



Mr. James R. "Jim" Cannistra, Sr.

May 11, 1934 - February 3, 2026

UTICA – Mr. James R. “Jim” Cannistra, Sr., age 91, passed away with his loving family by his side on Tuesday, February 3, 2026.

Born in Utica on May 11, 1934, James was the son of the late Frank J. and Mary (Preno) Cannistra. He was a graduate of T.R. Proctor High School, Class of 1952. A proud U.S. Army veteran, Jim joined the service after high school. Jim later furthered his studies at MVCC, where he received his associate degree. He excelled as an athlete and was proud to have been a part of a Proctor State championship baseball team.

Jim married the former Shirley J. Arcuri on April 28, 1956. The couple shared over 65 years together prior to Shirley’s passing on July 29, 2021.

Jim was employed with UNIVAC for more than 15 years. Concurrently, he worked as a cameraman at Vernon Downs. He then held a position as Production Manager at PAR Technology, from which he retired. One who never remained idle, Jim kept himself busy during his retirement years working at PJ Green, Inc.

Jim loved spending time visiting family and friends, especially traveling with them to Myrtle and Bethany Beaches, Cortland, NY and Scranton, PA, Italy and China. He was a warm-hearted man who always greeted everyone he

came across with a “hello.” He enjoyed sports, especially the New York Yankees. He loved attending his Proctor reunions with his wife to reconnect with classmates. Jim and Shirley also enjoyed attending events at the Sons of Italy Lodge #2054, and other Italian-American festivals in Utica.

Jim is survived by his sons and daughters-in-law, James “Jim” and Veena Cannistra, David Cannistra, Daniel (Dan) and Julie Cannistra, and the memory of his son, Matthew J. Cannistra, who he and Shirley took care of for over 18 years after he became ill and until his passing on October 28, 2005. He is also survived by his grandchildren, Sarah and her husband Brandon, Sharon and her husband Joaquin, Daniel and Mary, Molly and her husband Brian, Ethan, Jake, Zachary, Michael, Leila, Toby and Paige; two great-grandchildren, Vincenzo, and Danielle; former daughters-in-law, Mary Kate Bland, Jayne Gilbert, and Justine Coffey; brother and sister-in-law, Patrick and Ronnie Cannistra; nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins; sister-in-law, JoAnn (Arcuri) Wald (the late George Wald, Sr.); and his Tuesday breakfast buddies, who gathered at Debbie’s Cafe to enjoy camaraderie and good conversation. Jim was additionally predeceased by his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Dominick “Babe” and Elvira “Mollie” (Tutino) Arcuri; and brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Joseph J. Sr. and Jeanne Arcuri.

Visitation will be held on Saturday, February 14, 2026, from 1:00-2:00 p.m. at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave. Jim's funeral service and Celebration of Life will commence at 2:00 p.m. at the funeral home with Military Honors conferred by the U.S. Army. Internment will take place in St. Agnes Cemetery at the convenience of the family.

Cemetery Details

St. Agnes Cemetery

601 Arthur Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 732-8588

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 14. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.
932 South Street
corner of Hammond Ave.
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6714
eannacefh@roadrunner.com
<https://www.eannacefuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

FEB 14. 2:00 PM (ET)

Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.
932 South Street
corner of Hammond Ave.
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6714
eannacefh@roadrunner.com
<https://www.eannacefuneralhome.com>

Tribute Wall

JM

“ Jim, David, Dan and Families....Tony and I are so sorry to hear about cousin Jim's passing. He was just the sweetest...he had such a warm smile to offer. I used to run into him everywhere and I always enjoyed our chats. We have many fond memories of him and your mom too. She played a huge part in organizing our family reunions, which we are so grateful for. God bless you all and please know that you are in our thoughts and prayers. Sending love and hugs to all. Jolene and Tony Madia

Jolene and Tony Madia - February 19 at 08:23 AM

KD

“ Dan and family - I'm very sorry for your loss. I have very fond memories of your mom, dad, and all of you on Beechwood Road. He came to my dad's services a few years ago and it was nice to see him. Thoughts and prayers with all of you.

Kristen Delaney

Kristen Delaney - February 12 at 03:48 PM

MC

“ To the Cannistra family: Babe and I were so sorry to hear of Jimmy's passing. Babe said he has wonderful memories growing up with Jim, especially in the same house. He also remembers playing sports with him and Nini. We loved him very much and will miss him. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you. God Bless - Love Babe and Joanne

Mr and Mrs Babe Cannistra - February 12 at 11:43 AM

KM

“ Chris and I send our deepest sympathies on the loss of your father. May you find comfort and strength in the company of those who loved him.

Karen McManis - February 12 at 09:51 AM

DA

“ We are feeling heavy hearts with the news and extend our love and condolences to you all. Your dad was an amazing man and full of love his whole life. God bless you all.
Dominic J. Arcuri (Wald) and Family

Dominic J. Arcuri - February 12 at 09:30 AM

JJ

“ My deepest condolences.....

Joseph J. Arcuri Jr - February 12 at 09:29 AM

JC

“ Dear Cannistra Family, it is with a heavy heart that I share my heartfelt condolences on the passing of your dad. I have so many wonderful memories from when I was a little girl of your Dad and your mom too. After they were married they moved to the 3rd floor apartment on Rutger st, upstairs from your grandparents and I would love to climb that beautiful staircase to the third floor. As President of the Italian heritage Club both your parents continued to support the organization following the dissolution of the Sons of Italy. I last saw your Dad about a year ago. His warm smile and memories from my childhood will always remain in my heart. May he rest in eternal peace and may the support of family and friends ease your grief. Always Joann Cavo Campbell

Joann Campbell - February 12 at 12:30 AM

SC

Thinking of your entire family at this most difficult time. Jim and Shirley were the Best. The Best Dad and Mom and Grandparents that anyone could ever ask for. May your cherished memories put a smile on your face and ease your heartache. We will always cherish them in our hearts. With much love, Kevin and Sue Connors

Sue Connors - February 12 at 08:46 AM

MC

“ To the Cannistra Family, Babe and I are so sorry that cousin Jimmy has passed. Babe said he has wonderful memories growing up with Jim, especially in the same house. Also playing sports together with Nini. We loved him very much. May God Bless all of you, Love Babe and Joanne.

Mr and Mrs Babe Cannistra - February 11 at 08:32 PM

MC

“ Maureen Cooke purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Mr. James R. "Jim" Cannistra, Sr..



Maureen Cooke - February 11 at 04:48 PM

MC

“ Maureen Cooke planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. James R. "Jim" Cannistra, Sr..

Maureen Cooke - February 11 at 04:48 PM



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. James R. "Jim" Cannistra, Sr..*



February 11 at 03:47 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mr. James R. "Jim" Cannistra, Sr..

February 11 at 03:47 PM