

James William Urfer



James William Urfer, 77, of Grinnell, died on Tuesday, May 21, 2013, at Iowa Methodist Medical Center in Des Moines, from injuries sustained in an automobile accident earlier that afternoon south of Grinnell.

Funeral services are scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Friday, May 31, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Grinnell with Pastor Kathy Roys officiating. Organist will be Cheryl Ireland and vocalist will be Roger Henderson. Pallbearers will be Scott, Nathan and Renee Beach and Ned, Calvin and Samantha Quarterman. Honorary bearers will be Jewel Kintzinger-Day, Raymond and Rhea Light,

Montie and Betty Hammond and Dan Slagle. A private family burial will follow at Hazelwood Cemetery in Grinnell.

Visitation will be held from 3:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Thursday at the Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell with the family present from 5:00 to 7:00 Thursday evening.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be designated in Jim's name to St. John's Lutheran Church in Grinnell, Grinnell Regional Medical Center, or the Rotary International Fund for Polio Eradication.

James W. Urfer was born on April 13, 1936, to Samuel James Urfer and Mildred Caroline Ludquist Urfer in Des Moines, Iowa. He graduated from Grinnell High School in 1954 and attended Wartburg and Grinnell College. While at Grinnell College, Jim met Marlene Ellen Berg. They were married on July 18, 1959, at Faith Lutheran Church in Comfrey, Minnesota. They have three children.

Jim was stricken with polio when he was a junior in high school. Grinnell College and Coach Irv Samone stepped forward to help Jim and other polio patients in Grinnell area in their rehabilitation.

In the summers of his college years, Jim worked in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. He then joined the family business at Grinnell Implement Store in 1959. He became president in 1962 until he retired in 2003.

He was baptized, confirmed and an active member of St. John's Lutheran Church. He had also been president of the church council. Jim was very proud of his family's involvement and history with St. John's Lutheran Church.

An active member of the Rotary Club for 35 years, he served as the club's president in 1982 and 1983 and was honored as a Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary International. Jim was on the Grinnell Regional Medical Center Board of Directors from 1982 - 1990 and on the Foundation Board from 2003 to 2009. He was a member of the Grinnell Elks Lodge No. 1266.

Jim was co-founder and co-chair of Ag Appreciation Day for 18 years. He loved and respected the agriculture community.

Jim and Molly were honored as Grand Marshalls in the Grinnell 4th of July parade in 2011.

Jim cherished his time spent with family and friends. He was so proud of his children and grandchildren in their academic achievements and watching them in their athletic and fine arts activities. He also enjoyed attending Grinnell High School and Grinnell College sporting events, summers in Okoboji, watching sunsets, wintering in Florida, golfing, fishing, bridge club, traveling, gardening and going on walks.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Molly; his children, Julia (Scott) Beach of Grinnell; Christina (Ned) Quarterman of McHenry, Illinois; and Charles "Chod" Urfer of Grinnell; four grandchildren, Nathan Beach, Renee Beach, Calvin Quarterman, and Samantha Quarterman; one great-granddaughter, Brynn Bishop-Beach; and one brother, Theodore (Nancy) Urfer of Grinnell.

GH-R 5-27-30-2013

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Jim was born April 13, 1936.
Record 5-30-2013

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Services are pending at the Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell.

GH-R 5-23-2013