

In Memoriam



James D. Witt

February 29, 1944—May 23, 2020



James D. Witt was born February 29, 1944 to Wendell D. (Red) Witt and Jean E. (Jones) Witt in Aberdeen, South Dakota. The family moved to the Black Hills in 1945. Jim attended grade school in Pluma, graduating from Deadwood High School in 1962. He attended college for two years in Arkansas and worked in the Homestake Mine for two years before entering the United States Army in 1966. Jim served in Vietnam, earning the Bronze Star, and returned from service in 1968. He met the love of his life Bonnie Tieszen shortly after his return and they were wed in 1969, living in Watertown, Pierre, and Spearfish.

Jim attended Lake Area Vocational School in 1968-1969. He returned to college, graduating in 1973 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering at South Dakota State University. Jim worked for Scott Engineering, owned Rich Port Construction for many years and later worked for Morris, Inc., and RCS Construction, retiring at age 73. He enjoyed spending time with family, camping, hunting, and golfing. He was a well known face around the poker tables in Deadwood, infamous for his Texas Hold-em hand, 6-4.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, brother, Jerry Witt; and brother-in-law, William Parks. He is survived by his loving wife Bonnie; son, Michael (Justine) Witt, Vashon, WA; and daughters, Heather (Tad) Brewer, and Shelly (Derek) Nisly, both of Spearfish, SD; Jim was loved by his grandchildren, Krystina (Josh) Jones, Kaileen (Tony) Osmany, Kody Nisly, Jacob, Logan and Griffin Brewer, and Keelin Witt, and great grandson, Desmond Rashad Osmany. He was also survived by his brother, Gary (Sue) Witt, Lead, SD; and sister, Donna Parks, Overland Park, KS; and many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, May 30 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm at 19978 Gobbler Rd in Spearfish. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the family requests all guests wear a mask and practice social distancing. Jim will be inurned with full military honors at Black Hills National Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in Jim's honor to the Spearfish Veterans' Monument (www.spearfishveteransmonument.org).