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James H. Connell

Sep 27, 2019 Updated Sep 28, 2019 0

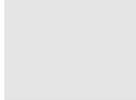
ENDS TODAY: JOIN FOR \$3

Collection

Obituaries in the Courier today, Sept. 27
All of the obituaries and service notices in today's Courier.

(1935-2019)

INDEPENDENCE — James H. Connell, 84, of Independence, died Thursday, Sept. 19, at St. Luke's Hospital in Cedar Rapids.



James H. Connell

He was born on June 23, 1935, in Anamosa, son of Herbert J. and Wilma E. (Coyne) Connell. He married his wife, Karen.

Jim was a 1954 graduate of Winthrop High School and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1954 serving in Germany with the aviation unit. He returned to the United States to attend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, receiving his airframe and powerplant certification. While in Miami, Jim worked for Pan American Airlines in the engine overhaul department. He also worked at the Kendall-Tamiami Executive Airport as a line person.

He returned to Iowa to work at Collins Radio and also a mechanic at the McBride Airport in Marion, was a flight instructor and line person at the Oelwein Municipal Airport, did maintenance for the Vinton Municipal Airport and the Independence Municipal Airport. For more than 44 years, Jim managed and offered general maintenance at the airport until his retirement in 2012. During his career, he also owned and operated an aerial application business, as well as a fixed base operation in Poplar Bluff, Mo. He was also a co-pilot in a jet commander and co-owner of of Aircraft Restoration & Fabric.

He was a member of AOPA (Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association), PAMA (Professional Aviation Maintenance Association) and was recently inducted into the Iowa Aviation Museum as a "2nd Generation Pioneer." Jim received the Charles Taylor "Master Mechanic Award" in 2010 from the Federal Aviation Administration.

Survived by: his wife of 34 years; his children, Michael (Ava) Connell of Decorah, Patrick (Anna) Connell of Marana, Ariz., David (Kristen) Connell of Lakeville, Minn., Kathleen (Rockford) Hettinger of Gilbert, Ariz., Dianne (Carl "Chip") Davis of Van Meter and Krista James of Winthrop; two stepdaughters Lynn (Robert) Estes of Independence and Jennifer Burco of Sumner; 13 grandchildren, nine stepgrandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren with one on the way, eight stepgreat-grandchildren; two sisters, Elizabeth Passage of Stockton, Calif., and Carole Palacios of Hayward, Calif.; and many nieces and nephews.

Preceded in death by: his parents; two sisters Mary Ellen Walton and Collen O'Connell; two brothers-in-law, Steve

Collection

Obituaries in the Courier this week, Sept. 22-27, 2019
We've compiled the obituaries and service notices published in the Courier this week.

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Submit an Obituary

Funeral homes often submit obituaries as a service to the families they are assisting. Obituaries submitted by family members are also accepted

Passage and Jose Palacios; and a stepgranddaughter, Ashley Cooper.

Services: 10:30 a.m. Saturday Sept. 28, at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Winthrop, with burial at St. John's Catholic Cemetery in Independence. Visitation will be from 3 to 8 p.m., with an 8 p.m. parish vigil service at Reiff Family Center – Funeral Home in Independence.

Online condolences may be left at www.reiffamilycenter.com.

As the patriarch of the Connell Aviation family, Jim dedicated his life to not only advancing flight but to sharing his aviation legacy with his children and grandchildren. He is an accomplished pilot, mechanic and airport manager, having a more than 50-year career as a pioneer in aviation in America.

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pending proper verification of the death.
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Events

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