



## James (Jim) Mahar

March 22, 1942 - September 7, 2025

James (Jim) Mahar of Amboy passed away on September 7, 2025, at Dixon Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center, Dixon, IL, surrounded by family. Jim was born in Mendota, IL to Roger & Nettie (Kerschner) Mahar on March 22, 1942. He graduated from Mendota High School and then from Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado in 1965, where he earned football all-conference first team awards as a full back and defensive linebacker. Jim then began his dedicated 35 year teaching career in Amboy District 272. He coached fresh-soph football and started the wrestling program and coached both for 32 years. He was inducted into the Illinois Wrestling Coaches Hall of Fame in 2011. In retirement he drove bus for the Amboy School district. Leisure time was spent as a fan of the Minnesota Vikings and NASCAR racing. Jim is survived by his wife of 61 years, Sandy (Schiefelbein) also of Mendota, son Cory, and grandchildren Ellie, Mia, Tyler & Dillon; other in-laws and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and brothers Henry, Edward, and Warren. Per Jim's request, cremation rites have been extended, and there will be no visitation or funeral. A celebration of life will be held on Sept. 28, 2025 from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM at the Amboy Community Building. Memorial donations may be directed to Immanuel Lutheran Church of Amboy, or the Amboy Junior Tackle football program (c/o of Mihm-Jones Funeral Home). The family wishes to extend their gratitude to Jennifer & Becky of Serenity Hospice of Oregon. Arrangements by the Mihm-Jones Funeral Home in Amboy.



# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

SEP **28.** 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

Amboy Community Center  
280 W Wasson Rd  
Amboy, IL 61310

# Tribute Wall

RE

“ I want to start out by sending my condolences to Sandy and Cory. Coach Mahar was a huge part of my life for many years. Coaching me in football and wrestling. When I was young he always kept me in check and he taught me so many great things throughout the years. Not only did he teach me how to wrestle and play football he helped shape me into a good person and a man. He was tough but fair and the older I got I started to understand the man he truly was. He cared so much for the people he worked with and taught. I have a lot of great memories of Coach Mahar and he will be truly missed by many people. I'm truly happy he was a part of my life. It is people like him that make this world a better place. He would do anything for anyone. Thank you for everything Coach!!

*Love Ryan Egler*

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**Ryan Egler** - October 10, 2025 at 11:30 AM



“ I have never shared this before, but Mr. Mahar was more than just a teacher—he was a mentor, a protector, and even a father figure to many of us at Amboy High School, myself included. During times when I struggled with bullying, Mr. Mahar always stepped in and put a stop to it. He consistently looked out for me and for all of his students because he genuinely cared about our well-being, growth, education, and future. His passing marks a very sad day for our community, (and myself) much like the loss of Mr. Braid. Both Mr. Mahar and Mr. Braid shared the same selfless commitment: they devoted themselves to serving the children of the Amboy community with compassion and dedication. I, for one, am a better person because I was raised in Amboy/Harmon, and these two remarkable individuals played an important role in shaping who I am today. Thank you, Mr. Mahar. May you rest in peace. Eddie (McCullough) McNamara -AHS Class of 1991

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**Edward McBride** - September 12, 2025 at 05:16 PM



“ As a Freshman football player Mr. Mahar decided we needed toughening up. With just an arm pad on each arm..... wrist to elbow he had each one of us charge him. We would sprint towards him low and fast and he swatted us away like flies ... it was 20 against one and he won by a landslide slide! 7 yrs as my wrestling coach and too many great memories to mention ! Rest in Peace you life influencer.

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**Harold Gerdes 138 Miles** - September 09, 2025 at 04:30 PM

SH

*Coach Mahar or Mr. Mahar to me even though I taught PE one year at Amboy HS with him. He always let me know what I should and shouldn't do as a new teacher at Amboy. Which I truly appreciated his straight forward words of advice. He loved to tease me even about being pregnant and having our son! He always did that in his own respectful way. It was just good to have his guidance and support while I was at Amboy! And I watched him Coach Wrestling, because my husband was a wrestler & then a Wrestling Coach he knew Coach Mahar better than I did. 😊 He had a passion and caring spirit for the kids he taught. He noticed the ones who needed a little extra attention & support. And amazing man, teacher & friend! Rest in Peace Coach Mahar!! You were Loved by many!! 🙏🙏💔🙏🙏*

Sue Hager - September 13, 2025 at 09:12 PM

HM

“ Harold Miles purchased the Simply Elegant Spatiphyllum for the family of James (Jim) Mahar.



Harold Miles - September 09, 2025 at 04:24 PM

MV

“ Michael V. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James (Jim) Mahar.

Michael V. - September 09, 2025 at 01:00 PM

RV

“ We extend our Deepest Sympathy to Sandy and Family on their loss.

*I had Jim in a couple of classes as students at Mendota High School, and he always made the classes very interesting!! Then when my children, Julie and Jared, were students at Amboy High School, they got to know "Mr. Mahar" as the teacher and staff member. So, we all have our memories of a great, kindhearted person that Jim was.*

*The Vaessens'*

*Ruth Ann, Julie and Jared*

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**Ruth Ann Vaessen** - September 09, 2025 at 10:01 AM

MM

“ *This man was a Marine. He served his Country honorably and then went onto serve us. He could be intimidating but in a way that brought toughness and belief within ourselves. He did that, unknowingly, for me. I was the little guy in our class of fine athletes. When I had a rough day he would take me aside and pump me up. He didn't baby me by any means but he inspired me to carry on. As an Army and Marine Corps veteran I would like to think some of his encouraging but tough support helped to remind me that I could make it through this life successfully. Thank you Mr. Mahar and Semper Fi. RIP.*

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**Michael D Masters** - September 09, 2025 at 02:40 AM

RG

“ *Condolences to coach's family*  
*Ronda Gehant*



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**ronda gehant** - September 08, 2025 at 05:00 PM

JM

“ An icon of a man, scared the crap out of me first time I ever met him, he asked me if I was staying for dinner, I said no sir, he replied b.s. sit down. So I sat. Years later he acquired some knee pads for me while doing flooring for the family. They were volleyball pads. RIP Spanky.

Jeremy Miller - September 08, 2025 at 04:28 PM

KB

“ Karen Blaine lit a candle in memory of James Mahar



Karen Blaine - September 08, 2025 at 04:03 PM

BH

Hey coach....sure hope you finally find the right size rock you want....you stories will live on forever.

bird hittlet - September 09, 2025 at 03:50 PM

WJ

“ Got get me a rock the siz.e of my little finger nail

Wes jenner - September 08, 2025 at 03:59 PM

MM

“ Jim coached wrestling, and I coached boys basketball- back in the day. I coached with Jim for eight super years, including the state championship year. Our staff was Don Wyzgowski, Tank Jones, Jim Mahar, myself - Mike McCracken, and Denny Weidman. We had a great time together to say the least. I would have been happy to coach football many more years with Jim and the rest of the guys, but I became head boys basketball. I needed the to put a lot of time into basketball, and I had a young family. I was Jim's assistant football coach. We had so many great players, and so many great wins. Lots of great memories! Jim was hard nosed with a great heart. On away game nights Jim and I always went back to his house for Angelo's spaghetti which Sandy always brought back from Rock Falls. On home game nights Don had the coaches and scouts over for a party. I've coached a lot of years - basketball, football (including flag football at the JH), baseball, and even track. But I'll never forget the super years of football with Coach Mahar!  
Love,  
Mike McCracken

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**Mike McCracken** - September 08, 2025 at 03:35 PM

JT

I met Jim a number of times through athletic events as an alumni and served as superintendent of Marengo during some Amboy - Marengo matches . Jim was well respected as a dedicated coach and educator. Prayers for family.

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**Jerry Trickett** - September 09, 2025 at 11:30 AM