

From: N7UQ – Chuck Dockery



AJ7EF - Jeff

Jeff was a very good friend, a person who never asked for anything, and who always looked for ways to give. I never heard him speak ill of anyone.

We spent a lot of time together, went to ham fests and always donated to the cause (Raffle Tickets, etc.). He volunteered to help at activities and events, being one of the first to arrive, one of the last to leave, and making sure all was taken care of.

Jeff and his wife Noreen (Renie) would house sit for people, primarily to take care of pets, while the homeowners were on vacation. They did not charge near enough in my estimation. When I would ask about maybe charging a little more, he would say "no, no, we like getting out of our house", then explain the mutual benefit being that the two of them would enjoy having AC, cable TV etc. for those few days.

Jeff and I would visit 2 or 3 times a week, either by phone, radio or in person. He made people around him smile just because of his positive attitude. I always invited him and his wife to our family BBQ's. Usually only Jeff would come.

When I talked to his father, he told me life was interesting with Jeff. His father was a police officer in Milwaukee, Wisconsin where Jeff was born. Jeff got into CB at a young age. The neighbors complained of hearing Jeff talking to people through their television sets.

I met Jeff eleven years ago through amateur radio. He was on the 147.000 repeater talking to Oliver, W7AFC, in Mescal. I broke in to introduce myself. Jeff and I hit it off then and a friendship began. We did everything ham related. He helped me several times install antennas, towers, etc. We have taken several towers down for people around town and helped several people with their antenna projects. He used to say he never had time for anything due to his work schedule, but always seemed to find time to help others.

The last few years were challenging for Jeff. Retired from the Air Force after 22 years of service, he worked as a "working Property Manager" for Colonia Verde Estates. In the last couple of years there were growing desires to let Jeff go and hire a "professional management service". This after 14 years of reliable personal service, of which he allowed himself to be on call almost 24/7. Add to this, his recent

health issues, his concern about finding another job at his age (59), and Noreen's psychological and physical health issues (cancer). Noreen treated Jeff as though he was a 10 year old, criticizing him continually for the smallest of things, and yet she several times depleted their checking accounts due to her insatiable appetite for shoes and clothes. Noreen was a classic hoarder. There were narrow trails through their house to the bedroom and bathroom. The kitchen had not been used in the last 5 to 6 years because it was needed for storage. For the last year and a half Noreen was asking for Jeff to remove an old pickup from the side of the house. The truck was one that he was parting out, so she could purchase a storage container to place there. This was not intended to make room in the house. Jeff would go home each night and cook outside on the grill or they would eat out.

Understand, I am not making excuses for what happened, nor am I claiming to understand what caused this tragedy, but rather sharing what others may not have known about the situation. Approximately 2 months before this tragedy, Jeff had a mole removed from his back and he was given narcotics for the pain. These narcotics had an effect on him like no one else I have seen. Certain drugs had effects on him unlike another person taking the same thing. Just to give you an idea, coffee was a no-no for him. If you knew Jeff, you knew him as very hyperactive. Was it chemical imbalance? I do not know.

Regardless, I begged with him not to take the stuff, asked him to please see another doctor, and even gave names of doctors. Finally, after 3 weeks of not being able to sleep at night, depression was beginning to take its toll. He saw a doctor who told him the medication he was given was bad for him. This doctor prescribed an anti-depressant, which, in my view, made it even worse. I begged and pleaded, as did my wife, to see another doctor or to seek council. He told me then that he and Noreen were seeing the Bishop of their church. He complained the Bishop was only seeing her side.

I had grown very concerned about his behavior. I spoke to Tammy about it at length. I went to visit him at Colonia Verde the afternoon before the tragedy. He was not very talkative as he was busy. We visited a short time as I tried to get him to go and have a beer or glass of wine with me. He said no and that he was not drinking any longer. I left after a short time. I talked about this with Tammy that evening. I was concerned and wanted to see if we could maybe find someone for Jeff to see, or find some solution.

That night I got on the 10 meter net. I hadn't been on there in a few weeks. After the net, Jeff checked in and we visited a little while on 10 meters then moved off to 40 meters. We visited there for about half an hour. He sounded as though his spirits were up and said he had a couple glasses of wine and was feeling much better. Then his wife came to his "sanctum", as he liked to call his small space carved out of one of the rooms for his "ham shack", and told him to come to bed. We ended the night on a good note. I went inside and told Tammy, "I think Jeff will be ok."

You all have heard the rest of the story. Jeff will leave a huge hole in my heart.

Thank you for your time,
Chuck N7UQ