



James A. Barys

December 30, 1947 - November 4, 2019

OAKHAM – James A. Barys, 71, passed away on Monday, November 4, 2019 at UMass Memorial Healthcare – University Campus after an illness. He was born in Holden, the son of Walter R. and Ruth E. (Burns) Barys and had lived in Oakham the past 41 years.

Jim earned his bachelor's degree from Colby College and his master's degree from Clark University. He began teaching math at Wachusett Regional in 1970, left to serve in the army from January 1971 to April 1972, then returned to Wachusett until 2000. For the next 13 years Jim taught math at the Mass Academy of Math and Science in Worcester. Jim instructed kettle bell classes at Stronger Personal Fitness in Worcester, he enjoyed working in his garden, hiking, paddle boarding, traveling, reading and spending time with family and friends.

He leaves his wife of 42 years, Elizabeth (Zukas) Barys; his daughter, Julia Chavez and her husband, Robert of Tucson, AZ; and his son, Mitchell Barys of Worcester.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Jim's family on Sunday, November 10th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Miles Funeral Home, 1158 Main Street, Holden.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Appalachian Mountain Club, 10 City Square, Suite 2, Boston, MA 02129.

To share a memory or offer an online condolence, please visit the "Tribute Wall" on this page.

Events

NOV **Visitation** 11:00AM - 02:00PM

10

Miles Funeral Home

1158 Main Street (Rte. 122A), Holden, MA, US, 01520

Comments



“ I had Mr. Barys for Geometry when I was a junior. While his teaching style and my learning style didn't mesh well, he taught me that no one is ever hopeless, that through patience, understanding and perseverance, you can be successful, and to think outside the box. I have shared this will the hundreds of students I've taught over the past 30 years. Thanks, Jim, for helping me to be a better teacher. Memory eternal.

B - November 10, 2019 at 04:26 PM



“ never had him at WRHS but knew him and will miss him was a great person & teacher.. RIP mr barys

Erik S Olsen - November 10, 2019 at 03:25 PM



“ Robert Le purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of James A. Barys.



Robert Le - November 10, 2019 at 11:53 AM



“ We are so sorry for your loss. Cherish the wonderful memories. May God be with you today and always. May he rest in peace. God bless him and all of you.

Eileen Chavez - November 10, 2019 at 10:36 AM



“ Whenever someone says they don't like math I know it's because they didn't have Mr. Barys as a teacher. He fundamentally changed how I interpret the world and I'm eternally grateful. My condolences to his family and friends.

Christopher Hamel - November 09, 2019 at 04:16 PM



“ We are deeply saddened by the news of Jim's passing. My wife and son were fortunate enough to meet Jim at some of the reunions and they always enjoyed his company and looked forward to the next one. He was a good friend, and always had a smile on his face. Our most sincere sympathy and condolences to Liz and the family.

Steven & Patsy Bailey

Steven Bailey - November 09, 2019 at 03:45 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Steven Bailey - November 09, 2019 at 03:10 PM



“ 5 files added to the album Memories Album



Steven Bailey - November 09, 2019 at 01:00 PM



“ I was privileged to care for his kids, they loved him dearly. Jim loved to tell stories about his kids. Adults asking about the difficulties of raising kids who spoke no English, he would laugh and say that at their young age this was not a problem, children that young rarely spoke any language that anyone understood. Jim loved his greenhouses and gardens, they were absolutely beautiful, he enjoyed trying anything new that he could brag about. When our new family came to live with us , they were excited to be able to swim in their new pool, he wanted them to share in all the good things they had been blessed with. He had an infectious laugh and he and Liz had a storybook romance. When we left Oakham we left behind a family that were an example of love, caring and that loved each other with a special love. We shall all miss you Jim, thank you for your messages when Herman was struggling with his illness, you were a true example of a loving, caring friend!

Nana Spinney and Hum - November 09, 2019 at 11:14 AM



“ Our deepest sympathy to Jim’s wife, daughter, son and family. We took Jim’s Kettle bell classes for the past 5 years and he spoke of you all often with such love . We heard about your hikes and vacations and adventures and how enjoyed it all. He will be so truly missed by us and the rest of kettle bell crew - Jim is our “King of Swing”.
Peace ,
Brian and Beth Crowley

beth Crowley - November 09, 2019 at 06:26 AM



“ My deepest sympathies to your family. Mr Barys was a memorable teach with such a passion for math and teaching and inspired a lot of us in high school At Mass Academy. He will be missed.

Jyothi A - November 08, 2019 at 06:19 PM



“ I was privileged to have Jim Barys as teacher at Mass Academy. Through his compassionate and challenging style I learned to always believe I was capable of more. His passion lives on in the love of learning and math that he spread to students like me. I feel so blessed to have been impacted by his commitment to excellent teaching.

Maayan - November 08, 2019 at 08:42 AM



“ Mr. Barys was such an awesome teacher. I have nothing but good memories of him. I remember the Mac computers in his classroom (which weren't super common back in the early 2000s) and doing math problems while he played classical music in the background. I remember him having a Yoga ball chair that I thought so cool and ended getting one several years later in the workplace. He had such great energy, and he instilled confidence and belief in his students. We are all fortunate to have had him as a teacher. Thank you Mr. Barys.

hoai doan - November 07, 2019 at 11:30 PM



“ My heart goes out to Mr. Barys' loved ones, family, friends and all the students whose lives he made the merrier. I truly adored him as a teacher; and I will never forget the one time I went to school really sick and had accidentally taken nyquil in the day time and he let me sleep it off (after falling asleep for a long while at my desk). He made learning fun and he always brought a smile to my days at MA. A great person, I am so glad I got to have him as a teacher.

Alissa Marguerite - November 07, 2019 at 11:06 PM



“ Mr Barys was my teacher at Mass Academy in 2004 and was a truly beloved teacher by all. He was a passionate educator and inspired us to think outside the box. His enthusiasm was contagious and he was an approachable mentor. He has inspired so many students in his years of teaching. I am saddened to hear of his passing and send my thoughts to his loved ones.

Ashley

Ashley Farrington - November 07, 2019 at 09:48 PM



“ Jim Barys inspired me so much to up my math educator game! While working with him as a visiting scholar, I discovered how much growth I had to do to develop as a teacher. Just today, I was helping students in a community college by using methods he used to teach functions, so I can say his impact on others is present always!

A.J. Stachelek - November 07, 2019 at 08:48 PM



“ So very sorry Liz, Julia and Mitchell, for the loss of your beloved Jim. He was a sweet man. I will remember how much he loved his family, his summers working outside, his swimming pool (with no fence!) We will fondly remember him. Sue Volungis

Sue Volungis - November 07, 2019 at 05:20 PM



“ I am so, so sorry for your loss. I loved Jim - he was a great teacher, he inspired me and shared so much with me, so selflessly. Like so many others, my life is immeasurably richer for having known him. I am grateful beyond words for that.

Cathy Nicastro - November 07, 2019 at 05:00 PM



“ I'm very sorry for your loss Liz and family Jim was always so nice to me when I worked at Wachusett High School Take care and God Bless Joan Palmer

joan s palmer - November 07, 2019 at 03:32 PM



“ Mr. Barys was one of my favorite teachers in all of my schooling. He had high expectations and made you work to your potential. He taught us that while answers may be "clear" based on the steps laid out, they're not always "obvious" and shouldn't be claimed to be such. After getting into my top choice college in no small part due to his recommendation, I promised I'd take him out for a beer when I came of age to celebrate. I'm sad to have missed my chance to do so. My condolences to Mr. Barys's family and loved ones. He will be remembered fondly, and he will be missed.

Amanda (Olender) Jenks

Amanda Jenks - November 07, 2019 at 12:31 PM



“ Mr. Jim Barys was a man I'll always deeply respect. He had a passionate way of teaching and a great ability to make a student understand the process of finding an answer. But most of all I'll remember his humor and his ability to hold me accountable. I once gave an sarcastic answer to a math question, he took off his sandal and threw it at me. Not in anger or violence but in a silly sort of way that gave him control of room. He knew how to keep things light. It is his type of levity that I try to bring with me whenever I tutor kids. Bless you and thank you, Mr. Barys.

Ben Larrivee

Ben Larrivee - November 07, 2019 at 11:04 AM



“ Mr Barys was the most outstanding teacher I've ever had the privilege of being taught by. He balanced a loving humor with a sense of academic purpose, rigor and challenge that brought out the best in myself and so many of my classmates. He taught with great patience (needed for our class at times) and enthusiasm, and I hope he knew how much we appreciated him. He was a truly unique and wonderful person.

David

David Merritt - November 07, 2019 at 10:39 AM



“ Jim Barys is the math teacher who challenged me the most as a student academically. Perhaps more importantly though are the life lessons that I learned from him - that education should be personalized for each individual student, that we all bring different strengths to the table and that your personal best is what you should always put forward. He touched many lives over his teaching career and the lessons he taught live on in all of us. Thirteen years into my own teaching career, I do my best to teach these same life lessons to my students and I am thankful everyday that Jim Barys taught them to me.

Sarah Leshay - November 07, 2019 at 10:31 AM



“ James Barys fundamentally changed my outlook on math, learning, and life for the better. I have never enjoyed math as much as I did when he was my teacher junior year of high school. I think in large part I went into teaching trying to help other students have a similar experience. I will be forever grateful for his compassion, advise, and teaching me how to learn. I am deeply saddened to know I won't get a chance to thank him in person. My condolences to his family and friends.

Shawn - November 07, 2019 at 10:07 AM



“ I am so sorry to hear about Mr. Barys! I graduated WRHS in 1989 and I have such great memories of him. In fact, I was just talking to my kids about him and how he was when we had to take our math tests--you didn't know an answer on the test? Sure you did--and he made you realize that, and prompted you with a different way of approaching the problem. Amazing that I can so vividly remember that about him after all these years! So approachable and a funny, great guy. My sincere condolences to his family. xo
Tabitha (Ovanes) Karch

tabitha - November 07, 2019 at 06:42 AM



“ I was lucky to have been taught by Mr. Barys when I was at Mass Academy. Beyond creating a progressive and forward-thinking learning environment that all of his students loved, Jim was an incredibly compassionate human being who really cared for his students. I'm not alone in saying that Jim fundamentally changed the way that we thought about education and learning.

Sincerely,
Prasant

Prasant L - November 06, 2019 at 10:12 PM



“ The leader of our kettlebell family each Tuesday and Thursday night, Jim proved himself to be a humble and encouraging coach and friend. I will miss his support and leadership, and will be forever grateful that our paths crossed.

Donna Williams - November 06, 2019 at 07:37 PM



“ So many thoughts and memories around Jim- all of them positive.His ready smile, his energy and willingness to try new adventures. So many meals and good times together with both Jim and Liz; conversations from politics to plants. While missing Jim, we cherish the memories. Our deepest sympathies are with Liz, Mitchell and Julia.

Cheryl Houston - November 06, 2019 at 05:18 PM



“ Jim and I were colleagues at Wachusett for many years. He was an excellent teacher, who was respected by students,parents and all staff members.He was a friendly,upbeat,helpful,smiling colleague. He stepped forward when our teachers Association was doing a fund raiser. We performed.the musical, Little Mary Sunshine and he played the Indian villain. He was terrific! Liz and family ,my deepest condolences-Jim was simply ,one of the good guys!

Louis J Cornacchioli - November 06, 2019 at 04:24 PM



“ Jim was the first person I met at Ft Sill Okla , in April 1971. I was 23 he was 22. We later were joined by other brothers of the 85th artillery det. We were nuke warhead specialists in Germany 1972! A good guy, fond memories!

John Francoeur Adrian Mi - November 06, 2019 at 03:08 PM



“

Liz,

I am so sorry for your loss. May the love and many wonderful memories that you shared bring you, and your family, comfort today and always. Sending you love and prayers of comfort.

Sincerely,
Julie Scott

Julie Scott - November 06, 2019 at 02:38 PM



“

To Liz and family

I had the pleasure of hiring Jim at the Mass Academy and working with him for over 13 years. An outstanding teacher who challenged the brightest and best in the area. I enjoyed my time with Jim both professionally and personally learning so much from his love of mathematics. He was a genuinely good guy with do much to offer. My wife and I send our condolences and prayers to the family.

Bob Salvatelli - November 06, 2019 at 04:35 PM



“

He was a wonderful teacher. I was in the class of 1980 and loved his math class. He tried keeping us out of trouble and made learning fun. Condolences and prayers to his family.

Kathy Kush Warner - November 07, 2019 at 08:40 AM



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To Liz and family ,

Jim was like a big brother to me. I enjoyed our time competing as mixed doubles water skiing when I was around 10 years old. Throughout the years we have remained friends. I will miss his huge smile, laughter and love of life. He will be so missed. My love goes out to you Liz and your children. I send love and prayers.

Wendy White Bowen

Wendy White Bowen - November 07, 2019 at 12:51 PM



“

Dear Liz and family,

Such a lose of a wonderful man, great father and loving husband.

Jim could light up a room with his smile and bring out the best in you with his genuine interest in your life. Don and I always received his warmest greetings. We know he was loved because he shared so much love. God bless his journey and keep his family safe and wrapped in the love of friends and extended family.

We will miss you, Jim.

Don and Melanie Donegan

Melanie Donegan - November 07, 2019 at 05:41 PM



“

I was a student of Mr. Barys at Mass Academy in 2002. During our school orientation, every teacher was asked to introduce themselves to the class. As I recall he said to us in his intro that his job was "to teach my students how they learn, and help them understand how they can learn better." That simple message has resonated with me throughout the years. My condolences to the Barys family on their loss. His wisdom lives on through the many lives he helped to enrich. - Syam M.

Syam Mohan - November 07, 2019 at 09:57 PM



“ My favorite math teacher of all time. (WRHS class of 1980) I have often thought fondly of him over the years and credit him for my love of math leading to a data focused career. My sincere condolences to his family.

kathy (welsh) stiles - November 10, 2019 at 09:12 PM



“ As a student of WRHS, I had the privilege of having both Jim Barys and Liz Zukas as my teachers. They both taught me more than math or child study. They taught compassion, grace, respect and so much more. I was one of the lucky ones to watch Mr. Barys courting Ms. Zukas and watched them fall in love. A true gentleman! May the memories his family has keep his spirit alive within them. God bless his family!

Jeanne

Jeanne - November 11, 2019 at 11:04 AM