



James Gerard Burke

November 9, 1937 - February 19, 2016

James G Burke age 78 of Dixon died peacefully Friday Feb. 19, 2016 at his home. He was born Nov. 9, 1937 in Rockford the son of James J and Mary Agnes (Donovan) Burke. He had owned and operated Burke Realty in Dixon for over 40 years.

Jim served 3 terms on the Dixon City Council from 1967 to 1979 and served 4 terms as Mayor of Dixon from 1999 to 2015. He was a founding member of the Dixon River Front project, of which he was immensely proud. He loved the town of Dixon and was its biggest promoter; "we can do that in Dixon" was often said. During Jim's tenure as Mayor 19 different boards were created including the Arts & Cultural Affairs Commission, Reagan Trail Committee, Veterans Memorial Commission and the Dixon Veterans Memorial Commission Museum Board to name a few. In addition Jim worked closely with and or assisted 28 different organizations and projects for the betterment of Dixon including the Bus Center, Dixon Welcome Center, I-39 Logistics Corridor Association, Lee County Industrial Development Association, Streetscape Program, and Dixon Sister Cities.

Jim was an avid reader and enjoyed having coffee and conversation at Books on First. He enjoyed his daily walks, no matter how hot or cold it was.

The highlight of every spring was the annual trek to the Morel Festival in Muscoda, WI. Sometimes hunted, but mostly bought, it was always a good time of drinks, music, laughter and the infamous rummage sales.

He was a "Reagan Democrat" and had a fierce love of politics. He always saw

the inherent good in people, respected and listened to their opinions; well 99.9% of them anyway.

He was a loving husband and father. He thought a lot of his family and enjoyed fixing breakfast and lunch for them in the park. The grandchildren were his pride and joy and he loved every minute he spent with them. He was a true Irishman with a twinkle in his eye, a story to tell, and a great sense of humor. He loved to travel; Ireland, Africa, Germany, Italy, Martinique, Mexico, Panama, Alaska, all over the U.S. and was able to attend Democratic Conventions and Inaugurations.

Jim married Lucy Gugerty Aug. 23, 1958 at St Patrick Catholic Church in Dixon.

He is survived by his wife, children Bradley (Debra) Burke of Dixon, James J Burke of Dunedin, FL, Laura (Steve Brazeau) Burke of Green Bay, WI, Christine (Jim) Jones of Nachusa, 4 grandchildren, Bradley (Stacy Braddy) Burke, Blake (Sarah Wypasek) Burke, Elizabeth Jones and Ashley Jones, 1 brother Edward Burke of Sparks, NV and 1 sister JoAnn Guthrie of Dixon.

He was preceded in death by his parents, brother Donald Burke, sister Maureen Atwood and a sister in infancy, brothers in law Alan Atwood and Bill Guthrie.

At Jims request a private service will be held at a later date. The family would like for everyone to remember the fun and good times they had with Jim. He was dearly loved, highly respected, and will be missed terribly.

Cemetery Details

Oakwood

416 S Dement Ave
Dixon, IL 61021

Tribute Wall



“ *James Gerard Burke*

October 08, 2023 at 11:30 AM



“ *James Gerard Burke*

December 31, 2022 at 02:40 AM

CR

“ Jim was always so well liked by so many! One of our fondest memories of him was watching the first man walk on the moon. The Burkes were our neighbors at the time and they invited some neighbors in for the big event! Jim loved Dixon, loved his family, and always had a smile for everyone! He will be missed by all of the people in Dixon. He was such an asset to our community! We send our deepest condolences to his entire family!

o

CAROL ROCK - March 22, 2016 at 12:25 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of James Gerard Burke.



February 26, 2016 at 10:14 AM

L1

“ *Enjoyed working with him both on his campaign and in the fight to save Mabley. He was a kind and warm person. He did a lot for this city, many with few accolades. Rest in peace! Linda LeBlanc-Parks. AFSCME Local 172*

linda leblanc-parks AFSCME Local 172 - February 24, 2016 at 09:49 AM

LW

“ *Jimmy was one of the first people I met when I moved to Dixon in the 70s. He never forgot that history and always made us feel special whenever we saw him. So sad not to hear that laugh again, Linda and Greg Wegner*

Linda Wegner - February 23, 2016 at 03:15 PM



“ *Jim and I served on many committees together over the years. He was always enthusiastic and energetic. I am a better person for having known him. My condolences to Lucy and family.*

Ann Lewis - February 23, 2016 at 01:46 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of James Gerard Burke.*



February 23, 2016 at 11:40 AM

RW

“ Jim, you will be greatly missed! Thank you for the new life you brought to Dixon! Thank you for your great appreciation for my work. May the angels lead you to paradise. Rita Van Wassenhove and family.

Rita Van Wassenhove - February 22, 2016 at 08:54 PM

JG

“ so many stories, happy memories and oh so many laughs we shared as siblings. No one could top his optimistic outlook on life. The only thing he disliked was negativity. I will miss you Bro Jimmy. He was fond of giving nicknames to people he knew. Mine was Jansky and only he knows how he made that out of the name Jo Ann

joann guthrie - February 22, 2016 at 06:52 PM

AL

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Ann Lewis - February 22, 2016 at 03:48 PM

SB

“ Steve Brazeau and Family Bobbi & Brenda purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of James Gerard Burke.



Steve Brazeau and Family Bobbi & Brenda - February 22, 2016 at 11:46 AM

KS

“ My most heartfelt sympathy to the entire family of this wonderful man who I was blessed to call my friend. Jim would always remind me that "there are two sides to every story". I think about that every time some sort of confrontation comes up. Myself and my co-workers at the City of Dixon LOVED his smile, laugh and the calmness he provided when things got hectic. There are so many things at City Hall and throughout this town that remind me of him. He will remain in my heart forever. Rest in peace, Jim.

Kathe Swanson

Kathe Swanson - February 22, 2016 at 11:05 AM

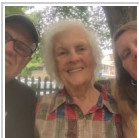
BS

“ I am sending my sincere sympathy to Mayor Burke's family and friends. He was so kind to me when he came to my book signing at Book's on First after I finished my fourth children's book. He purchased "Purple Patches", and wouldn't you know it, he took it outside and sat at a table reading the book. I never found out how many people saw him holding that book and came in to see me. What a kind gesture for him to do. May God's loving Angels hold him gently as he takes his journey throughout God's realm. RIP, Mayor Burke.



Betty Kepka Schultz

Betty Kepka Schultz - February 22, 2016 at 10:48 AM



“ A true local statesman. He brought an openness to Dixon life and culture which had not been there in the past. Tom and Mary Ellen Burns

Tom Burns - February 22, 2016 at 10:27 AM



“ On behalf of all of us at Starved Rock Lodge & Conference Center, we send our sincere condolences. Mayor Burke was our honored guest at a luncheon held last June here at the Lodge.



Kathy Casstevens - February 22, 2016 at 09:20 AM



“ There will never be another GREAT Mayor like Jim. He did so much for Dixon...we will be forever in his debt. RIP Jim...God Bless!

Diane Rockwell - February 22, 2016 at 09:13 AM



“ Diane Rockwell lit a candle in memory of James Gerard Burke



Diane Rockwell - February 22, 2016 at 09:11 AM



“ Jim's leadership and passion for Dixon is evident everywhere! His friendship was a gift...enhanced by his Irish humor and great stories. He lives us with fine memories!
My thoughts are with his wonderful family!

Tom Villiger - February 22, 2016 at 08:09 AM

ST

“ Sorry to hear about Jim, He was a good Friend and a super nice guy I can remember visiting him in the Mayor's office after been elected mayor. St. Patricks day will not the same without Jim so long my friend may St.Patrick always watch over you

Shannon Thompson....

shannon thompson - February 22, 2016 at 07:10 AM

KM

“ Kathleen McMunn lit a candle in memory of James Gerard Burke



Kathleen McMunn - February 21, 2016 at 08:31 PM

JS

“ When I first started work in Dixon in 1993, Jimmy "B" showed up at our title company office with an application to the Dixon Chamber of Commerce in one hand, and a title order in the other - he taught me how to do business in Dixon. It was a sheer joy to work with him over the years - his enthusiasm for Dixon brightened up the day, and his integrity and patience were a good example to respect and follow.

John Sweeney

John Sweeney - February 21, 2016 at 04:54 PM



“ *Jim was a really nice person, I remember him playing his guitar and singing my husband Happy Birthday one year. He was a nice person and good to the people of Dixon. He will be missed.* ”

Ida Hinton - February 21, 2016 at 02:09 PM