



James "Jim" Gordon Brown

MAR 25, 1938 - JUL 19, 2023



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James "Jim" Gordon Brown, a devoted husband, father and grandfather, passed away on July 19, 2023, after an 8-month battle with complications from a broken femur in November 2022. He is now at eternal rest with our Lord and Heavenly Father. He died peacefully in Lehigh Acres, Fla. He was 85 years old.

Jim was a proud country boy and loved to recall stories of growing up on the family farm in Brooke, Va., fishing, hunting and riding horses. He was a 1956 graduate of Stafford High School and cut a most handsome silhouette as a young man in his felt fedora. He worked at the Virginia State Highway Department for several years before striking out on his own to become an entrepreneur, owning several One Hour Martinizing dry cleaners in Fredericksburg, Woodbridge and Richmond. He was also the owner of a building truss plant in Fredericksburg and served his country in the Army National Guard, based in Fort Knox, Kentucky. After relocating in 1976 to Fort Myers, Fla., he continued in the dry-cleaning business as owner of Fashion Cleaners on Cleveland Avenue. He later worked for Gumdrop Books, traveling and selling books to school system libraries around Florida. He was recognized by the company as being a top salesman.

Above all, Jim was a dedicated family man who worked tirelessly to provide a charmed life for his wife, Ruby, and daughters Kimberly and Karla. He was a remarkable husband who cared for his wife for 15 years after she suffered a devastating stroke. He would take her out to dinners, shopping, and family events, always making sure she looked beautiful, taking special care to pick out the perfect outfit, the right makeup, nail polish and coordinated jewelry. He was surprisingly skillful with a curling iron. And he was a great cook, preparing meals for his daughters when they were young as Ruby worked the late shift as a nurse, then later for himself and Ruby after she was disabled.

As a father, he was the Dad Taxi to endless dance lessons and events, he designed and sewed dance costumes and made sure our clothes were always properly pressed and our shoes polished.



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Jim and Ruby shared a rare and inspiring love story. Their devotion to one another was unconditional. They celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in November, just one week before Jim's life-altering fall. Losing Ruby last March while he was recovering in a rehabilitation facility was devastating to him. He was unable to overcome the grief of losing the love of his life.

Jim had so many friends and never knew a stranger. His charismatic personality and caring for others were always predominate in his character. He was a lifelong member of the Fredericksburg Masonic Lodge No. 4. He had also been a member of the Elks Lodge in Fredericksburg, the Shriners in Fort Myers as well as the Royal Order of Jesters. After moving to Ft. Myers, he took up golf and enjoyed playing along with Ruby and their many neighbors and friends at the Landings, where they lived for many years. Jim and Ruby loved to dance and could cut a rug in many styles -- from square dancing to swing, waltz and rumba. He loved animals and especially cherished his Pomeranian Lucy and made sure she was taken care of by his loving daughters.

Though Jim made a life in Florida with his wife and daughters, he remained a Virginia boy at heart. The Aquia Creek beckoned each summer, where family and friends would gather at his Mom and Dad's place on the Aquia's banks. Jim cherished weekends running the small crab boat up and down the creek with his dad and brother, fishing the traps for blue crabs, cooking them perfectly seasoned over the open fire then piling them high on picnic tables for all to enjoy. There wasn't a more perfect afternoon than talking and laughing with family and friends over freshly steamed crabs and cold beer.

Left to cherish his memory are daughters Kimberly Keenan (Robert) of Naples, Fla., and Karla Brown-Garcia (Pedro) of Des Moines, Ia.; grandchildren Kaitlin Elizabeth Karr and Luke Jameson Garcia; niece Lisa Brown Lim (Mark) of Fredericksburg, Va.; sisters in law Ida Lambrose of Ft. Myers, Fla., and Betty Nolan Kiser of Fredericksburg, Va., and many nieces and nephews. Preceding him in death were his mother, Elsie Brown, father Gustavus Brown Sr., brother Gustavus Brown Jr. and granddaughter Kirsten Elizabeth Karr.

A celebration of life service for both Jim and Ruby will be held at a later date in Fredericksburg, Va.

Memorial contributions can be made in Jim's Honor to:

Ronald McDonald House of Tampa Bay:



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American Stroke Foundation:

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Memories only last if you share them

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



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