



Arthur "A.J." J. Higginbottom

November 30, 1934 - February 8, 2019

Arthur James "A.J." Higginbottom, 84, of Bluffton, passed away on Friday morning February 8, 2019 at his residence in Bluffton.

He was born in Polk County, Iowa on November 30, 1934 to Harry O. & Georgia (Satterlee) Higginbottom. A.J. graduated from high school in Maxwell, Iowa and completed his degrees in marketing and economics from Drake University.

A.J. always had a love for animals. Growing up in his youth, he worked in the sale barn and learned the trade of being a blacksmith and wheelwright, a trade his grandfather also worked. He moved to Bluffton in 1976 and worked for Mix Mill and Modern Mill. In 1984, A.J. started his own company, H.M.S. Zoo Diets, and developed his nutritional formulas and the production of specialty foods for many animals at zoos across the country. He had a talent for woodworking, making furniture and cabinets for many of the family members. He attended First Church of Christ.

A.J. and Janice K. (Miller) were married on December 25, 1954 in Elkhart, Iowa.

Survivors include his wife of 64 years, Janice of Bluffton, along with a daughter, Barbara L. (Scott) Mossburg of Bluffton, a son Jeffery J. (Kimberly) Higginbottom of Bluffton, 13 grandchildren, and 2 great-grandchildren. A.J. is also survived by 4 sisters; Helen Jacobson of Maxwell, Iowa, Catherine (Bob) Floto of Boise, Idaho, Caroline Lamberti of West Columbia, Texas, and Alice (Arthur) Hubbard of Ankeny, Iowa.

A.J. is preceded in death by his parents and a son, Brian L. Higginbottom. A service to celebrate A.J.'s life will take place at 10:30 A.M. on Tuesday (Feb. 12, 2019) at the First Church of Christ with Pastor Dennis Wood officiating. Calling hours will be held from 4 to 8 P.M. on Monday at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home and for one hour prior to the service on Tuesday at the church. Burial will take place at Elm Grove Cemetery in Bluffton. Memorials may be made to the Zoological Association of America. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends can send online condolences to the family at www.thomarich.com.

Cemetery Details

Elm Grove Cemetery

3500 East State Road 124
Bluffton, IN

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 11. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN 46714
<http://www.thomarich.com>

Visitation

FEB 12. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN 46714
<http://www.thomarich.com>

Service

FEB 12. 10:30 AM (ET)

First Church of Christ
909 W Spring St
Bluffton, IN

Tribute Wall



“ *Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Arthur "A.J." J. Higginbottom*



Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home - February 11, 2019 at 03:27 PM



“ *Arthur "A.J." J. Higginbottom*

September 08, 2022 at 08:26 PM



“ *I knew A.J. since the mid 1980's. He was truly a kind soul. His zoological diets made a great difference to the welfare of zoo animals for over 30 years. And I, like many ofther zoo vets will miss seeing him at meetings or speaking with him on the phone. He made the world a better place. Bonnie L Raphael, DVM*

Bonnie L Raphael - March 07, 2019 at 01:45 PM



“ *I'm so sorry to hear about A.J.'s passing. I will certainly miss talking with him about nutrition and HMS products at conferences. It was a joy to have him at the AAZV conference in Salt Lake City in 2013. He will be missed!
Nancy Carpenter, DVM*

Nancy Carpenter - February 15, 2019 at 03:10 PM



“ *Condolences to the family and with prayers. He will be missed and a loss to all of you.*

Kathy Gardner - February 14, 2019 at 09:06 AM



“ *My sincere condolences to AJ's family. I knew AJ as a colleague and contributor to zoo nutritional science over many years. It was clear how much he cared about the animals. I always looked forward to talking with him at the zoo vet conferences or when he would visit us in Miami (zoo). He will be missed, but I'm glad to know he is with God now. Chriss Miller, DVM*

Chriss Miller, DVM - February 14, 2019 at 08:18 AM



“ *Although I only knew AJ through our talks in the AAZV Exhibitors Hall during the annual conference, I will miss seeing and spending time with him in St Louis this year. Sincere condolences to all his loved ones.*

Donna Ialeggio, DVM, Philadelphia Zoo

Donna Ialeggio, DVM - February 14, 2019 at 07:51 AM



“ *As a newly minted zoo vet in the 1980's, AJ was invaluable in helping me establish appropriate diets for many of the animals in my care. I enjoyed our conversations when he came for site visits and at conferences. I learned a lot about practical feed management of domestic animals and how it translated (or didn't) to zoo animals. With fondest memories, Roberta Wallace, DVM. RIP A.J.*

Roberta Wallace - February 13, 2019 at 10:51 PM

RH

“ Dear Friends and Family Members,

On behalf of the members of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians, please accept our sincere condolences for the loss of our dear friend, A.J. I know this is a difficult time for all of you, as it is for us. I just can't imagine going to another AAZV Annual Conference and not being able to visit with A.J. He took time to educate me about the history of working with the various zoos, zoo veterinarians and nutritionists. I enjoyed my conversations with him, and will miss seeing him.

Every one of our members contributes to the health and well-being of zoo animals and wildlife worldwide. A.J. was no exception. His work in developing nutritional products for zoo animals has gone a long way in improving the lives of the animals in our care. I'll speak for the animals and say "thank you" to A.J. for his good work.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to you, the friends and family members, in hopes that time will heal your hurt. As I am doing right now, think back of the wonderful times you had with A.J. and let that smile on your face linger. We will all miss him.

Respectfully,

*Rob Hilsenroth, DVM
Executive Director
American Association of Zoo Veterinarians*

Robert Hilsenroth - February 13, 2019 at 01:16 PM

TM

“ Scott & Barb,
Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

Todd & Holly Mahnensmith

Todd & Holly Mahnensmith - February 12, 2019 at 03:32 PM

JR

“ Please accept our sympathy in the loss of your husband, dad, and grandfather. We remember several of you well from various school and church activities and know you feel blessed to have had A.J. in your lives.

The Record's, Jo Ann, Robin, Bill, and Jeanne

Jo Ann Record - February 11, 2019 at 03:08 PM



“ Fiery Lily and Rose was purchased for the family of Arthur "A.J." J. Higginbottom.



February 11, 2019 at 10:51 AM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Arthur "A.J." J. Higginbottom.



February 10, 2019 at 09:06 PM



“ 151 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



Thoma/Rich,Lemler Funeral Home - February 10, 2019 at 05:36 PM



“ *Jan, Barb & Jeff, I just want you to know how much I love you all, and wish that Blackie & I could be there in Bluffton for the services. I will always hold my "big brother" in my heart & thoughts. He taught me to ride a horse, and not be afraid of thunder...said it was "just God loading a wagon with potatoes". Yes, he was a special. May God bless his soul, and may you all find peace and comfort in this time of sorrow.. Love Alice*

Alice Higginbottom Hubbard - February 10, 2019 at 02:31 PM