



## James "Jim" Lackey

January 13, 1941 - June 5, 2025

James "Jim" William Lackey peacefully departed this world on June 5, 2025 surrounded by his family.

Jim was born to Harley and Majorie Lackey on January 13, 1941, in Parma, Missouri, in a house that was later described as two sheds pulled together. He was the oldest of 7 children and after several moves, the family would relocate to Kankakee County where he would meet Sandra Strange. The two would marry in 1963 and go on to have two daughters, Jessica Lee and Hillary Jean, and one son, James "Clayton". Jim is survived by his wife, his daughter Jessica, his son Clayton and daughter-in-law Kristin, as well as four granddaughters: Annika, Addison, Emerson, and Mackenzie. Jim was preceded in death by his daughter, Hillary Jean, his parents, his five brothers: Gary, Jackie, Terry, Leon & Kenny and his sister Patricia. Jim was a faithful member of College Church for the past 25 years. Prior to joining College Church, Jim and his family attended People's Church for 45 years.

Jim loved his family. He adored his wife, Sandy. He would talk glowingly about her relentless work ethic and energy, calling her a "modern day pioneer woman". She was the center of his universe and missed her terribly any time they were apart. No one could make him laugh like his daughter, Jessica, and she always provided such a spark to his life. His son, Clayton, would work with him in the business from a young age and would later spend countless hours playing golf together. Clayton's wife, Kristin, became best buddies with Jim as he would come to stay with them in Florida for extended periods to

help through pregnancies and other key life events. As for his granddaughters, Jim was so proud of the woman Annika has become and relished the opportunity to take care of another lovely young lady throughout her childhood. He would travel and adventure along with Addison, Emerson and Mackenzie, with trips taking them from Florida beaches to the Grand Canyon to all that California mountains and desert have to offer. He helped to raise his siblings and provide guidance throughout their lives as their big brother. He opened his home to extended family at various times so they would have a safe place to rebuild their lives. More than anything, Jim's greatest lesson to us all was the impact of giving the gift of your time to those that you love.

He proudly served his country in the United States Army during the Vietnam War, drafted in 1966. He honorably served as a helicopter mechanic and crew chief. While stationed in Phu Loi, Jim volunteered to be the company electrician. No one else would volunteer so that made it the perfect job for Jim. He used the knowledge he had to improve living conditions around the base for the troops and make repairs after the frequent attacks. It was only later that he would laughingly talk about how he never thought about how he was a sitting duck for the enemy high up on the poles. Although it had been a challenging time to be a soldier when he returned, Jim did find a comfort and well-deserved respect for his service later in life during his time spent during his visits to the Hines VA Hospital.

Always the consummate entertainer, there were smiles following him wherever he went. It was not uncommon to hear a verse of an old country song escape his lips as the music never stopped flowing inside of him. This was true even during his challenging final days where he would still sing from the hospital bed to add light to his day and anyone around that could hear. Jim loved to laugh. A joke would come out of him that would be most often understated and ideally, from his point of view, might be confused for not being a joke. This would make it even more fun for him as he watched his unknowing victim uncomfortably struggle with what was just said to them.

Jim's spirit forced him to pick up a guitar, find some friends and start performing Country and Western music with his own band they called "The Country Gentlemen".

He was a handyman, a creator and a lone wolf. We would dream big dreams and figure out how to make them happen with his own two hands. Gifted with mind and hand, nothing seemed beyond his capabilities. "Do we want a pool in the backyard? Let me go find a backhoe and start digging a hole," he would say. The quality of his craftsmanship was legendary (in his own way). If a project called for a 2-inch screw it was getting a 4-inch screw from Jim, likely with a larger foundation and board than was required as well. It could be argued that the structures Jim has built will be all that remain for future civilizations to assess the construction capabilities of the modern man. When he wanted to be in business for himself, off he went, becoming a local businessman for decades to satisfy his thirst for self-sufficiency. These businesses included an upholstery shop, toy store and finally Jeston Cleaning, which operated from 1985 to 2006. Instead of buying an old car, Jim would go on to rebuild a 1928 Model A Ford from the ground up. This was the life's work of a true renaissance man.

He hated onions and garlic anywhere near his food but loved a good Italian beef sandwich, peach cobbler and German chocolate cake. He was born a St Louis Cardinals fan and grew up listening to Stan Musial play on the radio. Later in life he would become an improved sports fan as he would grow to root for the Chicago Cubs. Jim also enjoyed the many years of watching Michael Jordan in a Bulls uniform and the very occasional success of the Chicago Bears. Jim took up golf after his son Clayton became interested in the sport. Although he would never once beat Clayton, the thousands of days spent together walking the fairways together was a gift that most children will never be lucky enough to receive.

Jim left his physical body at sunrise on June 5 to walk with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Jim spent no time building castles or monuments for

himself during his life. Instead, he left a touch of gold on each of the thousands of lives he impacted during his time with us, living his own life as a wonderful example of a Christian man of great honor, integrity, energy and spirit. He will be missed by all but will remain with us forever.

Visitation will be held 4-7:00 p.m. Thursday, June 12, 2025 at Clancy-Gernon Funeral Home in Bourbonnais.

An additional visitation will be held from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the 11:00 a.m. funeral service on Friday, June 13, 2025 at College Church of the Nazarene.

Interment will follow at St. Anne Township Cemetery, St. Anne.

# Cemetery Details

## St. Anne Township Cemetery

South Route 1  
St. Anne, IL 60964  
(815) 427-8346

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN **12**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Bourbonnais - Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes, Inc.  
295 Main St., NW  
Bourbonnais, IL 60914  
(815) 932-1214  
cgfuneral@gmail.com

## Visitation

JUN **13**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

College Church of the Nazarene  
200 University Ave.  
Bourbonnais, IL  
(815) 933-7749  
<http://www.collegechurch.org/>

## Funeral Service

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JUN 13. 11:00 AM (CT)

College Church of the Nazarene  
200 University Ave.  
Bourbonnais, IL  
(815) 933-7749  
<http://www.collegechurch.org/>

# Tribute Wall

SL

“ Thanks for the memories. Love you. Sandy

Sandy Lackey - January 25 at 12:21 PM

DM

“ To the Lackey family my deepest sympathy. What I remember most about Jim was that wonderful smile of his and how he lived his family. I apologize for not making service but my heart and thoughts are with you. This month is a year since I lost Steven and the struggle is real.

Deborah (Statler) Malone - June 12, 2025 at 07:59 AM

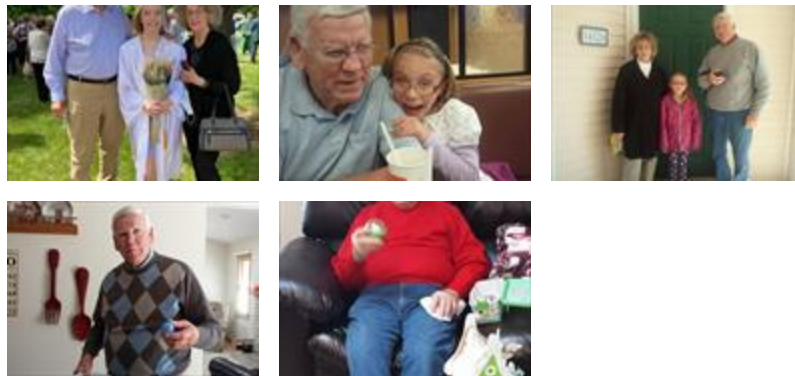
SL

Thank you for sharing. The struggle is indeed real. I do not know how anyone who is not a Christian can make this journey. Take care. God bless. Sandy

Sandy Lackey - January 25 at 12:29 PM

AL

“ I love you jimbo!❤️



Annika Lackey - June 09, 2025 at 11:41 AM

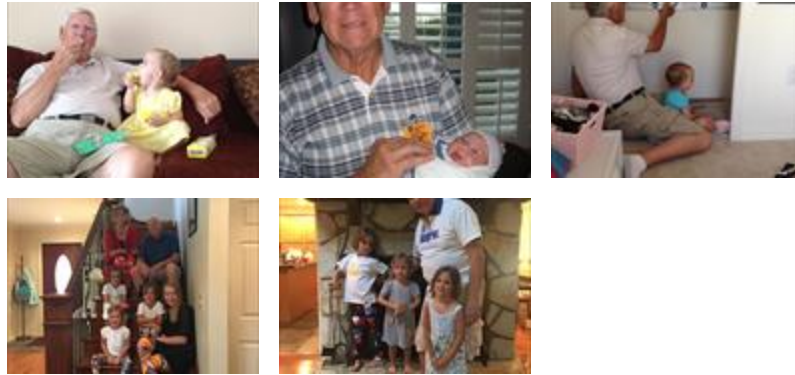
NK

“ Nicholas K. planted a grove of 10 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James "Jim" Lackey.

Nicholas K. - June 08, 2025 at 05:24 PM

KL

“ We love you Papa. 💕💕



Kristin Lackey - June 07, 2025 at 12:04 AM