



## James Frederick Besaw

January 25, 1931 - October 31, 2017

Jim Besaw, 86, of Traverse City, a resident of Long Lake Township, passed away Oct. 31 from the presence of loving family members into the presence of his Savior.

He was born Jan. 25, 1931 to Mabel (McClellan) and Clarence "C.R." Besaw in Detroit. Jim always spoke fondly of his "growing up years" in Detroit, saying, "We lived in a wonderful neighborhood - great schools, health care centers and shopping." In the mid 1940s Jim moved with his parents and younger brother to Traverse City. The family purchased a home "way out on M-22" (at Bingham Road).

He was preceded in death by his parents; his brothers, Gordon (sisters-in-law, Marylou and Sylvia) and Stanley Besaw; sister, Phyllis; and brother-in-law, "H" Ward. He is survived by his wife, Miriam; his daughter and son-in-law, Cyndi and Porter Blattenberger; his grandchildren; his brother, Larry Besaw (Janet); sister-in-law, Doris Besaw; and many nieces and nephews.

Jim went to Traverse City Central High School, where Central Grade School is now, and quickly became an active member of his graduating class. He stayed involved in the "class of 1950" the rest of his life, attending reunions over the years, and this summer he attended the 67th reunion. It was at TCCHS that Jim met Beverley (Blackett-Shaw). They later married and in 1953 had their daughter, Cynthia "Cyndi" (Worden/Blattenberger). Jim loved spending family time with his and Bev's families! Playing cards or going to family dinners with all the relatives gathered, watching football games, holiday gatherings and camping weekends with his brothers, sisters-in-law and their families were the "social events" that Jim loved best! Although Jim and Bev's marriage ended, their (and their families') friendships lasted. Jim was at Bev's bedside when she died in 1981.

Jim remodeled the "cottage" on Spider Lake and made it his home. He loved living on "the Spider!" He spent countless hours enjoying snowmobiling on the frozen lake, "boonie bombing" the surrounding state land in his old military Jeep or dune buggy and taking refreshing swims and long pontoon rides, where he grilled his dinner and stayed out way past sunset, enjoying the lake and life!

In his early adult years Jim worked at Parsons Corporation. He earned his associate's degree at Northwestern Michigan College as a young husband and father. He worked and took his young family to Lansing, where he spent two years and obtained his Bachelor

of Arts from his beloved Michigan State University. He went back for many family weekends to see MSU play football.

Jim returned to Traverse City and worked at Parsons Corporation in expanded capacities as well as in other industries within the Traverse City region.

In the late 1960s he moved to Wichita, Kansas, where he worked for Lear Jet Corporation. When he returned to Michigan he obtained his master's degree at the University of Michigan and came back full circle to Northwestern Michigan College, this time serving as the director of career planning and placement from 1971 until his retirement in 1991. For over 30 years he was devoted to the Tuesday morning Kiwanis Club. He was a passionate participant in the local DeColores ministries. He worshiped and served many years at Long Lake Friends Church.

Cyndi and her dad had a very special "dad-daughter" relationship. Jim often told people "Cyndi is the best 'kid' a dad could ever ask for! I can honestly say she never gave me an ounce of trouble in her whole life" and "she is also my best friend." They enjoyed one final "date night" this August with a drive (Jim's "fave") through the Mud Lake woods, happy hour at the mouth of the Platte with dinner and time on the beach at Frankfort.

Grandpa Jim, "Gramps," "Jimbo" dearly loved his "grandboys," Wes, A.J. and Sam Worden, and was "very proud of them." They had many great times together camping, enjoying the yard games that Grandpa devised, hunting or playing euchre.

Grandpa Jim was happy that he could attend recent family gatherings with grandson, Wes (granddaughter, Jessica) and great-granddaughters, Shaye, Tessa and Maylee, grandson A.J. (Jennifer, Zoe and Aria) and grandson, Sam (grand-daughter, Megan) and great-"grandboy," Fisher. With Cyndi's marriage to Porter, to whom he felt a special closeness, Jim garnered the new name of "Pops"! He gained not only another special son-in-law, he also was happy that he became "Grandpa" to Trisha (Scott Moore) and Lori Barnes and later, great-grandpa to Caden, Lexi and Jacob Moore and KZ, Hunter and Summer Barnes.

He loved how we all became one big, fun-loving blended family.

Jim's life took several turns, leading to special relationships that enriched many lives! He enjoyed recent visits with "adopted kid," Leslie South and other friends and family from relationships recent and past. Jim prided himself on saying, "Divorces happen between the couple, not the family!" He maintained close ties with stepdaughters, Angela (Robert) Thompson and Malinda (Scott) Kovalcik and their children, and he refused to "let go" of dear friend, "in-law" Pat Worden or "granddaughter" Rachel Stone-Gourley.

Jim married his loving wife, Miriam (Fox/Warning) in 2000. They enjoyed their time together, taking trips to Jim's "bucket list" destinations, camping and time split between their home in Long Lake Township and their winter home at Alligator Park in Punta Gorda, Florida. Jim was an active board member and friend to many there. Jim felt he had found

"a precious gift" when he married Miriam. He told everyone that he felt "blessed" to have her in his life and thrived on the loving care she provided, especially in his final days with declining health. Miriam's children, Sam Warning, Carmel Warning (Tarqe Alhindi) and Jennifer (Sam) McBride, and grandchildren, Zachary, Wyatt, Kasside, Joshua, Codey, Fatimah and Yasmin, were as special to "Pops/Grandpops" as he was to all of them!

A celebration of life service will be held for Jim on Friday, Nov. 10, at Long Lake Church, 4172 Church Road, Traverse City. Guests are invited to take part in visitation and refreshments from 4 to 6 p.m., and the celebration of Jim's life at 6 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to the Christian Education Fund of Long Lake Church, where Jim spent many summers teaching in the VBS program. Additionally, Jim would appreciate donations made to Alligator Park (APA), 6400 Taylor Road, Unit 112, Punta Gorda, FL 33950, to a special fund for a new sound system which he knew was much needed and where he loved entertaining residents in many on-stage performances. Jim is already deeply missed by his loving family!

# Tribute Wall

JA

“ I went to bible study on Monday with Jim and Miriam, He was well versed in the bible and always had thought provoking things to say. My husband, Dave and I enjoyed many evenings playing euchre in Alligator Park, when Jim euchred someone, he always said yucker pucker, which got a laugh from many players.

*Praying for peace and comfort for Jim's family.*

*Dave and Janice Lawless  
Alligator Park*

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**Janice** - November 11, 2017 at 11:14 AM

JS

“ I sold Jim his house in Alligator Park. On his first day of living in the park, 2 things happened. I had to talk with him about his dog being on a leash AND I asked him to volunteer with some work being done in the park. He continued to volunteer in and around Alligator Park for many years. I've always taken credit for Jim asking Miriam to marry him because Jim came to me for advise on an older man asking a younger woman to marry him. I used my husband, Roland, as an example, explaining the happiness he would find. I was right. They were a wonderful couple. Jim you will be missed by all of us Gators in FL. Love to the family, JD and Roland Stout

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**JD Stout** - November 07, 2017 at 04:31 PM