

Jack H. "Longjack" Leo Jack H. "Longjack" Leo passed over the bar July 16, 2008. Jack was born November 20, 1931 in Portland, Maine and moved to Austin, Texas in 1945 with his parents John H. and Fannie Gray Leo. He worked at his father's paper company in Austin before a brief stint in the late 1950s in Alaska, working in oilfield exploration and drilling seismograph wells. In 1961 Jack joined the Austin Police Department as a patrolman and during the 1960s he was a highly visible part of the Austin Lake Patrol. Advancing to Sergeant he worked as a shift supervisor during the 1970s and ultimately achieved the rank of detective. He served the city for 29 years, retiring in 1989 to "go to sea" as he liked to say. Moving to Galveston in 1989 he became an integral part of Texas' tall ship Elissa through thousands of hours of volunteer time maintaining, sailing and displaying the 1877 square-rigged sailing vessel. Friends he made in Galveston would give him the moniker "Longjack" from Kipling and ultimately invite him to sail on vessels berthed all over the United States. An accomplished marlinespike sailor, he knew eight different ways to tie a bowline and was a self-taught celestial navigator. Longjack was a skilled helmsman under both power and sail, crewing on vessels transiting the Panama Canal sailing to Belize, southern Florida, the Gulf coast and Atlantic Seaboard. A showman to the core, a favorite activity was to entertain with rope tricks and fancy rope work. His participation at the Texas Folklife Festival with a booth appropriately called "Arts of the Sailor" gave visitors a glimpse into the sailor's life with hands-on exhibits on navigation history, rope work and sailing. After a brush with skin cancer, he found an indoor volunteer home at the Lone Star Flight Museum in Galveston. Supporting LSFM's airshows by running trash collection operations was just one of the many ways Longjack selflessly volunteered. He also traveled to Oshkosh in LSFM's B-17 "Thunderbird" on several occasions, logging left-seat time traveling to and from that famous air show. In 2006, he and his wife Cindy became permanent residents on his son's farm near Milano, Texas. Moving to the farm was full circle for Longjack, because as a child he'd spent summers on his uncle's Hereford ranch near Jacksboro, Texas. Longjack truly loved the farm, embracing any new project as well as the semi-annual "Pear Patrol", locating and eradicating prickly pear cactus. A hard day's work was rewarded with a whiskey and Coke while 'holding court' on his front porch, watching the sunset, the barred owls flying the creek and livestock grazing. Many of the world's problems were solved there. Longjack was preceded in death by his wife, Cindy Sherrell-Leo; father, John H. Leo; his mother, Miriam MacCormack-Leo, his stepmother; Fannie-Gray Leo; and his sister, Winifred Donovan. He is survived by his son Randy Leo; grandson, Seth Leo and granddaughter, Scout Leo. No services are planned at this time however, donations in Longjack's memory may be made to the Galveston Historical

Foundation's tall ship Elissa (<http://www.galvestonhistory.org/elissa-donate.asp>).