

# JAMES P. "JIM" "BEAR" O'CONNELL



Age 76, of Carnegie, born March 6, 1947, passed away peacefully at home on February 12, 2024. He was preceded in death by his parents James and Mary Elizabeth "Mae" O'Connell. He is survived by several cousins. Jim was a graduate of Canevin High School, where he was an academic standout and a star athlete in football and wrestling. A highlight of his High School wrestling career was when

he defeated Mike McCoy (6'5"/258lbs) of Erie Cathedral Prep. Mr. McCoy went to Notre Dame, then on to play defensive tackle for the Green Bay Packers and several other NFL teams for eleven seasons. Mr. O'Connell went to the University of Pennsylvania where he played football and wrestled heavyweight for the Quakers. He was a member of the Ivy League championship wrestling teams of '68 and '69. After graduating with business and accounting degrees, he passed on an opportunity to work for Allegheny Ludlum Steel. Instead he chose to return to Canevin where he became a beloved teacher to countless students for forty years. During his tenure at Canevin, he taught business and accounting, coached football, wrestling, and golf. He was an advisor of FBLA, Rotary Interact and Academic Team. "Bear" as he was fondly known as, impacted the lives of thousands of students, remaining a friend and mentor to many of them long after graduation. Arrangements have been entrusted to the **SZAFRANSKI-EBERLEIN FUNERAL HOME, INC.**, where family and friends will be received on Sunday, February 18, 2024 from 2PM - 6PM at 101 Third Street, Carnegie. Interment private. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation in Jim's name to:

The Andrew Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall, 300  
Beechwood Ave., Carnegie, PA 15106,  
<https://carnegiecarnegie.org/>

[www.szafranski-eberleinfuneralhome.com](http://www.szafranski-eberleinfuneralhome.com)

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