



## James Gavisser

February 9, 2016

Gavisser, James age 72, of Minneapolis died February 9, 2016 surrounded by family and friends. He attended the University of Minnesota from preschool through medical school with further training at West Virginia University, the University of Washington, the Mayo Clinic and Paris, France. He went on to practice medicine as a plastic surgeon in Minneapolis. Though he dealt with physical health issues for 40 years, he never expressed self-pity or let his conditions limit his life. He had many interests including movies, fishing, humor, golf, fine art, theater, travel and, most of all, spending time with family and friends. He is remembered for his gentle manner, humor and sweetness. He was a well-respected surgeon but his gift and passion was patient care, treating everyone with dignity and kindness. Drawing on his experiences as both a physician and a patient, he helped launch the Patient Partners program at Abbott Northwestern Hospital, matching retired physicians and nurses with patients in need of support and advocacy. He was a founder of the Twin City Maimonides Society, a program of the Minneapolis Jewish Federation. He helped establish an exchange program between local physicians and Jewish and Arab Israeli physicians in the Galilee, as well as Israeli medical students and University of Minnesota medical students. He was remarkable at making connections among people and helping them through their challenges with the medical system. Whether garnering an appointment with a difficult-to-schedule doctor, driving an acquaintance to the Mayo Clinic, accompanying a friend to an appointment, or helping an immigrant get licensed in the U.S., he always

sought ways to help others. He rarely exited an airplane without a new acquaintance. He was an ever-present, loving and supportive husband, father and grandfather. To quote a dear friend, he and his wife, Judy, "lived courageous, meaningful and inspiring lives together" and were married over 48 years. In addition to his wife, he is survived by his children, Michael (Lauren) of Scarsdale, NY and Sara (Josh) Leslie of Menlo Park, CA; six grandchildren, Sydney, Alexandra and Nathan Gavisser and Devin, Sammy and Theo Leslie; sister, Marsha (Gary) Tankenoff; sister-in-law, Susan Lazar; and several nieces and nephews. His parents, Minette and David Gavisser, preceded him in death. Services 2:30 PM Sunday, February 14 at Adath Jeshurun Congregation, 10500 Hillside Lane W., Minnetonka. Shiva 6:30 PM Sunday and 7 PM Monday at the Synagogue. In lieu of flowers, memorials preferred to Mazon, a Jewish Response to Hunger ([mazon.org](http://mazon.org)) or Second Harvest Heartland ([2harvest.org](http://2harvest.org)). Arrangements with Adath Jeshurun Chevra Kavod HaMet and Washburn-McReavy.com Edina Chapel 952-920-3996