

Memories of a Husband and Father

Slain Guard's

Petaluma

A good father. A man who provided a wonderful home for his family. A man well-liked by his fellow workers.

That was how Vivian DeLeon described her husband Frank, 44, one of three San Quentin correctional officers killed Saturday in a bloody escape attempt in which three prisoners also died.

DeLeon was buried yesterday in Sacramento in his wife's family plot. His fellow officers were pallbearers at the military funeral for the Air Force veteran.

"Frank worked overtime to help support us," Mrs. DeLeon, 41, said. Her tear-stained eyes were hidden behind dark glasses as she sat in the living room of the pleasant ranch-style Sonoma county home that she and her husband bought two years ago.

Children

She was surrounded by neighbors and family, including the DeLeons' five children, aged 9 to 16.

DeLeon had worked at San Quentin nearly four years, since retiring after 20 years in the Air Force. The Antioch (Contra Costa county), native enlisted in the Navy at age 16 and served in World War II. He joined the Air Force later.

"He was very interested in going into law enforcement," said his brother-in-law, Bob Day. "But he was too old to become a policeman when he got out of the service."

Mrs. DeLeon said she nev-



VIVIAN DeLEON AND SON FRANK ^{AP Wirephoto}
'Many times he had close calls'

er feared for her husband, although "many times he had close calls. I could feel the tenseness, but he never let it all out. He didn't bring his problems home.

"He told me lots of officers were quitting because of all the violence and stabbings, but he didn't feel that way.

"Often he'd tell me the

cons had a new contract out on one of the guards. But my husband was well-liked by his prison crew. He never had any enemies among the prisoners, except in the adjustment center" (the facility where Jackson was housed).

News

Mrs. DeLeon reconstructed

Family

how she heard of her husband's death:

"About 5:15 p.m. (roughly two and a half hours after officials say DeLeon died) Associate Warden (James L.) Park came to the door with three other gentlemen. I knew right away something was wrong.

"He said he had some bad news, and I begged him not to tell me what had happened.

"He said: 'There's been an accident at the prison, your husband has been killed.'

"I told him: 'I don't believe it. My husband's too tough.'"

Then came the agonizing task of telling her children: Pamela, 16; Shelley, 14; Frankie, 13, Sharon, 11, and Mark, 9.

Return

"I don't think Mark knows what it's all about yet," she said, shaking her head slowly. "He just got home from camp Sunday and I had to tell him then. And the girls only got back Friday — they saw him for about ten minutes."

Mrs. DeLeon said she was upset about some of the publicity given to George Jackson, the convict who prison authorities say planned the escape attempt and who was killed during it.

"Every article we've picked up glorifies Jackson as a political prisoner, but nobody seems to care about the officers," she said.

DeLeon left an insurance policy which "will take very good care of us," she said.

Associated Press