

James "Jim" E. Phillabaum

August 31, 1940 - January 27, 2023

Long-time Bluffton City Councilman, James "Jim" Edward Phillabaum, 82 of Bluffton passed away on Friday morning, January 27, 2023, at Christian Care Retirement Community after receiving a Leukemia diagnosis in early January. Jim was born on August 31, 1940, in Peru, IN to Herbert G. & Mildred M. (Woolpert) Phillabaum. He graduated from Bluffton High School in 1959 and earned his Associate Degree in Accounting from International Business College.

On March 2, 1963, Jim and Joyce Ann (Wenger) were married in Vera Cruz, IN and enjoyed 59 years of marriage. Jim was a devoted husband and proud of the family he and Joyce raised.

Jim proudly served his county in the United States Navy from 1964 to 1968. A faithful and dedicated employee, Jim retired as a Corporate Vice President of North American Van Lines in 2002. In his retirement, Jim enjoyed selling health insurance and working with the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton.

Jim loved Bluffton and serving its citizens. He was elected to the Bluffton Common Council for 11 terms serving 44 years, many of which he was the Council President. He enjoyed his service on the Bluffton Board of Works and Safety. Jim was honored to serve as Mayor Pro-Tem, after the passing of Mayor John Flaningam. He also held the positions of Chairman of the Bluffton Downtown Merchants Association and President of the Wells County Alcohol Beverage Commission.

He was a faithful member of the First United Methodist Church where he served in many roles and was very active in the Kate's Kitchen ministry. Survivors include his wife Joyce of Bluffton, and children; John Edward (wife Duckhyang) Phillabaum of Edmond, OK, Jill Ann Phillabaum of Bluffton and Jada Ann (Jeff) Hoerr of Peoria, IL. He was a proud grandfather to Dr. Megan Ann Phillabaum and 2LT Nathan James Phillabaum.

He is preceded in death by his parents and a sister, Barbara Turner.

A service to celebrate Jim's life will be held at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday, (February 4, 2023) at the First United Methodist Church in Bluffton with Pastor Sherrie Drake and Pastor Steve Bard officiating. Burial will follow at Six Mile Cemetery in Bluffton with Military honors by the United States Navy Honor Guard and the American Legion Post #111 Honor Guard.

Calling hours will be held from 3 P.M. to 7 P.M. on Friday, (February 3, 2023) at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton and for one hour prior to the service on Saturday at the church.

The family encourages memorials be made in Jim's memory to Kate's Kitchen in lieu of flowers or gifts.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler Family of Thoma / Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends can send online condolences to the Phillabaum family at www.thomarich.com.

Cemetery Details

Six Mile Cemetery

4795 SE State Road 116
Bluffton, IN

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 3. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN 46714
(260) 824-3850
info@thomarich.com

Visitation

FEB 4. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church
325 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN

Funeral Service

FEB 4. 10:30 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church
325 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN

Tribute Wall



“ *Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of James "Jim" E. Phillabaum*



Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home - February 03, 2023 at 03:43 PM

SK

“ *To the family. Sorry to read/hear this. I normally read The Banner daily, but I guess it's been a while since I have. I know he faithfully served Bluffton. I remember you kids from The Bowling Center. RIP Jim.*

Steve Kunkel - February 06, 2023 at 03:03 PM

BG

“ *jill so sorry for the loss of your dad. didn't know him real well but appreciated his concern for my son in the military. glad i got to meet him and his kindness.*

brent gerber - February 06, 2023 at 01:55 PM



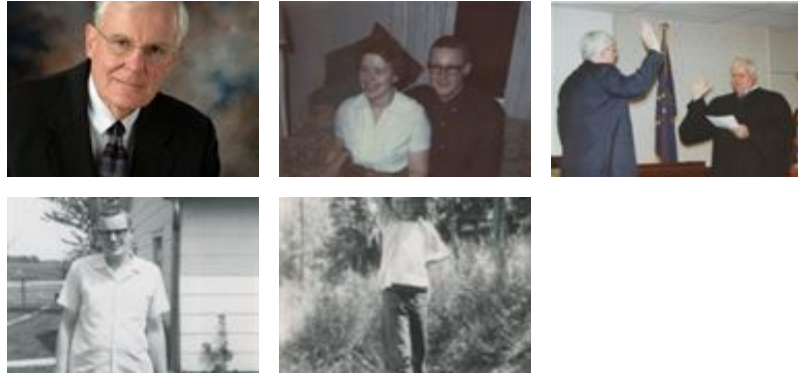
“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of James "Jim" E. Phillabaum.*



February 04, 2023 at 11:11 AM



“ 147 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home - February 01, 2023 at 12:57 PM

TL

“ *Todd & Sunpok Larson purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of James "Jim" E. Phillabaum.*



Todd & Sunpok Larson - February 01, 2023 at 11:46 AM

LS

“ *Jim was a kind and soft spoken gentleman! It was an honor to know him through our friendship with Jill and see how much he loved his dear wife and family! He will be greatly missed! Sending our love and prayers* ❤️ 🙏

Il Timothy 4:7 Louise Gerber and Dave & Lori Smith

Lori Smith - January 31, 2023 at 07:28 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of James "Jim" E. Phillabaum.*



January 31, 2023 at 06:19 PM



“ *My Father and Jims father worked together, as did Jim and I did at Northamerican. Blessings and prayers for the family. Jim Cass*

Jim Cass - January 30, 2023 at 05:23 PM



“ *Your family is in our prayers* ❤️ 🙏



Ms Patricia Ward - January 30, 2023 at 05:11 PM



“ *Midwest Food Bank Board and Team members purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of James "Jim" E. Phillabaum.*



Midwest Food Bank Board and Team members - January 30, 2023 at 05:03 PM

DG

“ Sadden to learn of Jim’s passing. When I was employed with the City of Bluffton, Jim was one of the great city councilmen at the time. He was always willing to listen to your ideas. Jim helped make Bluffton a greater place to live. Jim will be truly missed. The Phillabaum family will be in our prayers. Dan and Darlene Gerdom



Dan Gerdom - January 30, 2023 at 02:50 PM

DN

“ Dwight Nancy lit a candle in memory of James "Jim" Phillabaum



Dwight & Nancy - January 29, 2023 at 03:57 PM

CL

“ Kind & quiet are the words that come to mind to describe Jim, my classmate who sat in front of me in homeroom at Bluffton High School. Jim went on to make a future in the business world and i was proud by knowing him. Sincere Sympthy to his family at this time. Sorry i won't be able to pay respect but am in Florida at this time. Class of "1959" Carol Redding Lochtefeld.

Carol J Lochtefeld - January 28, 2023 at 04:25 PM

GC

So sorry, my thoughts and prayers are with all the family. Gerry Claghorn

Gerry Claghorn - January 29, 2023 at 09:29 PM

NH

*Joyce & Family,
Please accept our prayers for you and your family. Jim was a wonderful
man, a great leader, and accomplished much in his lifetime.
The children of Bob and Jane Reusser:
Nancy Halstead, Carol Foltz, John Reusser, Tim Reusser, David
Reusser, Donna Penrod, Brian Reusser & families.*

Nancy Halstead - January 31, 2023 at 02:00 AM

JJ

*Joy and family.....Dane and I would like to send our thoughts and
prayers to all of you. Jim was an amazing person. His
accomplishments in his lifetime were great. I know you and Jim thought
alot of Dane and when I told him Jim was ill I could tell he was alittle
taken back. He thought alot of Jim. Blessing to everyone!!!*

Jennifer Jesse - February 03, 2023 at 10:49 AM