



## Marvin Neal Conley Jr.

July 7, 1918 - October 19, 2012

Marvin Neal Conley Jr. (94), was born on July 7th, 1918 in Lewistown, Montana to Hattie M. and Marvin N. Conley. His father, Neal Sr., was a cowboy and cattle rancher. The family moved to Payne's Creek in Northern California while Neal was very young.

He hunted game in the mountains, and fished the rivers and streams of the High Sierras. Often roaming the mountain trails for days at a time, camping out, and exploring on his horse "Frosty" with a pack mule tied behind. For the rest of his life he never lost his love for hunting, fishing, travel and adventure. After graduating from high school in Red Bluff, California, Neal attended college in New Mexico with the goal of obtaining a degree in engineering. A job offer from the Lockheed Aircraft Company meant he would have to relocate to Los Angeles, California.

During his employment at the Lockheed Aircraft Company, war was declared, and Neal joined the US Army Air Corps becoming a radio operator. He flew in the B17 Flying Fortress, and later joined the 39th Bomb Group flying in the new B29 Super Fortress in the Pacific Theater, where he stayed for the remainder of World War Two. Promoting to the rank of Master Sergeant, and stationed at Guam, he flew out of the Marianna Islands and other bases. Neal's crew flew many bombing missions over Tokyo, and the rest of mainland Japan. While serving in the Pacific, he took every opportunity to explore the ocean and the islands. He loved to swim in the surf.

One particular bombing mission his plane was shot down and the crew had to

crash land in the Pacific Ocean, the plane sunk, and the crew floated on whatever they could for 12 hours before being rescued by the US Navy. Neal and his crew were shot down twice, and in both cases, the planes were lost. He earned a few medals during his time in the service, some of which were the Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Good Conduct Medal. While in the service, Neal met and married the love of his life, Ellen K. "Cappy" Griffith in 1943. A beautiful, young lady from Illinois, they were married for 68 years and 11 months.

After completing his mandatory tour of missions, and at the wars end, he returned to Los Angeles and resumed his work for the Lockheed Aircraft Co. In July 1946, he was hired as a firefighter with the City of Los Angeles Fire Department IAFF Local 112. Neal thought of the fire department as another adventure, there was something different every time he reported for duty. He was critically burned in 1967 while fighting an oil well fire that exploded and severely burned several firefighters. Neal had to endure a painful rehabilitation for nearly a year before returning to the job he loved. During his career, he was involved in many of the major fires and tragedies that plagued the city of Los Angeles, some of which were the Watts riots and the Bel-Air Brentwood fire. He served the citizens of Los Angeles for 30 years, retiring in 1976 as an Engine Company Fire Captain.

With his wife "Cappy", he began a lifelong dream of traveling the United States and Canada. For the next ten years they were on the road constantly for months at a time, before returning to their South California home. He enjoyed skeet and target shooting, and was very good at both. An avid golfer, Neal once hit a golf ball off the top of Pikes Peak, "just because I could", he replied.

Neal was a longtime member of the Masonic Lodge No. 351 of Garden Grove, California. Two years ago he received recognition from both the Muskogee and Fort Gibson lodges for his 50 continuous years of membership with the Masons.

In 2007, Neal and "Cappy" moved to Muskogee to be near their son. They

quickly adjusted to the hospitality and beauty of Oklahoma. For the last three years of his life, Neal resided at Magnolia Gardens in Muskogee where he had many good friends. He passed away in his sleep, at peace with Jesus, on October 19, 2012.

His parents; his sister, Mary; his brother, Jim; and three infant children preceded Neal in death.

Mr. Conley is survived by his wife, Ellen K. "Cappy" Conley of the home; his son, Robert Conley and wife Melodie of Fort Gibson, OK.; his daughter, Debbie Van Ravenhorst and husband Steve of Minnesota; two grandchildren; three great grandchildren; sister-in-laws; nieces; nephews; cousins; and an extended family of kind and loving friends.

He will be missed!

BBD

# Tribute Wall



“ *Marvin Neal Conley Jr.*

October 23, 2023 at 09:38 AM



“ *Bob, sorry to hear about your Dad. We read about his life, a life any man would envy. Our thoughts are with you and yours. Steve and Lorraine Hill*

**Steve and Lorraine Hill** - October 27, 2012 at 06:46 PM



“ *Bobby, Sorry for your loss. I know your dad was a big inspiration to you for many years. Remember the good times and cherish them. Vickie and I are thinking of you and your family. You are very special to me and my family.*  
*Roger Folsom*

**Roger Folsom** - October 26, 2012 at 09:05 AM



“ *Bob, I praying for you, if you need anything, I am here.*  
*Rick*

**Rick L. Holcomb** - October 26, 2012 at 08:24 AM



“ *Rick L. Holcomb lit a candle in memory of Marvin Neal Conley Jr.*



**Rick L. Holcomb** - October 26, 2012 at 08:22 AM