



## James "Jim" Allen Burnett

November 23, 1939 - August 7, 2020

"Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened." - Dr. Seuss

With heavy hearts, we note the passing of James "Jim" Allen Burnett, 80, of Eighty Four, PA on Friday, August 7, 2020.

Born November 23, 1939, Jim was the third child born to Andrew and Thelma (Knight) Burnett of Alliance, Ohio.

Jim graduated from Alliance High School in 1957. In 1961, he married Sharon Rastetter. Together they raised a son, and although the marriage ended in divorce in 1977, they remained friends. He served in the Army National Guard of Ohio beginning February 1962 and was honorably discharged January 26, 1965.

In 1969, Jim began his start to a very successful career in the highly competitive educational products marketplace. Beginning as a sales rep with the Silver Burdett Company, he worked his way up to Executive Vice President, National Sales Manager. Jim was always eager for new challenges and worked at a national level for the following publishers: Southwestern Publishing, Scott Foresman Publishing, and Globe Fearon Publishing. In the early years of his career, Jim attended night classes at University of Pittsburgh and graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.A. degree in 1972.

In late 1977, Jim met his current wife, Ruth Jackson. The couple lived together all over the United States, moving as Jim's career blossomed. They lived three times in the Phoenix area, twice in the Bay Area, and in between there were stints in Morristown, NJ, Glenview, IL, Blue Ash, OH, and Dublin, OH. On September 15, 1990, they finally tied the knot and married in a small ceremony at Christopher's Restaurant, Pittsburgh, PA.

Jim was a very private and quiet man. But what intelligence and talent! There was practically nothing this man couldn't do. After reading several "how to" books, he started his first project by tearing out the upper wall of his house to create an upstairs bedroom and bath. (At the time, "Wife One" was sunbathing in the backyard and thought that he was crazy!). Success with that first project gave Jim the confidence he needed to continue with home projects. He was able to do all of the electrical and plumbing himself, but his biggest talent was his vision. Jim was able to walk into a room and see the potential. He transformed all the homes that he and Ruth lived in, creating a beautiful living environment and selling for a profit.

Jim loved to cook and was very good at it. He also loved to read - Wilbur Smith books were favorites of his - but he also enjoyed the John Flanagan series. His favorite movie was "Out of Africa" and he loved music... Many a night he would put on an Andrew Rieu disk, or the Eagles, or Roger Whittaker.

How to sum up one's life in an obituary, that's a very hard thing to do. Jim Burnett was good man, he always tried to do the right thing, sometimes he failed and sometimes he shined. He loved and was loved, achieved some successes and fell short at times, too. He can be proud of his life.

Jim is survived by his wife, Ruth. He is also survived by his two sisters, Wanda Burnett of Leesburg, FL, and Judy (Art) Kunhardt of Brooklyn, NY,

along with a niece, three nephews, and their children.

He is preceded in death by his parents, his sister Janice (Frank) Baldwin, and his son, James A. Burnett II.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Griffith Funeral Home, 5636 Brownsville Road, Pittsburgh (412) 655-4600. A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, August 22nd, from 5 - 8 p.m. at 756 Spring Valley Road in Scenery Hill. Dress is casual and comfortable. Donations in Jim's memory can be made to the Finleyville Food Pantry, 3595 Washington Road, Finleyville, PA. 15332. Condolences, thoughts or comments related to knowing Jim may be offered for the family at [www.GriffithFH.com](http://www.GriffithFH.com)

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

AUG **22**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

756 Spring Valley Road  
756 Spring Valley Road  
Scenery Hill, PA 15360

# Tribute Wall

RS

“ Dear Ruth,  
*I was thinking of old friends today, thought of Jim and went searching. Sadly, I found Jim's obituary instead. He was a fine and ethical man, a good boss, and great friend. I think often of my retirement, heading west in my RV, and Jim hitching a ride as far as Columbus to share the experience. Thoughts, too, of the meetings, dinners, and the fun you two had together. My sincere condolences.*  
*Ron Spoerl (rspoerl@iowatelecom.net)*

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**Ron Spoerl** - September 09, 2020 at 02:55 PM