

Tribute To A Cowboy

Sadly Missed, Always Remembered, Forever Loved

I'm sure God has a ranch in Heaven
A place for cowboys to call home
With dusty trails and deep passes
Where cows and horses freely roam

I picture you up on a ledge
Gazing at the draws below
Leaning forward with your Thirty X
Stetson hat pulled way down low

I can 'bout hear the leather creaking
When your gelding switches feet
Your spurs softly jingle in the wind
Your rope's tied on and coiled neat

There is contentment on your face
You're happy, but I can't pretend,
Though I'm glad you've made God's journey,
That I can truly comprehend

In my earthly ways I question
The reasons God took you away
I guess the timing was exactly right
To enter Heaven on that day

The only comfort I have found
That puts my grief to rest
Is that God only takes the top hands
Because His crew's the very best

We still cry and we sure miss you
And all the things that might have been
But God needed one more cowboy
And He felt you'd fit right in

So He sent down all His ranch hands
An extra horse stood at their side
Then he softly whispered to you
"Saddle up, my friend, let's ride"

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF *Billy "Max" Cumming*

Born

January 7, 1935
Hatfield, Missouri

Entered Into Rest

April 6, 2014
Bridgeport, Nebraska

Funeral Service

Thursday, April 10, 2014 ~ 2:00 p.m.
Church of Christ
Bridgeport, Nebraska

Officiating

Pastor Jonathan Seng

Musicians

Lana Seng & Mary Lee Metz
Linda Lore

Casket Bearers

Tim Barr Tom Barr Matt Barr
Michael Schultz Parker Smith Elijah Smith

Graveside Services

Saturday, April 12, 2014 ~ 10:30 a. m.
Rose Hill Cemetery
Shenandoah, Iowa

Directed By

*Bridgeport Memorial Chapel
Hackett Livingston Funeral Home*

Billy "Max" Cumming passed away Sunday, April 6, 2014 after a battle with cancer, in his favorite chair with his loving family by his side.

Max was born January 7, 1935 in Hatfield, MO, the only child of William "Tom" and Lorene (Heyle) Cumming. He and his parents moved to Shenandoah, IA when Max was two years old, where his dad served as a Shenandoah Police Officer and later Deputy Sheriff of Page County until his untimely death. Max always said that his dad was his best friend, and he never stopped striving to live his life in a way that would honor his dad and make him proud.

Max married Karen June Callison May 26, 1976 in Shenandoah, and became "dad" to her sons, Tim and Tom. To Max and Karen was born a daughter, Billie Jo. Max didn't get the boy he was hoping for, but you sure couldn't tell by the way he loved his daughter. He rarely went anywhere without Billie and from the time she was born, they were inseparable.

In his early years, Max worked at Standard Oil, servicing vehicles, and also McNeilly Sign Company. He later went to work for the City of Shenandoah, eventually becoming Superintendent of the wastewater treatment facility. He retired from the City of Shenandoah in 1997 after 32 years of service. Shenandoah was his home and he was well known and respected there.

Max bought his first horse when he was in his early 20's and thus began his life-long passion. He rode numerous years in the Pony Express and he and Karen were members of the Nishna Valley Saddle Club and the Waubonsie Saddle Club. When Max and Karen bought their farm east of Shenandoah, he promptly built a roping arena that for years was home to weekly Saturday ropings for Max, his buddies, and all of the area cowboys, and he put his daughter in the esteemed position of chute-opener. The guys started out calf-roping, but as the years passed and the crew got too slow at jumping on and off their horses, they adapted and took up team roping. He attended his first Sidney, IA rodeo in the mid 1960's and never missed a year until his health began to decline around 2007. He and his buddies worked behind the chutes at the rodeo every year and it became "Home" to the guys and all of their families. His final rodeo was in 2011, and he cherished every second of getting to visit and reminisce with the remaining guys and their families.

He and Karen also took up country line dancing in the mid-1980's and became part of a close-knit group of dancers that met several times a week for many years. They only quit dancing when they moved away from Shenandoah, but never lost touch with their "Family" of dancing friends.

In 1998, Max, Karen and Billie moved to Bridgeport, NE so he could fulfill his cowboy dream of roping at brandings, working cattle, and riding the hills. He was a member of a dying breed, a true cowboy through and through. He rarely lost his temper; he was a gentle-man and a gentleman. He called women "ma'am" and his elders "sir" and he showed respect to everyone he met. He taught his kids and grand-kids how to ride a horse, how to shoot a gun, how to work hard, to never stay mad, and to always laugh and play. He was his grandsons favorite playmate. His family was everything, his friends were for life, and he will forever hold a special place in the hearts of all who knew him. We, like him, will live our lives to bring honor to our beloved dad and grandpa and to make him proud.

Max was preceded in death by his parents, and by his beloved dog and faithful companion, Charley, who went the day before he died to wait for him in Heaven. He is survived by his loving wife Karen; his son Tim Barr, daughter-in-law Pat Barr, grandson Matt Barr all of Shenandoah; and son Tom Barr and wife Becky of Ollie, IA; daughter Billie and son-in-law Parker Smith and grandsons Elijah, Lucas and Aidan Smith all of Bridgeport.

Max gave his life to the Lord and was baptized September 12, 2013. Our lives will never be the same without him, but we take great comfort in knowing that we will see him again, and until then, he and Charley will be riding the trails of Heaven.

In Loving Memory Of



Billy "Max" Cumming

January 7, 1935 ~ April 6, 2014