chipped in and cleaned up the tables and then it was time to socialize while Denny ("Chips") and his lady Andrea ("Big Wheel") got the Karaoke set up and ready for those that wanted to sing their favorite tunes. Beside the karaoke hosts, there was quite a bit of talent. The only problem was if you hit a sour note, Hardbite was quick to solve the problem by pretending to remove your vocal cords! Sandy ("Bandit") and I did a duet, and of course her hubby, George ("In-the-Water Daggette") did some outstanding singing. Chris was a victim to Hardbite's suggestion, but he didn't scare



easily, because he just kept right on singin'.

It was getting late and for the final song, not only was it a tribute to Jerry but to all that had and still are protecting this country, with Denny singing Lee Greenwood's 'Proud to be an American', while we ALL joined hands and sang along with him. Such spiritual power! I know Jerry was with each and everyone of us there, and was smiling; as I am sure he heard every word coming from our hearts to him.

Jerry is riding his white iron steed, forever, watching out over all of us. Though he will be greatly missed by his family and all of us, he is never too far away. In our hearts he will always remain. To all the family members, peace, love and most of all may the Great Spirit guard and guide you wherever you may go.

~~~~~ Sidekick