



James Richard Downing

January 17, 1929 - June 28, 2022

Jim was a devoted husband, father, educator, camper, world traveler, naturalist, volunteer, and real estate developer.

He lived the first ten years of his life in Bakersfield California. Jim's family moved several times during his young life including Kansas City, Missouri and South Lynwood, California. His interest in learning and inspiration from his teachers motivated him to study and to attend college. He graduated from Compton High School and Compton Junior College before transferring to the University of California, Santa Barbara.

While studying for his BA at UCSB, he met Marguerite Noel, the love of his life for over seventy years. They married on September 9, 1951. After serving as an officer in the Army during the Korean War, he obtained an MA in Education from UCLA. He taught science and social studies during his teaching career of over 30 years. He taught briefly in Torrance, California before teaching at Lincoln Junior High School in Santa Monica until he retired in 1984.

Jim and Marguerite had three children (Janis Holt, Kenneth Downing, and Pamela Noel Hughes). Additionally, Jim had seven grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Jim and his family spent many summers camping all over the United States, Canada and Hawaii. They also made numerous trips to Europe, Asia, and South America.

Throughout his entire life he was involved in numerous community service organizations including the YMCA, Western Youth Baseball, Santa Barbara Botanical Gardens, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and the Goleta

Library. Most notably after he retired from teaching, he ran the Sunset Home, a nonprofit senior retirement home for women in Venice CA under the umbrella of Trinity Baptist Church in Santa Monica for many years.

A memorial will be held on July 19th at 2:00 pm at Veronica Springs Church in Santa Barbara. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUL **19**. 2:00 PM (PT)

Veronica Springs Church
949 Veronica Springs Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

Tribute Wall

MP

“*Mr. Downing was my teacher at Lincoln as a student and a colleague of sorts years later when I returned to do my student teaching with his fellow teacher Clara Smith. In addition to learning so very much from Mr. Downing as a student and as a teacher-in-training, I was fortunate enough to be a dinner guest at his house along with Clara. It was that night that I realized that teachers were humans, too. They were funny and intelligent and warm and so very encouraging. They laughed uproariously, loved one another and loved being alive. Clearly, Mr. Downing did just this for a very, very long time.*

Michael Pardridge - July 17, 2022 at 05:26 PM