



## John R. Smith

July 17, 1938 - October 30, 2008

John Smitty Smith was truly a self-made man. He was born to elderly parents in New Bedford, Mass. and his mother adored him. She unfortunately, died when he was only 9 years old and he was left to basically raise himself. After his mother died, life was hard for John (or Jackie as he was known in those days). He left home and high school at the age of 14. He hitch-hiked around the country, hopping trains and taking any and every odd job he could find. At times, he thought he would starve to death. He moved from place to place and finally found a home with the United States Air Force, which he joined at the age of 17. In the Air Force he was able to get his G.E.D. and after basic training he was transferred to Castle Air Force Base in Atwater, CA., which was quite the disappointment, because he was told that if he worked hard and did well in his classes, he would be sent to the Far East. While exploring the area around Atwater, he found himself at a restaurant in Delhi, where he met the love of his life, Patsy. Patsy's family owned the restaurant and he quickly became a regular. He knew he would marry Patsy someday. Over the next 2 years, he proposed to her at least 100 times before she said yes. They were married in Delhi on August 10, 1958. Patsy was one of 10 children, so John went from having almost no family, to having a large, loving, extended family. In 1959, their daughter, Shelley was born in Atwater, and in 1963, their son Mark was born in New Market, England. John or Smitty as he was now called, left the Air Force and joined the Turlock Police Dept. It was during this time, that he joined the Masonic Lodge #395. After 2 years at the Turlock Police

Dept. he then transferred to the Stanislaus County Sheriffs Department, working his way up the ranks to the position of Lieutenant. During this time, he held several key positions; Juvenile Division, Womens Jail Commander, Mens Jail Commander, Records and Identification, and Patrol Watch Commander, to name a few. During these years, he was a busy family man, worked a variety of shifts and yet he still managed to find time to attend school and earn a college degree. He even spent 3 months training at the F.B.I Academy in Virginia. He was still Smitty to close family and friends, but now he was known as Lieutenant Smith. During this time he became a step grandparent. Christina, Shelleys step-daughter came into his life as a 2-year old and he always called her Christy banana. Because their son Mark had also joined the United States Air Force, John and Patsy, traveled to the Philippines in 1990 to welcome granddaughter Erin, their newest addition to the family. (This was as close to the Far East as John would get.) During this time, he continued to work and thrive at the Sheriffs office. He even Earned a Silver Medal in Sailing, at the Police Olympics. He retired in 1993 and looked forward to a leisurely life of sailing, playing golf, traveling and doing whatever he wanted. However, in 1994, he became Grandpa again! This time it was a boy, Ryan. John happily gave up his opportunity to do whatever he wanted in his retirement, to become Ryans full-time babysitter. In 1997, granddaughter Rachel was born, giving John his 4th and final grandchild. Family was everything to John. He devoted his life to his wife, his children and grandchildren. He became a regular fixture at the grandchildrens schools, always volunteering to be a fieldtrip driver. He always said that he was blessed to be able to do activities with his grandchildren and they adored the attention. Grandpa was deeply loved by his family and they learned much from him. He taught his family to love the Lord, Jesus Christ, love each other and to love our country. He was a kind and gentle man, had a dorky sense of humor and was incredibly dependable. John and Patsy recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. If you needed someone, he always stepped up to the plate. In addition to the devotion he had to his family, he was also

committed to several organizations that were very important to him. He was Past Master of the Turlock Masonic Lodge #395, where he was currently serving as chaplain, Past President of the Turlock Shrine Club, and was also a member of the York Rite bodies in which he held several offices. He served as Grand Lodge Inspector for the 589th Masonic district from 2001 to 2005. He was awarded the Hiram Award in 2006 and received the Mason of the Year award earlier this year. He was a member of First Baptist Church in Modesto. He is survived by his wife, Patsy Smith of Salida, Daughter Shelley Smith of Salida, son Mark Smith of Las Vegas, NV. Grandchildren, Christina Clark of Colorado Springs, CO, Erin Smith of Ocean Springs, MS, Ryan Gulmon and Rachel Gulmon, both of Salida, great-grandson, Tyler Clark of Colorado Springs, CO. He is also survived by a large extended family. SERVICE INFORMATION: Visitation will be held noon to 7pm Thursday, November 6th 2008 at Turlock Funeral Home, 425 N. Soderquist Rd. in Turlock. A Masonic Funeral will be held 11:00AM Friday, November 7, 2008 also at Turlock Funeral Home. Interment will follow immediately at Turlock Memorial Park. A Celebration of Life will be held at the Turlock Masonic Lodge immediately following the services. In Lieu of flowers, the family requests contributions be made to The Shriners Hospital 2425 Stockton Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95817

# Tribute Wall



“ *John R. Smith*

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January 28, 2023 at 09:01 AM



“ *Aunt Pat and Family, I am so so sorry. I Love(d) Uncle Smitty all my Life. He was definetly Gods messenger and a Angel to My Mother and Brothers and Myself. He will truely be missed. I loved to talk to him and loved his jokes. I Love you all.*

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**Stephen P. Carskaddon** - November 21, 2008 at 12:00 AM