



## James "Jim" Norman Gilliam

July 6, 1942 - May 8, 2026

James (Jim) Norman Gilliam, 83, of Franklin, Tennessee, peacefully passed away at home on May 8, 2026, surrounded by loved ones, from complications associated with Alzheimer's.

James was born on July 6, 1942, to Isaac Howard and Lula Mae (Loveless) Gilliam in the small town of Manchester, Tennessee. After graduating from Hickman County High School in 1960, James went on to study Electrical Engineering at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, graduating in 1964.

Upon graduation from Vanderbilt, James began his career at Nashville Electric Service. He went on to work at the Arnold Engineering Development Complex at Arnold Air Force Base in Tullahoma, where he worked on the Apollo and Saturn Space Programs from 1966 to 1974. Longing to be back in the "big city," James moved his family back to the Nashville area, settling in Brentwood. Eventually, James' career path led him to Barge, Waggoner, Sumner & Cannon (now known as Barge), where he led the electrical engineering team and mentored countless others, served on the Board of Directors, and retired as Vice President. James absolutely loved what he did for a living, and was passionate about the engineering field, even serving as President of the Tennessee Society of Professional Engineers.

James had many hobbies and passions in life, especially Vanderbilt basketball

and football, Tennessee Titans football, music, and golf. He created many fond memories around these events, with family and friends.

No matter how you knew James, Jim, Dad, or Grandad, you knew his generous heart and the kindness he showed to everyone. He was often quiet, but when he spoke, people listened; his words carried pearls of wisdom and felt like a gift. He was always there for his family, even before they realized they needed him. James had an easy way of imparting knowledge, advice and guidance, while providing a safe space to make life decisions. Above all, he gave unconditional love and support to his family and friends.

He is survived by his wife, Carolyn (Blackwell) Gilliam, sons Jim (Caryn) Gilliam of Tarpon Springs, Florida and Greg (Kelly) Gilliam of College Grove, Tennessee from his first marriage to Linda (Baker) Gilliam, grandchildren Jake (Annabel) Gilliam of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Gavin Gilliam of Tarpon Springs, Florida, Grayson Gilliam of College Grove, Tennessee, great-grandson Baxter Gilliam of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, brother Lonnie (Marilyn) Gilliam of Centerville, Tennessee, and sister Patricia Skelton of Centerville, Tennessee. James was preceded in death by his parents, Howard and Lula Mae Gilliam.

He is also survived by stepchildren Tracy (Brian) Rivers, Stacia (Dewayne) Dean, and Ginger Blackwell. Stepgrandchildren Justin, Cooper, Kennedy, Kristen, Gage, Jordin, Somara, and step great grand-children Nevaeh, Caysen and Kieran.

Jake Gilliam, Gavin Gilliam, Grayson Gilliam, Jon Gilliam, John Gromos, Brett Skelton and Cooper Dean will serve as pallbearers. Ken Todd, Pat Tichenor and Steve Putney will serve as honorary pallbearers.

The family would also like to thank his exceptional and compassionate

caregivers: Debbie Passmore, Angela Vaccaro and Patricia Sanders, as well as the Heart'n Soul Hospice team.

Visitation and services will be held at McDonald Funeral Home in Centerville, Tennessee on May 15, 2026, from 10am to 12pm, followed by interment at Memorial Gardens in Centerville. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Alzheimer's Association.

# Cemetery Details

## Memory Gardens

2833 Highway 100 E  
Centerville, TN 37033

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 15. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

McDonald Funeral Home, Inc. - Hickman County  
102 West End Ave.  
Centerville, TN 37033  
(931) 729-3561

## Funeral Service

MAY 15. 12:00 PM (CT)

McDonald Funeral Home, Inc. - Hickman County  
102 West End Ave.  
Centerville, TN 37033  
(931) 729-3561

# Tribute Wall



“ Ronald Gammons lit a candle in memory of James "Jim" Gilliam



Ronald Gammons - May 30 at 03:43 PM



“ We will miss Jim. He was kind, generous, fun and funny - a good person and a wonderful friend. Sending condolences to Carolyn, Jim, Greg and their families and wishing them peace, Steve and Linda Putney

Linda Putney - May 17 at 04:46 PM



“ Jeany and Randy have a candle lit ❤️



Jeany Perry - May 15 at 08:47 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



McDonald Funeral Home, Inc - May 15 at 12:51 PM

DS

“ I'm sorry for your loss. Prayers for his family.  
May you have comfort, strength and peace in  
the coming days.



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**Debbie Semore** - May 15 at 08:35 AM

JH

“ Joanie Stewart Holtsford lit a candle in  
memory of James "Jim" Gilliam



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**Joanie Stewart Holtsford** - May 14 at 07:05 PM

SG

“ Stanley & Judy Gordon lit a candle in memory  
of James "Jim" Gilliam



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**Stanley & Judy Gordon** - May 14 at 09:48 AM

JB

“ June bowen lit a candle in memory of James  
"Jim" Gilliam



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**June bowen** - May 13 at 11:30 PM

RS

“ We both are thinking of u.

Regina & Martha Shelton - May 13 at 07:26 PM

RH

“ We are thinking of u.

Ruby & Rex Horner - May 13 at 07:25 PM



“ Loveless Carole lit a candle in memory of James "Jim" Gilliam



Loveless Carole - May 13 at 02:44 PM

MB

“ Michael Bates sent a virtual gift in memory of James "Jim" Gilliam



Michael Bates - May 13 at 10:09 AM

RM

“ Roy. & Sharon McCoy lit a candle in memory of James "Jim" Gilliam



Roy. & Sharon McCoy - May 12 at 09:48 PM

BM

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with Carolyn and the family.*



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**Bobby/Sandy McFarlin** - May 12 at 09:08 PM

ES

“ *Ed and Melinda Sullivan lit a candle in memory of James "Jim" Gilliam*



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**Ed and Melinda Sullivan** - May 12 at 06:59 PM