



## James F. Dickson

March 10, 1954 - January 12, 2022

James F. Dickson, age 67, passed away on January 12th, 2022, at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, surrounded by his loving family.

Jim was born March 10th, 1954, in Trenton, MI, to Dr. John C Dickson and Katherine Taft Strowd. He grew up on Grosse Ile, an island at the mouth of the Detroit River, where he developed a life-long thirst for knowledge, an appreciation of his Scottish heritage, and a solid foundation in the Christian faith. His relationship with God began at the Grosse Ile Presbyterian Church, where he was baptized and confirmed.

As the youngest child, he was adventurous and inquisitive, eager to keep up with his three older siblings. Jamey, as he was endearingly called, loved his family dearly and understood the importance of prioritizing relationships with loved ones. In warm weather, his family spent countless hours boating the waters behind their home. He was always excited to spend time with his cousins, often at a family farm in Ohio or ranch in Wyoming. Throughout his childhood, he made many cherished memories exploring the world, from Europe to Mexico, with his family.

Jim began his education in the Grosse Ile Public School system, where he explored a variety of interests. He played trumpet in the school band, ran on the track team, and earned a varsity letter for football. He particularly enjoyed

The Boy Scout Explorers, where he could experience an array of outdoor activities and perform community service. He discovered a lifelong love of photography as a teen, working on his school's yearbook.

As a young man, he enjoyed traveling with his friends when he was not taking classes at Adrian College. While studying for his BA in Psychology, he was an active figure on campus. He was a member of the psychology club, served as the president of his residence hall, and shared his photography skills with many. He frequently submitted his work in photography contests, often receiving recognition for his work. While he was excited to have a photo published in Rolling Stone's former College Papers magazine, he was disappointed he could not secure a free subscription. On campus, Jim contributed to the college yearbook, serving as editor in 1976. A highlight of his education was an internship with the Lafayette Clinic in Detroit before graduating in 1977.

Following undergrad, Jim worked various positions, gaining experience in the mental health field. During a stint at Lenawee Community Mental Health, he met his wife-to-be, Sally Dunne. After earning his Master's in Psychology from Eastern Michigan University in 1983, he settled into a career with the Michigan Department of Corrections.

Jim was blessed to marry the love of his life, Sally, on August 4th, 1984. Together they worked on updating their 1920's home, which they shared for 37 years of happy marriage. Jim and Sally completed their family by welcoming two children, Lauren and Scott, into the world.

Jim adored being a father and was an active presence throughout his children's lives. He was a PTO member at Garfield Elementary and completed several wood-working projects for classrooms and fundraising events. Jim happily took responsibility for the school's yearbook and enjoyed many laughs

taking candid photos of the students. He found joy in coaching his kid's soccer and little league teams. As his children's interests changed, he became the dedicated Scoutmaster of the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 13, a small troop in Adrian. He was incredibly proud of the seven young men, including his son Scott, who attained the rank of Eagle Scout.

As an adult, Jim was a faithful member of the First Presbyterian Church in Adrian. He shared the church's lessons as a Sunday school teacher and a frequent liturgist. He contributed to the church community as a deacon and was an eager participant in the Men's Fellowship Group. In addition, he helped organize many breakfasts and fundraising brunches.

Jim concluded his professional career in 2016 when he retired from the Department of Corrections. While in good health, he and his wife traveled, often finding peace in nature. Together they explored the Canadian Maritimes, a coastal region north of Maine, The Carolinas' picturesque coastline, and hiked the rim of the Grand Canyon. During the pandemic, the couple enjoyed exploring parks and nature preserves closer to home.

In retirement, Jim dove into cycling, a longtime hobby. In addition to riding, he found pleasure in bicycle mechanics, once restoring a tandem bicycle. He became highly involved with the non-profit, Re-Bicycle of Lenawee, where he worked diligently to provide affordable and reliable repair services. He enjoyed working with his customers and the opportunity to engage with the public. He took pride in educating others about bicycle safety giving presentations to schools and scout troops. He organized Adrian's Ride of Silence; an annual spring ride held to remember community members killed while cycling. He volunteered with several rides and participated in even more. Jim twice completed the PALM Ride, pedaling across lower Michigan, from Lake Michigan to Lake Erie.

Jim's active lifestyle prepared him well for the health challenges he would face. As the son of a doctor, he was a strong supporter of medical research and participated in clinical studies when eligible. Jim understood how integral blood donations are to healthcare and was a frequent donor. He taught his children that there is always something new to learn and that learning requires accepting when you are wrong.

Jim would go on to fight two separate bouts with cancer. Early detection allowed him to have a higher quality of life in his final years. Early in 2020, Jim began chemotherapy to treat leukemia. Exhaustion from medical treatments did not deter him from community service. After 18 months of treatments, Jim and his family were relieved to learn his cancer had gone into remission.

Sadly, Jim would soon contract Covid-19 due to a community outbreak. His compromised immune system not only lessened the protection usually gained through vaccines but also depleted his body of the strength necessary to fight the virus. Nevertheless, over the coming months, Jim fought valiantly through complication after complication as the virus attacked every aspect of his health.

Jim's family could not be more proud of his positive attitude and bravery during the most trying times. The determination with which he fought to return home was an act of love.

What wonderful memories we have of a life spent loving each other. He leaves behind his wife Sally (Dunne); his children: Ren and Scott, both of Ypsilanti, MI; siblings: Carol (Dr. Douglas) Woodring of East Palestine, OH; Barry (Sue Webb) of Grosse Pointe, MI; and John III (Jenny) of Louisville, KY. He was reunited with his parents, Dr. John and Katherine, who preceded him in death.

Cremation and a private graveside service have taken place. A Celebration of Life service will be scheduled in the spring. In Jim's memory, please consider donating blood or making a financial contribution to the League of Michigan Bicyclists ([LMB.org](http://LMB.org)) or the First Presbyterian Church of Adrian.

# Cemetery Details

## Oakwood Cemetery

East Siena Heights Drive  
Adrian, MI 49221

# Previous Events

## Memorial Gathering

MAY 20. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Wagley Funeral Home (Adrian)  
1501 W. Maumee St.  
Adrian, MI 49221  
(517) 263-1400  
info@wagleyfuneralhome.com  
<https://www.WagleyFuneralHome.com>

## Celebration of Life

MAY 20. 2:00 PM (ET)

Wagley Funeral Home (Adrian)  
1501 W. Maumee St.  
Adrian, MI 49221  
(517) 263-1400  
info@wagleyfuneralhome.com  
<https://www.WagleyFuneralHome.com>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Wagley Funeral Home and Cremation Service created a Webcast in memory of James F. Dickson*



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**Wagley Funeral Home** - May 19, 2022 at 09:18 AM

AW

*Looking to seeing this video since I couldn't attend his service.*

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**Anne E Walker** - June 04, 2022 at 04:08 PM



“ *James F. Dickson*

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January 28, 2023 at 12:24 PM

“ I mostly knew Jim through scouting. I was impressed by the way he worked with the boys. He usually wore a smile. He was always thoughtful. He was able to lead and guide and inspire without preaching.

My boys started in a different boy scout troop than Jim's troop 13. When Jim started helping with troop 13, Jim and his boy Scott came to scout camp with our troop because two people made for a very small camping group. A couple years later I took my sons to Pedal Across Lower Michigan, and I was pleasantly surprised that Jim and troop 13 were bicycling on the same ride. Jim always had a kind word to say. He was always interested in the people he was with and concerned with how they were doing. A few years later and we changed scout troops to join Jim's troop. He made us feel like we were coming home.

Jim found them several routine activities. Every so often they took over the church sanctuary and had a movie night. Every spring was a taco dinner fund raiser that had people lined up out to the street. Jim worked at the prison, and some prisoners had a garden. So, the troop sold their flowers for Mother's Day and sold their cactuses at the taco dinner.

He was always on the lookout for a way for the scouts to help the community. Troop 13 came to my church and helped with a pancake breakfast my church put on for Clinton's Fall Festival. They planted in the city garden and donated the food to fishes and loaves.

The boys went fishing and we had meetings at his friend Tony's pond. Eventually Scott earned his Eagle badge, but Jim stayed on as scout master because he didn't want to let down the younger scouts in the troop. He brought in another friend who volunteers with Habitat for Humanity to help the boys work on their Eagle projects. Kept reminding them what they needed to complete and how time was running out, but in the end most of them earned their badges.

He was disappointed that he could not find anyone willing to take over as scout master, and then the sponsoring church disbanded, so in the end troop 13 had to shut down. That made us all sad.

A few years after that I needed a fill-in rider to accompany me on

*another PALM ride, and Jim was kind enough to come with me. I appreciated that he was patient enough to ride alongside the slowest pedaler you ever did see.*

**Bob Kruse** - May 21, 2022 at 11:24 AM

JD

“ *Wishing I could be there today to share my memories of working with Jim at the prison. Unfortunately due to being very sick this week, I don't feel it safe for me and others to come today. Jim was wonderful to work with and was always willing to go above and beyond if I needed help. He was also a great member of the Adrian Presbyterian Church, which we had in common as I go to the Cadmus Presbyterian Church. So it was always something we could relate to with our faith. Please accept my sincere prayers and condolences today. May God Bless the family today as you share your fond memories with family and friends.*



**Judith Dennis** - May 20, 2022 at 11:09 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of James F. Dickson.*



May 20, 2022 at 09:39 AM

BD

“ *Brenda Dewey-Jones purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of James F. Dickson.*



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**Brenda Dewey-Jones** - May 17, 2022 at 05:31 PM



“ *Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of James F. Dickson.*



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May 10, 2022 at 09:17 AM

MH

“ *I graduated with Jim in 1972 and shared a class with him and remember seeing him between classes in passing in the hallway. I didn't know him very well but my goodness, what an incredible person he turned out to be serving his church and community. May God bless and keep him and comfort all of the family.*

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**Marianne Rinna Huston** - March 24, 2022 at 09:47 PM

SS

“ *Always a smile. Always a kind word. Always a friendly handshake. He will be missed.*

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**Steven Sherman** - February 15, 2022 at 01:07 PM

BM

“ I only briefly knew Jim, after I retired and took my bike into the shop for a tune-up. I was so impressed with his easy kindness and generosity. I am so very sad to hear of his passing.

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**Beth Myers** - January 26, 2022 at 09:10 AM

ND

“ Dear Jim  
You were an amazing person!!!  
Frankly I am not prepared to write this as it is surreal...  
You not only did selfless things, you brought your lovely mother into our lives at First pres.  
I try to ask God nearly every day if I died, could I look him in the eye and say “Did I do good?” I can tell you, you did good Jim!!!  
I couldn’t possibly pay homage to Jim for all of the outstanding feats he accomplished in his quiet and humble way. Your efforts for the homeless, including the high schoolers was enough for most, but your bicycle efforts at re-bike was whole other world. Hoping we listen to some of the examples you set! I feel like so many, we took for granted that you would win this war too! I am so grateful to have known you as a devoted deacon, scout master/mentor, men’s group extraordinaire, dear friend of neighbor Alta,  
Father to two beautiful kids, son to your lovely mom and adoring husband of Sally. Rest in eternal peace Jim and you will be missed do much....

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**Nancy Dermeyer** - January 24, 2022 at 03:08 PM

JD

Such a wonderful tribute Nancy. Thank you.

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**Judith Dennis** - May 20, 2022 at 11:11 AM

JC

“ Jim, you had an enviably full life, and so much of it was tirelessly spent making it a better place for others. We need many more people like you. So sorry you went before your time; I know that so many others would have benefitted from your continued presence on this earth. Rest in the peace you so deserve, my friend.

Jerry Carnes - January 21, 2022 at 10:04 PM

BT

I wholeheartedly agree, Jerry. He always had time to talk, and listen, when a friendly ear was needed.

Beth Tuckerman - January 24, 2022 at 01:22 PM

JS

Our condolences to Sally and family. We remember Jim for his selfless care for his neighbors and friends. He always had a smile and friendly word for everyone. Will miss seeing him in his “pew” at church. The Stevenson’s

Jan and Bud. Stevenson - January 27, 2022 at 12:25 PM

DK

I didn't know Jim as I'm a few years older and went to school with his brother John "Jocko". I see a family resemblance. Also, I still remember my mother telling her friends, way back then, that Dr John Dickson was the best doctor she ever had. Condolences to Jim's family. Looks like you lost a really good guy. Deb Klein (nee Fullerton)

Deb Klein - March 24, 2022 at 02:09 AM



“ All I see at Re-Bike is Jim's work. From all the woodwork he did, to the last time I saw him. He and I spoke at length about our cancers, and he was always there to listen. I miss him greatly, as I'm sure many of you who had the gift of knowing him do as well...

Bill Marshall - January 21, 2022 at 07:35 PM