



## Mr. James Eldon Pitney

September 7, 1929 - January 23, 2013

Be the first to share your memories or express your condolences in the Guest Book for James Eldon "Jim" Pitney"

Son of Lynn and Zella Pitney, was born at Campbell, Nebraska September 7, 1929, and departed this life on January 23, 2013.

Jim grew up in Webster County Nebraska on a farm where he attended District #41 Rural Elementary School. After graduating from Inavale High School in 1947, he farmed and took great pride in raising Hereford cattle. He served two years in the military police with the U.S. Army in Germany during the Korean War. On August 15, 1954 he was united in marriage to his farm girl sweetheart, Darlene Mahnke.

In 1957 Jim and Darlene left the farm and moved to El Segundo, California where daughter Debra Louise (1958) and son Gary Lynn (1960) were born. Jim started his fire service career with the El Segundo Fire Department in April 1959, promoting to captain in 1968 and retiring as a fire suppression battalion chief in December, 1984. Jim enjoyed helping people and found the work of a firefighter suited him well. He developed life-long friendships with his fellow firefighters and took with him the wonderful memories and great stories from those years in El Segundo.

Jim and Darlene moved to Escondido, California in 1985. Living there for 14 years, they were very active in square dancing and made many wonderful friends from all over the country. Jim and Darlene developed a love for baseball and became loyal San Diego Padre baseball fans during the Tony Gwynn years, which included attending a World Series game in 1998. They also started a most enjoyable part of their lives, traveling part time in their motor home for 17 years throughout the USA, Canada and Alaska.

Tugging at their heartstrings, grandchildren Ethan James (1996), and Julie Deene (1997) were the reason for Jim and Darlene's move to Santa Barbara in 1999. Their first purchase when they moved to Santa Barbara was a bunk bed so their grandchildren could

spend the night with them. Not wanting to miss any of the action, Jim and Darlene could be seen cheering for all the T-ball, soccer, and roller hockey games and never missed a family birthday or holiday celebration. August 15, 2004 was an important day in Jim and Darlene's lives. Surrounded by the family they loved, they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

Jim enjoyed popular music of the 40's and 50's and was very good at remembering titles and words from the songs of that era. One of his favorite memories was playing "Name That Tune" at the Santa Barbara First United Methodist Church's annual pancake supper. Jim was an active member of the church. His service to God could be witnessed through the friendships he developed and his eagerness to help others.

Jim was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He enjoyed baking cookies and breads with his wife Darlene and helping his kids and grandkids with school reports and home improvement projects. Always the first to work and last to quit (remember, he was a farmer), Jim enjoyed sharing his life experiences and telling stories while he worked.

Preceding him in death are his parents, sister Marilyn Beth and Phyllis Ann, and beloved daughter Debra Louise.

Loved ones who will cherish precious memories are his wife Darlene, son Gary and his wife Laurie, and grandchildren Ethan James and Julie Deene Pitney of Santa Barbara. Jim is fondly remembered by his brother Kenneth Pitney and wife Gwendolyn. Also, his niece Penny Cline, and her husband Gary, their son Jeremy and wife Bobi, and their children Chloe and Seth, in the San Diego area.

Jim will be greatly missed by other relatives, neighbors, friends and all who knew him. Jim had a love for others that showed in his smile and warm handshake or hug. Jim's family finds comfort knowing that his daughter Debbie was waiting to greet him

A celebration of Jim's life will be held at the First United Methodist Church located at 305 E. Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101 (805) 963-3579 on Saturday, February 2nd at 11:00 A.M. A light lunch will follow. Jim is at rest in the beautiful Crystal Cathedral Memorial Gardens at Garden Grove, CA. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Jim's name to the Santa Barbara First United Methodist Church. To share a memory or send a condolence to the family, visit [www.wrhsb.com](http://www.wrhsb.com)

Arrangements entrusted to Welch-Ryce-Haider Funeral Chapels.



# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

FEB 2. 11:00 AM (PT)

First United Methodist Church  
305 E. Anapamu Str.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

# Tribute Wall

BB

“ Miss Mahnke was how I knew you as my K-1st-2nd grade teacher at District #61 in Guide Rock. How I loved you and couldn't wait to be at school to see what new and fun things we were going to be doing. A lot of years have passed since then, and by reading your husband's life story in the "Red Cloud Chief," I can see you had a very fulfilling life with him. That means you and your family have a million good memories tucked away in the recesses of your hearts to remember him by. That is the way it should be!

*In case I never thanked you, I thank you now for the important influence you were in my life. Truth be told, I followed you in the teaching profession. I taught 32 years here in Iowa before retiring in 2001.*

*May peace and God's blessings be with you and all your family at this most sad time. Thoughts, prayers, love, and big hugs are coming your way. Barbara Haller Butcher*

---

**Barbara Haller Butcher** - February 22, 2013 at 06:51 PM

LP

“ My prayers are with you Darlene and family in the loss of your husband. I too lost my sister Wanda on the 23rd of January of this year. I was your flower girl at your wedding. You were my kindergarten teacher at District #61 in Guide Rock, Nebraska. I am still working at the courthouse in Red Cloud. I have thought about you many times through the years. My name is Louise (Liz) Fausch Petsch. God Be With You All.

---

**Louise Fausch Petsch** - February 07, 2013 at 01:41 PM

JP

“ My prayers are with the Pitney family on Jim's passing into his next life and feel the memories he helped make will be remembered by all. I recently stopped by the farm in Webster County that Jim grew up on. I remember as a youngster playing out in the barnyard while he was out doing chores.  
May time and love bring you peace.  
Janice Pitney

---

**Janice Pintey** - February 01, 2013 at 06:45 PM

DR

“ My condolences to the Pitney family on the passing of Jim. I did not have the honor of meeting him but, did work with Gary. From his obituary it sounds like Jim had a great fire service career and a full and rich retirement. My son, who is also a firefighter, sent me a placard which reads, “the greatest compliment a son can give is to follow in his father’s footsteps,” and Gary is doing that.

*Sincerely*

*Richard Ribar SBFDF retired*

---

**Dick Ribar** - January 29, 2013 at 02:23 PM