



James "Jim" Johnson

December 31, 1937 - April 11, 2026

James "Jim" Johnson, 88 died peacefully on April 11 at his home in Bourbonnais, Illinois

Jim is survived by his children; Bill (Linda) and Bob (Lesa) of Bourbonnais, IL and Kathleen (Dave) of Iowa City, IA, their 4 grandchildren; Christopher (Samantha), Ashley, Alexander and Nicholas and 2 great-grandchildren; James and Isabella.

He was preceded in death by his wife "Sue" in 2021 after 58 years of marriage. Jim was born in 1937 in North Minneapolis, MN. He served 2 years in the United States Navy, graduated from the University of Minnesota and had a 30-year career with the US Census Bureau. That career took him from Minneapolis to Washington DC, Boston and Chicago. Upon his retirement he and Sue moved to Buffalo, MN where they participated in the Maple Lake Community Theater, Bethlehem UCC and Wright County Master Gardeners.

Jim's retirement job was with Dan & Jerry's and Tatanka Garden Centers where "Garden Center Jim" was a fixture for many years before moving to Illinois. Jim loved fishing, gardening, birdwatching and being outside. He always made it a point to learn everybody's name and say hello whenever their paths crossed.

He was a resident of Arbor Grove and could be seen walking around the lake every day or multiple times in a day when his health permitted. Through the help of some wonderful caregivers, he was able to remain in his own home in Arbor Grove until his passing.

Cremation services provided by Jensen Funeral Home in Kankakee, IL. No public services are planned.

Tribute Wall

PC

“ Uncle Jim and Aunt Sue were both such kind people. I'll always remember them showing me all of their favorite places in Minneapolis when I visited there and then their sweet home on the lake in Buffalo. We got to see all the garden projects around town that they both worked on and it was quite special. As kind as he was, he did have a sly sense of humor too! I think he got a kick out of the face I must have made when he presented me with the container of hellgrammite larvae in his basement refrigerator, an oddity this southerner was not prepared for. He made up for it though by catching all the fish later that afternoon. They were a special couple and I know everyone who was in their presence could sense it. You are missed.

Phillip Campbell - May 15 at 09:16 PM

LE

“ Jim and Sue were beloved friends of ours, singing in the church choir together for many years. Jim would always lead our choir business meetings prior to practice. Until we meet again, Linda and Garry Elfstrand

Linda Elfstrand - May 14 at 01:31 PM

NH

“ One of my favorite memories of my uncle Jim was the many times fishing with him and my dad, Jim's big brother at their lake home in Buffalo. As a Master Gardener Jim and Sue introduced me to numerous woody plants they gave me try out on my land, they all flourished and every spring when they come up even healthier than the year before, it reminds me of both Jim and Sue. I will miss him much. Also, Im so glad my dad and I got visit with Jim and family in June of 2023. Nathan Hilder

nathan hilder - May 13 at 12:19 PM

SR

Jim was always a big hugger and a very fun, sarcastic and genuinely interested uncle. He liked to call me a little boy when I was young and had a pixie haircut. I didn't like that much. But he was a teaser later. He was always interested in my college interest and my marriage and what I was doing with my life and so is Sue as well they were one of my favorite aunts and uncles. He will be very missed. Also they have very wonderful children!

Sandra Roussin - May 13 at 01:39 PM

SR

It was a great time to go visit them when they lived in Washington DC and Boston. And it was always wonderful when they would come and visit us in Minneapolis! Dad and Jim were very good buddies and I'm glad they're together again.

Sandra Roussin - May 13 at 01:40 PM