



Gene E. Tehee

July 29, 1946 - March 1, 2025

Gene E. Tehee was born July 29, 1946, in Selma California to Mary Taylor and EJ Tehee.

In his own telling of the story, his mother was transported to Selma from Kingsburg, lest there be any scandal in that city, given his father's young age. He was only 15 at the time.

Gene spent some formative years in Calwa, an unincorporated community just south of Fresno. This would later become a point of pride for Gene.

By high school, the Tehee siblings - Gene, Kenny and Elaine - had moved to Kingsburg to live with their grandparents and that's where Gene graduated in 1964.

He was drafted into the US Navy and spent two years serving in Vietnam, including time on a supply ship that ran between the Philippines and the Vietnamese coast and the Gulf of Tonkin. This was another, less talked about point of pride. Following his discharge from the military in 1968, he returned to his grandparents' home in Kingsburg.

In 1969, he married the daughter of Harry Aslan, a prominent farmer/fruit packer.

Gene Tehee and Susan Aslan were wed on Sept. 29 and lived together for the next 56 years, until her passing on Jan. 6, 2025. Gene followed his wife, just two months later.

He died March 1, 2025 in the Emergency Department of the Clovis Community Medical Center. It was an unexpected death. He was 78 years old.

Gene and Susan lived, worked and raised their two sons - Jason and Joshua - in Kingsburg.

For years, Gene drove bus and was a janitor for Kingsburg Unified School District, where the students gave him the nickname Mean Gene, which anyone who knew him would agree could only be partly in jest. After taking an early retirement, the pair moved to Fresno and Gene went back to school and earned an associates degree from Fresno City College.

As an older man, he inspected citrus trees and other crops for the USDA. It was a job he loved and wished he could have held longer.

In recent years, he served as a full-time caretaker for his wife. It was his greatest work; done simply out of love and dedication.

Gene was an alcoholic and in recovery. He frequently attended Alcoholic's Anonymous meetings in the past, but recently just enjoyed spending time and checking in on people at the Alano Club in Fresno. Prior to his death he had been sober for more than 30 years.

Gene was an athlete. In his school days, he boxed and wrestled and ran track; the sports he loved to talk about even into his final days. In middle age, he took up weightlifting and, for years, was a regular at Gold's Gym, though they could never get him to compete. Oddly, he was the only member of the

Tehee family who didn't bowl, though he certainly spent hours in bowling alleys across the country, traveling with his son Jason as he toured on the PBA.

He loved and hated football, depending on the weekend and his mood and loved and hated the Raiders as his team; though he hated the team more after they moved to Los Angeles and raised the price of season tickets.

The Tehee family had a deep connection with music and Gene was no exception. He never played an instrument, though his father tried to get him accordion lessons as a child. Gene declined the offer, the accordion being the least cool instrument he could think of at the time. He would later try to learn an instrument - the guitar, the ukulele - but it never took. That didn't stop him from enjoying live music. He attended hundreds of concerts with his family, from country stars like Johnny Cash to hair metal bands like Mötley Crüe. He was a doo-wop and oldies guy at heart. He had a subscription to Vintage Rock magazine and delighted in retelling the tidbits he'd learned about artists like Fabian and Ricky Nelson or Jerry Lee Lewis.

There is an old quote you say about friendly people: "They've never met a stranger," and that was Gene.

He was honestly inquisitive and relished his interactions with every person he met, from the nurses and doctors who took care of his wife, to the usher at the LA Memorial Coliseum where the family watched the Raiders play. He was genuinely interested in people's stories. And their opinions (on everything from the disposition of TV characters to a ranking of his favorite guitar players or boxers).

Gene was preceded in death by his mother Mary Taylor, father EJ Tehee and

wife Susan. He is survived by his brother Kenny Tehee, sister Elaine Brown, step-sister Tonya Henslee, his sons Joshua and Jason, daughter-in-law, Mika Tehee and anyone who he ever met and took an interest in.

He will be missed.

Graveside services will be held at 10:00 AM Thursday, March 20, 2025, at the Kingsburg Cemetery, 12782 E. Clarkson Avenue Kingsburg, CA.

Services have been entrusted to Salser & Dillard Creighton Chapel. Memorial Tributes and condolences may be offered by logging onto www.salseranddillard.com.

Previous Events

Graveside

MAR **20**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (PT)

Kingsburg Cemetery
12782 E. Clarkson Avenue
Kingsburg, CA 93631

Tribute Wall



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Gene E. Tehee.*



March 12, 2025 at 11:40 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gene E. Tehee.

March 12, 2025 at 11:40 AM