



Mr. James T. "Jim" Ward

October 20, 1955 - July 17, 2023

NORTH UTICA - Mr. James T. "Jim" Ward, age 67, was reunited with those who preceded him when he passed away on Monday, July 17, 2023. He had been surrounded by his family prior to, and at the time of, his transitioning, and was in the hearts of those he loved most on this earth.

Jim was born in Utica on October 20, 1955 to Patricia (Martin) Ward-Smith and the late William Joseph Ward, I. He attended General Herkimer Elementary School and was a graduate of J.F.K. High School in 1973. Jim enlisted in the Navy in 1975, and got to see the world during his 6 years of duty as he served on the USS Inchon. This time in his life helped to develop and mature him. Among those he served with, and for, he was admired for his skills and was well regarded as a leader.

On May 23, 1981, Jim married the former Karen Keetley. They were a team, always making moments and memories special and providing for their family with a great sense of responsibility. Their strength and sense of responsibility were obvious in their parenting skills, which taught their children the value of hard work, resilience, and most importantly, family.

Jim was an electrician by trade, and was a member of the IBEW Local 43. Through the union, he was afforded work throughout many areas of the Northeast. The camaraderie with his fellow workers meant a great deal to him.

He was highly skilled and intelligent, and reveled in his profession. Jim retired at the age of 60.

Jim was the opposite of an open book. He was modest and unassuming, and spoke with a quiet voice that was very soothing. Food was his love language. He was an incredible, self-taught cook and loved sharing his favorite dishes with others. He was generous and thoughtful with his cooking, always preparing meals for family and friends on vacations, visits, or if someone was sick. His soups and chili omelettes were spectacular, but he could create anything and do it well.

Being a devoted football fan, the New Orleans Saints were his team! Somehow, Jim watched their games 12 months out of the year, critiquing reruns of past seasons. Jim also loved golfing with friends and family members, and attending boxing matches at the casino was a particular treat for him. One of his favorite things to do was bring his grandkids fishing, though he would've liked to do it more often. He is fondly remembered by his family for watching the worst movies of all time and then reviewing them with great humor. He had a dry sense of humor and was a good storyteller, always right on the money with the details. Toying with telemarketers was a favorite pastime of his, and he got no end of pleasure from stumping them, making them laugh, or even being hung up on.

Jim was brokenhearted when he lost his canine "Max." He reacted deeply and mourned his passing. They were inseparable, and Jim was amused by Max's affection and antics. His culinary skills were even applied to Max's gourmet meals. His wife, Karen, often said they were soulmates.

Close friends and family brought out the best in Jim's personality. He enjoyed discussing many topics, including sports, politics, current events, the latest shows and movies, and social values, which had important meaning to the

manner in which he lived his life.

Jim is survived by his wife, Karen; as well as their daughters, Natasha Ward, Megan Ward and her husband Dr. Christopher O'Connell, and Kelly Ward. He had a loving and playful relationship with his grand- and great-grandchildren; Tyler, Adrianna, and Aubrey Ward; Jameson O'Connell; Xavior, Camron, Trenton, D'Andre, and Chase Robinson. He cherished the memory of his infant granddaughter, Lynaesia Elazae Ward, who passed on October 4, 2000. He will be missed by his great-grandchildren, Athena and Donna Marie; Davianna, David, Legacy, Lovely; and Auriel. He is also survived by his mother, Patricia Smith, and his siblings and their spouses, William "Bill" and Karen Ward, Mary Patricia Chard, Kathleen Lilly, Nancy Biddlecome, Maureen and Dominick "Tony" Talerico, and Walter and Lynn Ward. He is also survived by many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, and cousins; his in-laws Kathryn and Francis Wilson, William H., IV and Margaret Keetley, Karyl and Michael Griffin, and Randall Keetley. Jim is also survived by countless friends from every facet of his life. He was preceded by his stepfather, Arthur Smith, who he considered a friend and loved to share laughs with.

Jim's family is grateful to the staffs of the MVHS St. Elizabeth and St. Luke's campuses. Memorial contributions may be considered to the James Library & Center for the Arts online at www.jameslibrary.org. Envelopes for donations will also be available at the service.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend James' Memorial Mass of Christian Burial, which will be held on Monday, July 24, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at St. Mark's Church, 440 Keyes Rd., North Utica. Immediately following the services, there will be a Celebration of Jim's Life at Sherrillbrook Park, 4191 NY-12, New Hartford. All are encouraged to join the family in showing their love and support.

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

JUL 24. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Mark's Church
440 Keyes Road
Utica, NY 13502

Celebration of Life

JUL 24. 12:30 PM (ET)

Sherrill Brook Park
4191 NY-12
New Hartford, NY 13413

Tribute Wall



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

July 24, 2023 at 03:47 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. James T. "Jim" Ward.



July 24, 2023 at 03:47 PM



“ Grace and I are so very sad that Jim has left us. His sense of humor, calm being and laughter are things we will always cherish. Karen and family please know we love you all.

Grace and Dave Pelto - July 24, 2023 at 07:31 AM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Mr. James T. "Jim" Ward.



July 23, 2023 at 02:33 PM

SD

“ We are very lucky to have known Jim. He will be sorely missed. He was a kind and gentle person with a big heart. I really enjoyed his smile. Big hugs to the entire Ward family. You are in our thoughts and prayers. Stacy

Stacy Deuel - July 22, 2023 at 03:28 PM

LJ

“ Love, Stacy and Jeff purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mr. James T. "Jim" Ward.



Love, Stacy and Jeff - July 22, 2023 at 02:48 PM

LJ

“ Love, Stacy and Jeff planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. James T. "Jim" Ward.

Love, Stacy and Jeff - July 22, 2023 at 02:48 PM

TS

“ Karen, Aunt Pat and entire family, I'm so sorry for the loss of Jimmy. He was a great guy and I always enjoyed being around him. May you all find peace some way. 🙏

Tony Scalise - July 21, 2023 at 10:03 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. James T. "Jim" Ward.*



July 21, 2023 at 02:08 PM



“ *Thanks for the laughs and great memories Jim. You'll always be in my thoughts, Bob Poirier.*

Bob Poirier - July 20, 2023 at 10:38 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. James T. "Jim" Ward.*



July 20, 2023 at 07:00 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. James T. "Jim" Ward.*



July 20, 2023 at 08:47 AM