



## James Maurice Ohler

May 6, 1935 - March 16, 2023

James “Jim” Maurice Ohler, 87, passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, March 16th at 10:35 pm at his home in Anderson, Indiana. Jim was sitting in his favorite easy chair, with his favorite afghan blanket keeping him warm, his two favorite cats cozying up to him purring on his lap while watching NCAA basketball (even though his beloved Butler University & Ball State University were not in the running).

Jim wished to stay in his home until the end of his life. After all, this was his childhood home. He moved back in to take care of his elderly parents in 1999. His mother, Martha lived until the age of 88, and his father, Jack, lived to be 93. Jim grew up with his brother, Jay, who lived to be 61 and passed away just nine days before their father in 2002. Jay and Jim enjoyed their neighborhood and their childhood home. Growing up, they always had some money-making schemes going on. One year, they saw an opportunity to start a business selling Christmas trees, though their timing was slightly off. They noticed a bunch of trees in the alley. So they dragged 10-20 used Christmas trees onto the front porch and were going to start a Christmas tree stand. Their parents had to break the news to the kids that no one wanted to purchase a tree in January. Jim spent a lot of time at the YMCA, playing basketball (even though he said he had “two left feet”), and pool. He also played a lot of baseball in the neighborhood.

Jim attended Butler University and later transferred to Ball State. He always joked that Butler, his father's alma mater, was too hard. Upon graduating from Ball State with an economics degree, he was conscripted into the Army and deployed to Korea. Fortunately, it was not an active conflict at that time, and he could enjoy Korea, the people, and the culture. He had many stories from Korea that demonstrated how the Korean people were resourceful and practical. One story he retold many times, was about a break-in on the base. One of the buildings had Top Secret documents in it. There were some concerns about what had been stolen. After an inventory review, the only expensive things stolen were the telephones. In order to prevent future thefts, the Army erected an electric fence around the base. The locals then ran wire to the fence and ran the electricity to their small houses. Jim loved Korean food and enjoyed going to Korean restaurants in Indianapolis. Later when we tried to get him to go on a cruise, he always said that he'd been on a cruise, to Korea and back, and that was enough for him.

After returning from the Army, Jim met Sonja, and they married in 1963. Jim worked for the family business, Jack & Jill's Children's Clothing and in 1974 Sonja joined the venture to open their new store location in Kokomo. Jim loved the store. His economics degree came in handy when choosing unique inventory and making business decisions. Jim was a "people" person and loved all of his customers and vendors. Relationships were his favorite part of his job. He loved spending time with the other business owners and attorneys downtown and spent a lot of time golfing and bowling with them. As an adult, these were two sports he loved playing. Although he'd tell you he was no good at either, it didn't stop him from enjoying them and placing in a few local golf tournaments, and winning a few bowling league trophies.

He'd tell you he was very competitive but only with himself. He even turned his physical therapy into a sport, setting, reaching, and often surpassing his goals while seeking accolades from the nurses and showing off to the rest of the patients. He would challenge other patients to races. The Physical Therapy staff all loved him. Sara Miller, one of his Physical Therapists, loved working with Jim and was grateful that he took on her father, Bob Johnston, as one of his PT buddies, and convinced Bob that getting a life-saving pacemaker was a good idea. Jim always tried to lead by example.

Jim was known for his big heart, his sharp mind, and his witty sense of humor. He was quiet but had a strong presence. He had grown to love his medical team as he got older. Jim previously always avoided doctors, but fortunately, he had issues with his "life-saving" kidney stones. The first time he went to the ER with kidney stones, they discovered he needed open-heart surgery. Jim always tried to keep a sense of humor about things, no matter how dire. When his heart surgeon, Dr. Peter Walts, gave a detailed explanation in preparation for the procedure, Jim said, "I only have one question, have you ever done this before?". Thanks to his medical team at the Heart Center in Carmel, the heart surgery went without issues. Jim's second round of kidney stones revealed a spot on his ultrasound. This led to a biopsy, a splenectomy, and another biopsy. Dr. Ubaidullah Sherief walked in with a big smile on his face and told Jim that he had what was known as the "flu of cancer" and they could knock it down with no problem. Jim got a big smile on his face and said "I bet I am the only one who had lucky kidney stones!" When someone would ask him how he was doing, he would say "I am great!", and he then would follow up immediately with "but I lie a lot!". Jim loved all of his physicians although his all-time favorite was his Nurse Practitioner, Brooke Zerker. He was especially close to her. Whenever he would get to see her, he would always have a big

smile on his face.

Jim loved watching sports. He was a lifelong Anderson Indians fan and his family always had season tickets until the downtown campus closed. He loved his Pacers. He felt fortunate to have seen Reggie Miller score 8 points in 8.9 seconds in a playoff game. His father, Jack, had given up on the game and went to the kitchen to get ice cream and missed it. Jim told him, "You can't give up on the Pacers!". He also was a lifelong Cubs fan. Fortunately, he lived long enough to see his beloved Cubs in the World Series in 2016. He celebrated the win for his mother, who did not live long enough to witness it in her lifetime. Jim was also a huge racing fan and especially loved the Indianapolis 500. He attended the race countless times. He was known to have a few Budweisers at the race. One year during the race he had a few too many and he couldn't find the car and his friends left without him. He was not happy about it at the time, but that story was retold many times.

Jim owned an extensive collection of Jazz records. He loved Count Basie, David Brubeck, the Modern Jazz Quartet, Ella Fitzgerald, Ramsey Lewis, Louie Armstrong, and all things Jazz. Along with his wit, and his love of sports, he also passed on his love for music to his children and grandchildren.

Jim loved to experiment in the kitchen and was a sucker for all the new kitchen gadgets. Although he appreciated trying new things, he was very much rooted in tradition. Two of his favorite dishes were made-from-scratch chicken noodles and lasagna. He used to make trays of lasagna for all family members for Christmas.

Jim had his priorities straight. Family came first. After retiring, he was able to spend much of his time taking care of his grandchildren when they were little and was sure to attend many of their games and performances. With family members who lived further away, he regularly spent many hours on the phone, talking and learning about all the new things they were into while always sharing his wisdom and perspective.

Jim was kind and sincere and never talked badly about anybody (except the politicians). People around him felt his love and care in the most special way. And even his five beloved cats were spoiled by him.

Jim is survived by children, Gay Barkley of Indianapolis, IN, Nicholas Ohler (Anya Aslanova) of Indianapolis, IN, John Ohler of Portland, OR; grandchildren, Misty Reinecke (Mark) of Manchester, TN, Dmitry Aslanov-Ohler and Vladimir Aslanov-Ohler of Indianapolis, IN; great-grandsons, BJ Walker and Christopher Reinecke of Manchester, TN; sister-in-law, Marsha Ohler of Cicero, IN; nephew Michael Ohler (Nancy) of Cicero, IN; grandniece, Sasha Reynolds (Jason) of Atlanta, IN, and grandnephew, Vader Ohler (Cydney) of Cicero, IN, and great-grand nieces and nephews, Caleb and Grace Reynolds, Jack, and Wren Ohler. He will forever be in the hearts of many family and dear friends.

Jim was preceded by his wife, Sonja Ohler; daughter, Debra Lynn Ohler; son-in-law, Tim Barkley; grandchildren, Timothy "Timmy" Barkley and Ia Aslanova-Ohler; parents, Jack and Martha Ohler; brother, Jay Ohler; nephew, Greg Ohler

A Memorial Service will be held at Loose Funeral Home & Crematory (200 W

53rd St, Anderson, IN 46013) on Saturday, March 25, 2023. Visitation will start at 10:30 am followed by a short service at 11:30 am. Funeral service will be held at the Anderson Memorial Park Cemetery (6805 Doctor M.L.K. Jr Blvd, Anderson, IN 46013) at 12:30 pm, with interment immediately following. Flowers can be sent to Loose Funeral Home & Crematory (please no roses due to an allergy). If you would like to donate to the funeral funds instead, contact the family.

Jim's family and friends are invited to a memorial dinner following the services at the Timber Creek Club House (1010 Timber Creek Dr, Carmel, IN 46032), at approximately 2 pm.

# Cemetery Details

## Anderson Memorial Park Cemetery & Funeral Needs

6805 Doctor M.L.K. Jr Blvd  
Anderson, IN 46013  
(765) 643-3211

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**MAR 25.** 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Loose Funeral Homes & Crematory  
200 W 53rd St  
Anderson, IN 46013  
(765) 649-5255  
[info@loosecares.com](mailto:info@loosecares.com)

## Service

**MAR 25.** 11:30 AM (ET)

Loose Funeral Homes & Crematory  
200 W 53rd St  
Anderson, IN 46013  
(765) 649-5255  
[info@loosecares.com](mailto:info@loosecares.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of James Maurice Ohler.*



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March 25, 2023 at 09:32 AM



“ *Vivid Recollections was purchased for the family of James Maurice Ohler.*



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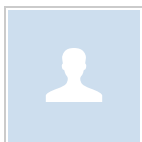
March 24, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *Nicholas and Anya That was a most excellent and detailed obituary with much love. I wish newspaper would have printed that one. It is moving. God Bless you both. Dr. Bruce E. Jones*

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**Dr Bruce E. Jones** - March 22, 2023 at 11:25 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of James Maurice Ohler.*



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March 21, 2023 at 07:12 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of James Maurice Ohler.*



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March 21, 2023 at 04:01 PM