

## JAMES T. KANE



With the knowledge and confidence that he lived a full life, filled with love and adventure, the family of James "Jim" T. Kane announces his peaceful passing on March 10, 2025. Despite living with the effects of Alzheimer's the last few years, Jim continued to flash his charm and sense of humor to the end. He is survived by his wife of almost 60 years, Carole (Kunkle); children, Brian (Sally), Shelby

(Matt) Frankel, Chris; and grandchildren, Joshua Kane, Nathan Frankel, Emily Kane and Eli Frankel.

Jim was born on March 7, 1942, to Mary (O'Brien) and Eugene Kane. Raised in the "mean" streets of Swissvale, PA, Jim grew up playing baseball and basketball and chasing after his older brother, Gene. He took piano lessons and attended St. Anselm School. He was a devout Catholic, for whom Sunday church attendance was an important part of his entire life. As an adult, his rich, deep voice made him an excellent church lector and he frequently served as a Eucharistic minister. He was proud to eventually become an active, lifetime member of the Knights of Columbus.

Jim attended Swissvale High School, graduating in 1960. He played football his senior year. Despite being blessed with a skinny frame and no speed (he was known as the "Snail"), he loved to talk about playing against the legendary Braddock High team in a game that was featured in Sports Illustrated that year. A much better basketball player, Jim had the thrill of sinking two late free throws to beat that same Braddock High team on the hardwood.

Nevertheless, Jim's greatest Swissvale accomplishment was meeting, dating and falling in love with his high school sweetheart, Carole, who became his life-long love and partner. Jim fully embraced the reality that he had "outkicked his coverage" and often acknowledged that her presence in his life was the best thing that ever happened to him. He spent the rest of his life unconditionally loving and supporting her.

Jim attended St. Vincent College, graduating in 1965. In college, he played a little basketball, gently tormented a couple of priests, consumed a few Rolling Rocks and tried desperately to meet one of his idols, Arnold Palmer. An original member of Arnie's Army, Jim loved to tell the story of being at Arnie's Latrobe residence one afternoon with the help of a friend who was house sitting. He did not get to meet Arnie that afternoon, but he still considered it a highlight. A personally signed autograph photograph of Mr. Palmer was one of Jim's cherished keepsakes.

Jim and Carole married in 1965. He began a career in sales and marketing, a profession well-suited for a guy who loved to talk and meet people. He eventually became involved in international sales, affording him the opportunity to travel the world. Over a 30-year period, Jim visited every major European, African, Asian and Far Eastern capital. Prior to the unrest in the late '70s, he also visited the Middle East, including Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. Getting a unique gift from those travels was always a highlight for his children.

Ultimately, Jim's greatest joy was his three children, Brian, Shelby and Chris. He was known as "Big Guy" to his adoring children, a loving term of endearment that captured his importance in their lives. To his sons, he shared his love of sports and never tired of being "all-time" pitcher/quarterback for marathon wiffle ball and touch football games in the backyard with the neighborhood kids. He also shared the secret to attending youth sports events; sit far away from any parents, a lesson all his children followed with their kids. Always ahead of his time, Big Guy was a "Girl Dad" before that was a thing. Shelby had him wrapped around her finger from day one. He loved every one of her marathon dance recitals and proudly displayed forever a picture of Shelby "on her toes" in her ballet tutu on his dresser.

In addition to his international travels, Jim's career took the family to many places. The city kid from Swissvale found his way to stints in Ridgway, PA, Broken Arrow, OK, Morristown, NJ, Yardley, PA, Douglassville, PA and West Chester, PA. Along the way, he made numerous friends, many of whom remained in contact to the very end.

Carole and Jim loved to travel and never missed an opportunity to take a cruise or visit a Caribbean or Mexican resort. Sitting at a pool, deck or beach, reading a book, taking a nap or talking to Carole was an ideal day for Big Guy and he had lots of them. Jim also cherished shorter trips to see the autumn leaves in New England, Jersey and Delaware Beaches and visit family wherever that might be. During family vacations in 1970s, wood-paneled station wagons, Big Guy introduced the kids to the greatness of Barry Manilow, The Carpenters, Neil Diamond, The Four Seasons (Carole's favorite) and the latest Broadway musical. The Kane children know every word to Annie and A Chorus Line because of those trips.

And just when he did not think life could get any better, Big Guy became "Pop Pop" and eventually "Popster" to his four grandchildren, Joshua, Nathan, Emily and Eli. Each grandchild learned the joy of a quiet moment with Pop Pop as he read a bedtime story, discussed school and activities alone in a corner or shared a cone on a bench outside the ice cream store. Of course, Pop Pop imparted his greatest lessons at regular family games of Uno, where the taunting, pouting and yelling was always overcome by uncontrollable joy and laughter when he dropped a crushing Draw 4 Wild on an unsuspecting grandson or granddaughter.

Big Guy loved big moments and had a knack for finding them. He was at Three Rivers Stadium (with Brian) when Roberto Clemente got his 3,000 and last hit, and returned three months later returned to that same venue to watch Franco Harris scoop up the Immaculate Reception. At age 70, Chris treated him to a round at historic Augusta National Golf Club, home to four Masters wins by Arnie. In one last bit of magic, Big Guy stuck his tee shot on the world-famous 12th hole to three feet, pausing on Hogan's Bridge to admire his shot and a once in a lifetime walk with Chris.

Pop Pop loved and enjoyed the small moments too. Car rides to practice, attending games and performances, college visits, neighborhood walks/talks, and well-timed phone calls just to check in or discuss last night's game will be cherished memories of all who loved him.

Jim/Big Guy/Pop Pop loved his family and never failed to make our world more joyful, more fun and more meaningful. We will miss him beyond words but are comforted by the knowledge that he lived a rich, adventurous and impactful life.

Jim's life will be celebrated at a private ceremony. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the Alzheimer's Association.

Condolences: [jnelsonrigbyfh.com](http://jnelsonrigbyfh.com)

Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](http://post-gazette.com/gb)