



James I. Smith

October 17, 1922 - January 12, 2020

Dateline: Alton

J. I. Smith, age 97 of Alton, Illinois died Sunday, January 12, 2020 at his daughter's residence surrounded by his family in Greensboro, Ga. He was born October 17, 1922 at 920 Riley Ave, Alton, Illinois. J.I. was the only son of James Pierce and Lena Elizabeth (Erthal) Skaggs. His father died in a local industrial accident in 1927. His mother then married Ross Hardy Smith of Hartford, who adopted him. Both his parents preceded him in death.

He married Marjory Muriel Farmer of Wood River in St. Charles, Missouri in 1942. She preceded him in death in 1985. They had one son, Michael L. Smith, of St. Peters, MO (Mary Ann Fahrner) who preceded him in death in 2016 and one daughter, Connie L. Slusher (Carroll W. Slusher) of Reynolds Lake Oconee, Greensboro, Ga. There are five grandchildren, Cory L. Slusher, Charlotte, N.C., Cristan R. Strickland, Greensboro, Ga., Lori Ann Morrison, St. Peters, Mo., Michael James Smith, Kirkwood, Mo., Jennifer L. Crane, St. Peters, Mo., and 11 great grandchildren. His late life companion of many years, Genevieve Nash, preceded him in death in 2013.

J.I. attended St. Patrick's Grade School, Alton High School, University of Illinois, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, and Texas A&M. In his early years he learned the Baking Trade at Alton Baking and Ice Cream Co. He entered the Army in 1942 and was stationed at Camp Roberts, California. He joined the Shell Oil Company as an Operating Engineer at The Wood

River Refinery in 1944. He started as a “Flunky” in the Utilities Dept. He worked in eight operating departments at various assignments and retired as Process Manager in the Aromatics Department, HOP, after 45 years and 45 days of service. Of particular note: He was a major force in the construction and startup of the Kerosene Extraction Unit (KEU) in HOP that produced the High-Altitude Jet Fuel that allowed the U-2 Spy Plane to fly safely above any Russian anti-aircraft fire.

He was high spirited and determined in everything he set about to accomplish. He lived in Alton, Wood River and Godfrey all his life. He was a lifelong Catholic attending St. Ambrose Catholic Church since 1975. He was a collector of sorts with many interests. He was active in Softball, Bowling, and Golf. He traveled extensively in the United States, Mexico and Canada. He loved boating, hunting, fishing, traveling and camping. In 1959 he took his family on a camping trip to Alaska over the then graveled Alcan Highway. He maintained a summer fishing camp on Lake Osakis in Minnesota where he spent many days fishing with longtime friends. He fished in just about every state in the Union, especially liked to fish for Crappie, Bass, and King Salmon. After his retirement he loved to work on his “Hobby Farm” in Delhi, Ill. He was a member of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, A Charter Member of “The Legion of One Thousand” at St Anthony’s, The American Legion Post 0794 of East Alton, The Godfrey Knights of Columbus, Council 7804, The Alton Eagles, Aerie No 254, The Alton- Wood River Sportsman Club, The Wood River Moose, A charter member of the B & B Fishing Federation out of Houston, Texas. An American Red Cross “VIP” Blood Donor and 23-year member of The Newman Country Club.

Visitation will be from 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. followed by a Mass of Christian burial at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, January 18, 2020 at St. Ambrose Catholic Church in Godfrey. Father Steven Janoski will officiate. Burial will be at Valhalla Memorial Park in Godfrey. Gent Funeral Home in Alton is in charge of arrangements. Online guestbook and information may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Valhalla Memorial Park

2308 W. Delmar Ave.
Godfrey, IL 62035

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 18. 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM (CT)

St. Ambrose Catholic Church
820 West Homer Adams Pkway
Godfrey, IL 62035

Mass of Christian Burial

JAN 18. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Ambrose Catholic Church
820 West Homer Adams Pkway
Godfrey, IL 62035

Tribute Wall



“ *James I. Smith*

January 28, 2023 at 10:19 AM



“ *James I. Smith*

January 28, 2023 at 08:19 AM

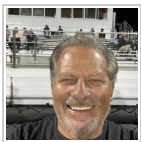


“ *One of my best memories of J. I. (Jim) is from a fish fry he hosted at the farm. He shared the fish he had caught in Wisconsin and prepared them in his special recipe batter. He fed a lot of Fahrners that day and provided the site for a lot of kids to enjoy fishing and running around.*

I am sorry I was not in town to attend the funeral today. Charlie was even further out of town than I was: he is serving on a construction mission trip in Honduras. I hope the day was one of spending special time with family and sharing good memories.

Bonnie Fahrner

Bonnie Fahrner - January 18, 2020 at 09:52 PM



“ *I only knew JI for only 10 years, he was a remarkable man.... You remain the same except for the people you meet and books you read.*

Dan Belter - January 16, 2020 at 09:35 PM

WF

“ Thoughts and Prayers are with his family. He was our next door neighbor at Lake Osakis at Two Mile Campground. Always looked forward to his and Genny's arrival and later years just him. Last summer was the 1st summer he missed and he drove up by himself and we worried about him. He said that was why he never told anyone when he was coming for sure. Very intelligent and independent soul. Great guy and he will be missed.
Wanda and Owen Fonken

Wanda Fonken - January 16, 2020 at 03:11 PM

JB

“ We always looked forward to spring when JI would come to his camper in Osakis. He always had words of wisdom to share with me on parenting. Loved visiting with him and Genny we really miss him.
Rest In Peace good friend

Love. Scott and janel Baker

Janel Baker - January 15, 2020 at 09:49 PM

DW

“ I worked with J. I. for many years when the plant was Shell Oil Co. He was an extremely dedicated employee. Always demanding the best from his personnel and expected the best from the maintenance personnel from Engineering Field Dept. where I worked as a Maintenance Manager. He will surely do some reorganizing in his part of Heaven, and guess what, he will succeed in making his part better. A fantastic human being!!!

Dick Webb

Dick Webb - January 15, 2020 at 08:15 PM