

Austin community leader Jim Buchanan succumbs at age 78

Written by Administrator

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Word spread quickly on Thursday evening, June 4, that Jim Buchanan had died.

James Albert Buchanan, 78, did not recover from a fall in his home that he had suffered on Friday, May 29. With his family around him, he passed peacefully at the University of Louisville Hospital, where he had been a patient since the accident.

Plenty of stories were swapped about Jim as family members and his many friends gathered at the Buchanan Funeral Home in Austin on Sunday, June 7, to say farewell and comfort those he left behind. Jim was born in Madison on February 27, 1931, to Hubert and Evelyn Smith Buchanan. After serving in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War, he received his training for the mortuary business in Indianapolis and briefly worked there. He also met his future wife, Margaret Nalley, in Indianapolis and eventually brought her home to Austin. Jim went into the funeral home business with his parents in the 1950s while Margaret worked as a nurse and then left that profession as the younger Buchanans started their family.

Four children and many years later, Buchanan Funeral Home maintains an impeccable reputation, thanks to a lot of hard work. Three of the Buchanan children now operate the funeral home business, though Jim was always on hand to make sure all was being handled well.

Jim Buchanan was known throughout the Austin community for his generosity and his sense of humor. He was a charter member of the fledgling Jennings Township Volunteer Fire Department. He was an active member of the Austin Lions Club for over 50 years. He operated one of the first ambulance services in Scott County. He and his family always contributed a small mountain of items to Toys for Tots campaigns at Christmas time. He was a life member of the Jennings Township Conservation Club and a strong supporter of his church, American Martyrs Catholic Church in Scottsburg. He touched many lives and performed many generous acts. It's no wonder the funeral home was packed that Sunday night by those wanting to tell family members how much Jim meant to them.

The world is poorer for his absence.

His survivors include wife Margaret; three sons, Tom and wife Misty of Carrollton, Ky., and J.D. and wife Terri and Jerry and wife Jennifer, all of Austin; a daughter, Janie and husband Keith Alexander of Austin; two brothers, The Rev. Father Don Buchanan of Austin and Hubert "Hubie" Buchanan of Amherst, N.H.; two sisters, Mary Ellen Buchanan and JoNell Buchanan, both of Austin; and six grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Monday morning, June 8, at American Martyrs Catholic Church. Father Don Buchanan officiated.

Burial was in Austin Cemetery.

Memorial gifts may be made to the Jim Buchanan Scholarship Fund of the Austin Alumni Association.

On-line condolences may be expressed to the family by visiting the funeral home's website at www.buchananfuneralhome.net.