



## James "Lee" Cathey

August 26, 1957 - September 12, 2023

James 'Lee' Cathey passed away at his home in Grove, Oklahoma on Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at the age of 66.

Lee was born on August 26, 1957, in Memphis, Tennessee to James H. and Barbara (Peirsol) Cathey. He graduated from Raleigh Egypt High School and then attended the University of Memphis. Shortly thereafter, he joined the United States Air Force where he proudly served his country for the next 18 years. He attained the rank of E-7 Master Sergeant and served in Operation Desert Storm. He earned many outstanding commendations during his Air Force career. During his tenure in the Air Force, he became an accomplished wrestler.

Lee moved to the Grand Lake area from Memphis in 2013. He soon joined the American Legion, Post 178 in Grove, which he was instrumental in revitalizing. He was a dedicated member of the Grove Veteran's Ritual Team. He swiftly moved up the ranks of the Post and the Legion, becoming the American Legion Post Commander as well as the District Commander. He was influential in aiding the Post in attaining and maintaining the F-4 Jet Fighter which is displayed at Freedom Park east of Grove. Lee is also, the current Senior Vice Commander for the American Legion Dept of Oklahoma. Among his many lifetime achievements, he was also an accomplished youth sports coach, and was a two-time National Champion Cheerleading team coach.

The life that Lee lived was the epitome of 'selfless service', as it was

engrained in the military, always placing the needs of his fellow Veteran above his own. Lee was a great friend to many, and a leader in the Grove Community and he inspired people with his confidence and unwavering positivity. Lee loved a challenge and energetically set out to achieve whatever he set his mind to. There is no doubt that Lee is irreplaceable, but he left a legacy for his peers and future generations to follow.

He is survived by his wife Susan Engstrom; his children April Cathey, Roger Lee Cathey, Reagan Cathey, Alexis Engstrom and Kayla Cathey-Shea; bonus daughters, Donna Engstrom Shello and Suzanne Engstrom, 12 grandchildren and 2 bonus grandchildren; brother, Walter Cathey of Memphis, Tennessee and sister, Debra Nelson of North Carolina.

A visitation for Lee will be held from 5-7 pm on Saturday, September 16th at Nichols-Stephens Funeral Service, and funeral services will be at 2:30 pm on Sunday, September 17, 2023, at First Baptist Church, Grove. Lee will receive full Military Honors by the United States Air Force and the Grove Veteran's Ritual Team. There will be a reception following the funeral at the Grove American Eagle Post 178 at 4pm.

Lee insisted that instead of flowers, donations be made to the F4 Project or the American Legion Post 178, 114 Broadway Street, Grove, OK 74344.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP **16.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Nichols-Stephens Funeral and Cremation Service  
10201 U.S. Highway 59  
Grove, OK 74344  
(918) 786-6761  
nicholsfunerals@yahoo.com

## Funeral Service

SEP **17.** 2:30 PM (CT)

Grove's First Baptist Church  
501 E. 13th St  
Grove, OK 74344

# Tribute Wall



“ *James "Lee" Cathey*

October 04, 2023 at 03:23 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of James "Lee" Cathey.*



September 16, 2023 at 10:48 AM



“ *we are heartbroken. Lee was such a wonderful guy and so positive. Last we saw him for my hug, he looked so good and smiling as usual. He always brought laughter to our bingo gang. we will miss his beautiful smile and joyful presence. Such a loss to all of us who knew him. Even though all my prayers were not answered to keep you with all of us....I guess God had other plans for you. Smile down on us my friend. Rest in peace Lee in God's eternal care...*



**Tomeli Dews** - September 15, 2023 at 01:52 PM

TD

*Susan, I forgot to write my poem for you.*

*"Don't think of Lee as gone away, his journey's just begun.  
It holds so many facets; this earth is only one.*

*Think of him as resting from the sorrow and the tears,  
in a place of warmth and comfort, where there are no  
days or years.*

*Think how he must be wishing, that we all could know  
today,  
how nothing but our sorrow, will EVER pass away.*

*And think of him as living in the hearts of those he  
touched;*

*For nothing loved is EVER lost; and he was LOVED SO MUCH!"*

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**Tomeli Dews** - September 17, 2023 at 01:05 PM

RI

“ *Rex & Diane Ice purchased the Sacred Duty Spray for the family of James "Lee" Cathey.*



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**Rex & Diane Ice** - September 14, 2023 at 12:53 AM

DW

“ Through mutual friends I first met Lee when he was helping to start Bingo at the American Legion Hall in Grove. His sense of purpose to give to not only Veterans but the community was unwavering. I enjoyed helping him with the advertising.

Lee quickly became a friend whom I shared much laughter with. He will truly be missed.

To Susan and his family I send my heartfelt condolences and will keep you all in my prayers.



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**Denise Winn** - September 13, 2023 at 12:34 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of James "Lee" Cathey.



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September 12, 2023 at 10:10 PM