



James Frederick Gilreath

DEC 9, 1923 - MAR 27, 2023



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Frequently you must have heard Dad declare that he had lived
A Good Life. Here's why:

He worked hard on the Indiana farm, met our mother in late high school, but, while mom went on to nursing college, he signed up for the Army to fight in WWII. Returning from the Pacific Front, he married his love, Mary Ellen, and they started their family of two children: Mary Ann and Jim. The experience of living in the semi-tropical Pacific islands, observing native people being happy and singing while going fishing showed him that one could relax, laugh, and be happy whatever was happening. So when his adult children left home, our parents quit their jobs in their mid-forties, leaving behind the cold weather and a future of shoveling snow in old age. Moving to Florida gave them a new life of warmth, enjoying picnics on the beach, deep-sea fishing, and their own backyard of tropical flowers and fruit trees! It was Dad's version of the South Pacific: he enjoyed every minute of it!

Along the journey of several jobs, he developed his passion for reading history in order to understand The War, and then he moved on to exploring other cultures, especially the Romans. Not only did he love learning history, but he continually tried to spark that love for all those whom he met (as you can very-well testify to!). His technique became sharing some unusual tidbit of history that you most likely had never heard of, which might make you curious or doubtful! Later, hearing about what a great resource computers were, his favorite response was Google It! Sadly, being born in an earlier generation and inheriting macular degeneration, he regretted that he could not do that himself; he could only hope that some people would not be afraid or too bored to learn some history, what he saw to be the foundation of our present and future human life.

Being a mechanic, he loved fixing things. He loved to read Popular Mechanics, getting excited about new inventions that could better our lives and change the future. He installed solar panels above their garage and hoped other neighbors would do the same.



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As his father's only son on the farm, he was not allowed to play football, fearing he would get injured. This did not deter him from strategizing the best moves like a "home" coach, whether listening to the radio and later watching them on glorious television! Following sports, namely football, basketball, baseball, and hockey, took him through all the seasons of the year and his life!

Before he lost his sight, he always read the newspaper for world news and comics and then would spend time on the porch, being challenged to solve a Cryptogram (sparked by his fascination of those brilliant people who deciphered the WWII codes that helped end the war). As a senior he even picked up the challenge of working Sudoku puzzles while waiting for Mom at her doctors' appointments.

At the age of 89, he joined his daughter on a dream trip to Rome, not for the art (of course) but the history of what the Romans gave us. He insisted on climbing the stone steps to the very top of the Coliseum (when told the elevator did not work!!!) A dream come true! When it came to history, he was One Determined Man!! The photo attached, shows his famous smile of delight when in Rome, being presented with a new dessert, Gelato!!

Our father strived to practice his Christian values of kindness, generosity, and compassion, working hard to be forgiving. He was an honest man who would tell you what he thought (although sometimes hard to hear!).

Dad survived his two sisters, May and Grace, and half-sister Hildegard and half-brother Edward.

His ashes will be placed next to our mother's grave in the Bay Pines National Cemetery of Saint Petersburg, FL. We are respecting his wish that there be no funeral nor memorial service. As my brother and I live out-of-state, there is no need to send flowers.

However, if you wish to honor our dad's US Army service in WWII, please consider a donation to Dad's favorite veterans' charities:

Disabled American Veterans https://secure.dav.org/site/Donation2?df_id=17643&mfc_pref=T&17643.donation=form1

The Salvation Army <https://give.salvationarmyusa.org/give/164006/#!/donation/checkout?amount=Other>



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If you have other memories of our dad that you would like to share publicly, you are welcome to do so on this website. Due to the threat of Indentity Theft, if you would like to write an email to either of us, please contact Kristy Bolek at Moss Feaster Funeral Home: 727-562-2040 or Kristina.Bolek@nsmg.com



Events

James Frederick Gilreath

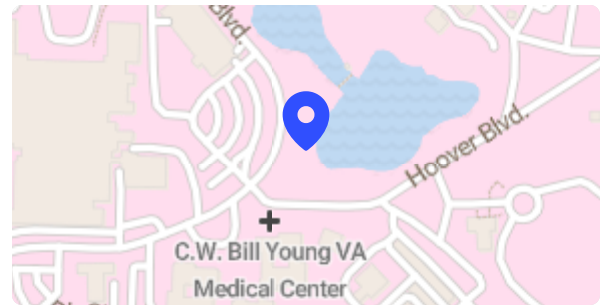
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Cemetery Details



Bay Pines National Cemetery

10000 Bay Pines Blvd, Bay Pines FL FL





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring James by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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