



For Immediate Release

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A Tribute to James Steven Corley

Deerfield Beach, FL. – January 22, 2016 - We must announce today with heavy hearts that we lost our friend and coworker, James Steven Corley, known to most of us simply as “Steve.” He passed away Monday morning after a rapid decline in health over the last few months. Steve worked here at H2O International for 19 years as warehouse manager. With more than 40 years of experience in the industry, Steve was the go-to guy for technical questions about products and filtration. In spite of his age and his deteriorating health, Steve possessed an excellent memory and a determination to work. He was also light-hearted and funny, seemingly always in a good mood and always ready to tell a joke he’d recently heard. Even when we saw him last week at the hospital...in spite of having difficulty breathing, he made sure to tell us his latest joke before we left. He was a tall, big-hearted presence around here and he will be greatly missed.

Steve was born in Orlando, but grew up in Gravette, Arkansas, where he graduated as the valedictorian of his high school class. After studying at the University of Arkansas, Steve worked a few years in the pipeline industry before transitioning to the water business...selling bottled water in his early 20’s. In 1984, he started at Bestech Incorporated, a water filtration company in Pompano Beach. He’s remembered there as an articulate man with a sharp intellect who often





had to explain complex solutions in simple terms. Many of the designs and processes he created there are still in use to this day. "He was a jokester...always with a great sense of humor," said June Barr, owner of Bestech, "but he was also a family man. He often spoke with pride about his niece and nephew. They meant the world to him."

All of Steve's family lives in Arkansas. His brother Mark lives in Fayetteville. Steve enjoyed going out to Mark's cabin in the country, surrounded by nature. His sister Ellen and her husband Dave Malm live in Jasper. Steve was very close to their twin children, Kathleen and Daniel. He went to great lengths to obtain empty ostrich eggs for them. He colored the eggs and had them hidden along with the regular Easter eggs...just so the kids would be amazed when they found them. Kathleen is now grown up and married to Tony Marleneanu and they live in Maumelle. Daniel and his wife Lauren live in Little Rock. They now have two young children, Benjamin and Beckett. Steve was able to see and visit them for the first time during the recent Christmas break. He repeated the ostrich egg surprise for them also.



Christmas 2015, playing with Benjamin & Beckett

Steve was also a part of our family here at H2O where he worked since 1996. He spent much of his time in the warehouse, purchasing materials and overseeing the manufacturing of our products. But he also worked in the office, communicating with customers about any and all product issues and coordinating with the staff to process orders. His deep knowledge of the industry made him very valuable to our company. He had a role in just about every part of the business. He was also loyal and eager to work, always maintaining a good attitude without any complaints of long hours or working on Saturdays when needed.





Steve maintained a variety of interests and hobbies which he regularly talked about. He often mentioned his excursions on the Loxahatchee River, a seven-mile stretch in Jupiter, Florida where he would set out on a canoe to take pictures of wildlife and the beautiful landscapes. "If you take that route on the river," he added, "you'll see exactly what the Native Americans saw...it's virtually unchanged." He spoke often about his dog from long ago, a German Shepherd that he trained to fetch a can of beer. He loved to work on his old Pontiac and to read about hot-rods and cars in general. He was knowledgeable about current events, easily able to recite facts from sports, politics and many other subjects. He was easy to talk to because he genuinely took an interest in what you had to say. Without a trace of ego or selfishness, he cared about people.



Steve with Kathleen and Daniel during their 1998 trip to Florida.

He struggled in the last few years with his health, missing long periods of work. In spite of the setbacks, he was always determined to come back to work. This was the place where he belonged. As his physical weakness prevented him from carrying out the strenuous tasks that he used to perform, he transitioned in the company to more of a supportive role, coaching newer employees in sales. We would often go into his office to ask him several questions. It never bothered him. He enjoyed sharing what he knew...and he knew so much. "He was very knowledgeable, very loyal and was always there when we needed him," said Guillermo Guzman, President of H2O International, "I've known Steve for more than 25 years. He's a big part of the success of our company and I'll always be grateful to have known him. He never complained and was always eager to do what was asked of him. He was very reliable, was always happy to give more and never complained about overtime or extra work. I couldn't have asked for a better man to run my warehouse all these years."





You were taken from us much too early, Steve. You were a caring brother and uncle, a hard worker, a supportive colleague and a good man. We're deeply going to miss you. Goodbye, good friend. Rest in peace.



If you wish to send a card to Steve's family, here is his sister's address:

Ellen Corley
HCR 70 Box 592
Jasper, AR 72641

In lieu of flowers or gifts, please send a donation to [Wishing Well International Foundation](#). Steve was proud to be a part of the cause for clean water. He also loved dogs. A donation to your local Humane Society would also mean a lot to him. Thank you.