



## James Lee Schunke

July 22, 1957 - June 6, 2021

James (Jim) Lee Schunke, 63 of McKinney Texas, passed away on Sunday, June 6, 2021. He was born July 22, 1957 in Kankakee, the son of James “Pinky” and Willie (Bucksteeg) Schunke and they preceded him in death. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his beloved son, Matthew Joseph on June 8, 2019.

He is survived by his fiancé, Michele Price Schroeder, son Kyle James Schunke and Natascha Maca of McKinney; Michele’s daughters, Riley and husband Conner Cain of Evansville, IN, Grace and husband Kyle Balthazor of Clifton, one sister Jaye Lynn and husband Eric Gravitt of Normal; one brother, Dale Schunke of Gilman and many nieces and nephews. Jim is also survived by dear friends Marty and Maria Martindale and their daughter Rachel of Allen, TX.

Jim spent his childhood in Gilman, graduating from Gilman High School in 1975. He went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in history at the University of Illinois in Champaign. Jim proudly served his country by enlisting in the United States Marine Corp. Following a honorable discharge from the military he embarked on a very successful career in Human Resources. He cherished many treasured friendships that he developed over the years and to this day friends across the industry recall his professionalism, old school work ethic, quick wit, genuine kindness and relentless humorous interjections in meetings and get togethers. From crazy sox, ugly Christmas sweaters, and shark heads to endless Yoda memes, Jim believed in having fun while working hard and in creating a work environment that supported everyone. He was quick to provide donuts in the morning, German potato salad for potlucks and kept an endless supply of snack mix in his cubicle. He never turned down an opportunity to bring out his tool belt to help with Habitat for Humanity or lace up his running shoes to participate in a Schneider Electric event or One Run for the Cancer Support Community. He prided himself on providing amazing customer support and worked tirelessly with candidates to set them up for success. This was reflected in numerous honors and awards for performance through the years and leaves a remarkable legacy.

Jim's charisma and endearing personality made being a part of his personal life an absolute joy. The pure and unconditional love that he had for his close friends and family was tremendous. Kyle and Matthew were the center of his world. His love for his boys was boundless. As a proud Pops, he mastered dirt bike riding and boating, sat proudly on the sidelines of soccer games providing snacks and drinks to the team, swelled with pride as he attended high school graduations and boasted about their life achievements to everyone. He introduced both sons to his love and passion for cooking and grilling. His most special moments were spent preparing spiral ham for special holidays, trading recipe ideas, and trying new things on his Big Green Egg. No Christmas passed without "scratchers" in the stockings and hanging the pickles on the tree. He always had a crisp 20 in the wallet for yardwork or just because. Jim also had a special place in his heart for Michele's children and shared the same pride and adoration for them and all their special moments.

Jim loved old black and white war movies, collecting guns, working in the yard, building things and restoring anything with an engine. He lived for weekends when the weather was just right, and he could ride his Harley to one of his favorite hang outs and have an ice-cold beer with his dear friend Marty. He loved adventures but was just as happy to be sitting on the patio catching a nap in the afternoon. Jim and Michele were very fortunate to have spent the last several years together, planning for the future and had just begun the process of renovating Jim's childhood home in Gilman. He loved talking about his vision for the final product and dreamed of sitting on the front porch with Michele enjoying their quiet life with his trusty barker Otto sitting at his feet.

Jim's zest for life was matched by his genuine, caring, protective, and loving nature. Everyone who was blessed to know him is better for having him in their life. The profound sadness and sense of loss is immeasurable. This is somewhat eased by the extraordinary amount of special memories we will all carry in our hearts, the knowledge that he touched so many lives, that he and Matthew are together again and that we will have a special guardian angel looking over all of us, as he always did. When you said I love you to Jim, he always responded with "More".....that embodies Jim. He loved us all ...More.

A private family graveside service will be held at a later date.

Memorials may be made to Habitat for Humanity.

Arrangements are by the Knapp-Redenius Funeral Home in Gilman.

# Comments

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“ With Sympathy from the GHS Class of 1975.



Noreen Buss - June 18 at 01:28 PM

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“ James Lee & I went through 1st-12th grade together, including Sunday School and Confirmation Classes. He was such a funny, smart & clever guy. But some of my best memories of him were from taking drivers ED with Mr Slack as our instructor. I so wish I could remember more of what James Lee said to Mr. Slack when we were “on the road” in the driver’s ED car. But I do remember it was constant chatter and very funny. I remember being totally distracted at times while listening to James Lee instead of being totally focused on driving. And there was a long conversation James Lee had one day with MR. Slack that “10 & 2” hands on the wheel didn’t really work for him and why it didn’t. If only that conversation could have been captured on an i-phone. Hilarious! Surprisingly we both passed the class! My locker was next to James Lee all 4 years of HS in the “S” section. And I remember him being bullied at times by a few of our classmates. Yet he took it without ever ratting out who did it. And he always seemed to handle it with humor. He and I talked about this at the 2015 Old Boys ( and our Class of ‘75) reunion. He seemed to brush off that treatment like it was a right of passage at the time. I look back and think he had to have been hurt by those comments. And I question myself why didn’t I step in? I will always regret that I didn’t stand up for him. He was probably the most mature person in our class to handle it as he did. What a beautifully written obituary to reflect the very unique and wonderful talents and qualities of James Lee. Sending my sympathy to Michelle and James Lee’s family. May he Rest In Peace. Warmly, Noreen (Schriefer) Buss

Noreen Buss - June 18 at 01:23 PM

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“ Jim and I met more than 35 years ago, when we were recruiters at EDS. We sat elbow-to-elbow in cubicles recruiting talent for EDS data centers. Later, he worked with me at Perot Systems, on the recruiting team.

He was known by a countless number of friends as "Shunk".

I don't shed a tear easily, however, when I learned of his initial diagnosis with cancer, I cried a river.

Over the last few years, I enjoyed riding our Harley Davidson's for a cold beer and simply to sit and hear him tell stories, like no one could.

No one made me laugh more than Jim. His Facebook headline said it best, "Keeping the world safe from boring people".

He was absolutely one-of-a-kind and deep inside there was something special about his heart.

He will be dearly missed!

**Tony Cinello** - June 16 at 02:49 PM

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“ James Lee was among the best of my childhood friends. We not only played in the sandbox as these photos show, but we played kickball, and we invented other "worlds" of all sorts, and we sat behind the church on a pile of bricks and talked about life and whatever kids talk about that seems deep and important.

He was a leader, and he was creative. He had us bring our Barbies alongside his GI Joe on adventures out on the dirt piles in the yard. He led as we attached roller skates to boards and pushed each other down the hill on makeshift go-carts. We explored the woods past the end of the neighborhood together and claimed it as our own, naming the little clearings and trampling down what was in our way. We carried boards on our bikes from one end of the block to the other to nail up and create a clubhouse under our treehouse. And so much more.

James was confirmed by my dad at Zion UCC one year before I was confirmed. There was much more to it than memorization, a field trip, and wearing bow ties on the presentation day. That impacted our conversations in a good way too.

I always thought we would have a neighborhood reunion some day here on earth, but now I pray we will see each other again in heaven one day. Perhaps he will have already explored and can show the rest of us around.

James, you will be deeply missed. It was truly a gift to grow up with you as part of our lives. Though we haven't met some of you, please know our deep sympathy and prayers are with Michele and the rest of Jim's family.



Kate W Woods - June 16 at 09:26 AM

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“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album



Marlon - June 15 at 03:54 PM

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“ I had the pleasure of working with Jim for 3 years and carpooling with him for 1/2 of that time. He always had a good story, would say things I would only think about and cracked me up just about every single day. I remember him making Hamzilla where took turkey legs and sewed them on a ham. My kids loved him, his co-workers loved him and while Jim was a particular and routine kind of guy, he was also pretty easy going. One of my favorite lines was when he would say "That rat bastard". He was old school, but cool school too.

It was an honor and privilege to know you, share recruiting stories and call you a friend.

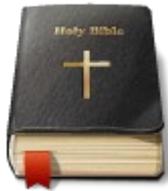
God Bless You Schunke.

**Marlon** - June 15 at 03:38 PM

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“ MR MRS sent a virtual gift in memory of James Lee Schunke



**MR MRS** - June 15 at 10:36 AM