



James "Jim" Parker LaRue

March 27, 1922 - November 1, 2019

Cedar Falls – James “Jim” Parker LaRue, age 97, of Cedar Falls, died Friday, November 1, 2019, at Western Home Communities – Deery Suites.

He was born in Mission, TX on March 27, 1922, the son of James F. and Jessie (Backer) LaRue. He graduated from Cleveland High School in St Louis, MO in 1940. On January 20, 1945 he married Nancy Ashton in St Louis, MO. She preceded him in death on November 11, 2013. He served as a Naval Aviator during WWII, and then joined the US Naval Aviation Reserve. He received his BA from SE Missouri St at Cape Girardeau, MO, his MA from the University of Northern Colorado, and his Doctorate in Education from Penn State.

Jim was a professor of industrial technology at the University of Northern Iowa for over 30 years, retiring in 1986. He was a member of the Cedar Falls Kiwanis, serving as a past Governor of Iowa/Nebraska chapters, a member of the American Foundryman’s Society, and a member of Cedar Falls First Presbyterian Church for over 60 years.

Survived by: four children, Linda (Gary) Johanningmeier of Waukon, David LaRue of Orange, MA, Richard LaRue of Saco, ME, and Kathryn Gronberg of Cape Coral, FL; nine grandchildren and twenty great-grandchildren.

Preceded in death by: his wife; a son-in-law, William Gronberg; his sister, Mildred Parks; and a special friend, Cynthia Turner.

Funeral services will be 10:30am Thursday, November 7 at First Presbyterian Church in Cedar Falls. Visitation will be from 4-6pm Wednesday at Richardson Funeral Service.

Burial will be in Cedar Valley Memorial Gardens, with military honors provided by Cedar Falls AMVETS Post #49.

Memorials may be directed to Western Home Foundation or the church.

Events

NOV **Visitation** 04:00PM - 06:00PM

6

Richardson Funeral Service

615 Main Street, Cedar Falls, IA, US, 50613

NOV **Funeral Service** 10:30AM

7

First Presbyterian Church

902 Main Street, Cedar Falls, IA, US, 50613

NOV **Burial with Military Honors** 11:30AM

7

Cedar Valley Memorial Gardens

Cedar Falls, IA, US, 50613

Comments



“ It's safe to say that I knew Jim (or Dr. La Rue, as we always called him), my whole life. Jim and Nancy would visit our South Dakota hometown, Yankton, and we would visit Cedar Falls, once every couple of summers or so. As kids, we saw them maybe a dozen times over the years. Our friendship was forged many years before that, as Jim and my Dad, Richard McCormack, were best friends for much of their college days, first in Cape Girardeau as undergrads, and then, after the war, as grad students, in Greeley.

As an adult, I began a Christmas card exchange with the La Rues, starting in the mid 1990's. For the past 25 years, we've watched the La Rue family grow. A couple of years ago, I came across some photos, in one of our boxes of photos, of Jim and Nancy and their kids, made color reproductions of them, and sent them to Jim. He was very happy to receive them. He told me he had framed one photo, which I had enlarged, of him and Nancy from the 1940's, he in his uniform. He told me that it was around the time of their wedding. We then sent a few letters to each other, which was wonderful because it was as if I was having a conversation with my own Dad, who had passed away in 2005. Jim's stories really brought home how they were such good friends. Both were cheerleaders, and in clubs and classes together. There are other things that connect us. One of Jim's sons is named Richard (is it possible that Richard was named after my Dad?). And when my wife, Justine, and I were having our own kids we'd decided that if there was a boy among them he'd be a James, because we had known many good men named James in our lives, among them Jim La Rue. We now have two daughters, Bridget and Erin. About a month ago, I contacted one of my cousins in St. Louis, who helped me with some genealogy questions I had as I'm trying to build up the Family Tree. My cousin sent me some photos and names, and among them was my Dad, back in the day, sitting and holding hands with a young lady, not my mother! I had never seen that photo before, and my cousins let me know that Dad was pretty serious about her at the time. I did some sleuthing, including looking in some online back issues of the Sagamore yearbook. I decided that the name of Dad's old flame was Marie Jones. I was going to include in this year's Christmas card to Jim a request for his memories of what he knew. Sadly now, we'll never know for sure. In any case, events turned out well for us as Dad followed Jim to Greeley and met the love of his life, Leona Wasinger, who became the mother of Michael, Thomas, and me, Brian McCormack. A very happy ending indeed. Justine and I moved to Australia eight years ago, returning to Justine's home country. I was happy to be able to have some quality time with Jim, after a lifetime of knowing him as Dad's lifetime friend. Dr. La Rue left a deep and abiding impression on this son of his best college buddy. His spirit now lives on, across the ocean, here in Australia, in the stories I can share with our daughters. Our best wishes to all of Jim's family and friends. It was a wonderful life, and I am honored to have been able to be a small part of it, now and then, over the past sixty years.

Brian McCormack
Jamberoo, Australia



“ Dr. LaRue was my my professor of Industrial Technology in the 1980's and gave me my first Foundry Educational Foundation (FEF) scholarship when I was nineteen years old. He was very instrumental in directing me toward a very successful career in metal castings and foundry work. He had a passion for metal working and shared it with his students. He was a blessed man and will be missed. Our prayers are with him and his family.

John L. Grahek
Plant Manager, Clow Valve Oskaloosa, IA

John Grahek - November 07, 2019 at 10:24 AM



“ Our prayers and thoughts are with you at this time of the death of your father. Linda I knew and worked with your dad in Kiwanis. I was President of the Waterloo Kiwanis and Lt. Governor of the district around Waterloo/Cedar Falls. He was a leader, a teacher, and a gentleman. Wayne had him as a professor at UNI when he was working on his masters in Industrial Arts. Interesting how our paths intertwine.

Jane & Wayne Hasek

Jane & Wayne Hasek - November 05, 2019 at 02:34 PM



“ Your parents were our sponsors when we joined 1st Presbyterian Church and were so very kind to us. I was especially grateful for Jim's bringing over a huge overstuffed chair for our Jim to sleep in the very last night he was home. He was having so much trouble breathing and couldn't lie down to sleep. Jim La Rue was a good man with a good heart. I am so glad you have that wonderful memory of him.

Priscilla (Penny Hancock) Brown

Priscilla Brown - November 04, 2019 at 05:44 PM



“ David and family,

I was so sorry to read of Dr. LaRue's passing. As one of his students many years ago I found him to be incredibly knowledgeable and skillful. I still scratch my head over how he cast the saucer, tea cup and spoon so craftfully. He challenged me to figure out, but wouldn't share how he done it. What a wonderful mentor and friend.

Prayers to all and know that God is always with us in these most difficult of days.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eldon B. Swanson

Dr. Eldon B. Swanson - November 04, 2019 at 12:38 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of James "Jim" Parker LaRue.



November 03, 2019 at 10:19 PM



“ my grandpa was a very special man who lived a very extraordinary life he will be missed on Earth but it is through out belief in Christ that he will spend a rich eternity in heaven

Robert Johanningmeier - November 02, 2019 at 05:35 PM



“ Robert Johanningmeier sent a virtual gift in memory of James "Jim" Parker LaRue



Robert Johanningmeier - November 02, 2019 at 05:11 PM