



## James Victor Gels

May 1, 1944 - September 16, 2025

James Victor Gels, always the center of our family's world, departed this one on Sept. 16th. He signed his birthday cards "Dajipapa" - he was "Jimmer" to his partner Muriel Haglind; "Dad" to his kids Tracey Reichert, Steven Gels, and David Gels; father-in-law to Mark Reichert, Joy Miciano, and Jennifer Gels; "Papa" to grandkids Grace/Lucy/Tommy Reichert, Maya/Oliver Gels, and Abby/Lily Gels; brother to Jerry Gels and wife Betty; but above all, he was a friend to everyone he met.

Born and raised in Cincinnati, Jim was an avid basketball player and student through his time at St. Xavier High School. He continued at Xavier University, graduating with honors and a lifetime love of Musketeer basketball.

Working at River Downs racetrack as a young post-grad, Jim placed his bet, not on any horse, but on a secretary he met there. He and Kathy started their family, and Jim began working for the Miami Herald in a position he described as "barely above paper boy". Finding his calling in the beating heart of the newspaper business, he continued to move up in the Knight-Ridder newspaper chain, while the family moved "up" on the map: from Marketing Director at the Miami Herald, to Marketing and General Manager at the Akron Beacon Journal, and finally, Publisher at the Duluth News-Tribune.

Always a staunch believer in giving back to the community, he put in countless

hours on the boards at United Way, Akron City Hospital, Chamber of Commerce, Duluth Marshall School, and College of St. Scholastica. After retirement, he volunteered as a high school tutor, and at Little Brothers - Friends of the Elderly.

Despite all these commitments, he arguably never missed a soccer game, track meet, school play, birthday party, or family dinner. He was ever-present for our family, our friends, and always one more round of golf.

Jim was diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis in 2007, and then was devastated by the loss of Kathy to cancer in 2008. He was fortunate, however, to receive two gifts late in life: the first was Muriel, a true companion and source of joy who entered his world in 2010; then, in 2012, a double lung transplant which brought another 13 years of life, love, and grandfathering.

We will forever miss his energy, playfulness, grammar corrections, terrible jokes, whiffle ball skills, generosity, and his boundless love of life and his fellow humans.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Helen and Victor; wife of 40 years, Kathy; and granddaughter Elizabeth Reichert.

A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, October 11th at Minneapolis Golf Club. Open house 11am-3pm with a short service at 11:30am and lunch to follow. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Crescent Cove in Minneapolis, an organization which Jim greatly admired.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT 11. 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Minneapolis Golf Club  
2001 Flag Avenue South  
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

## Celebration of Life

OCT 11. 11:30 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Minneapolis Golf Club  
2001 Flag Avenue South  
St. Louis Park, MN 55426