Larkin

Jim Kirkman

January 5, 1948 ~ May 19, 2019

Even with all the rain, the flowers in Sugarhouse may look a little sad with the passing of Master Gardener Jim Kirkman. He created beauty in a world that could always use more. As a former missionary, and military veteran, he had seen some of that world. He entered the Army as a noncombatant and served as a medic. He was a man of peace , unless you touched his snapdragons.

Jim Kirkman, Crazy Uncle Billy, was the ultimate Desert Rat. He was as much a denizen of those sparse lands as a coyote. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of everything there. He knew the name and nature of the beautiful cactus flower you enjoyed. He could identify that bug that bit you in the middle of the night. It was not uncommon to see him with a snake coiled around his arm or a scorpion in his palm. "Don't try this at home," he would laugh. Besides such risky displays, his motto was "No Suffering Allowed." You were outside to learn and explore not to invite trouble thorough ignorance. Only fools have adventure. He was not a fool and would expertly teach you not to be one.

Around his carefully tended campfire, you enjoyed the cuisine of a master chef. After dinner, he sprinkled "Crazy Uncle Billy Magic Dust" on the coals and the fire pit became a thing of beauty. As the label apologized: Non Explosive , Sorry.

At nightfall he would tell tales of digging up dinosaurs and excavating archaeological ruins for the Division of State History. His discoveries grace museums across the country. He knew it all and loved to share his knowledge and wisdom with anyone, especially children. He inspired many young scientists.

Jim Kirkman was a generous library of natural history. Now, that library has burned down. But all is not lost. We checked out the books long before the fire started. Anyway, we'll sprinkle some Magic Dust on the embers and enjoy the show.

Thanks Jim

Jim leaves behind his son Greg, sisters Jeanette and Marianne, niece Heather Perez and nephew Jacob Owen and a great-niece and great nephews. And his flowers.

A celebration of his crazy life will be from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, June 1, 2019 at Larkin Mortuary, 260 East South Temple, Salt Lake City.