



## Dr. James Arthur VanZant

September 23, 1942 - February 23, 2020

James Arthur VanZant, 77, of Fort Gibson, Oklahoma left for his heavenly home on February 23, 2020. He was born to Roy Lafayette VanZant and Rozella Georgia (Harris) VanZant on September 23, 1942 in Tulsa Oklahoma. Jim attended Prague Public Schools beginning in first grade after overcoming a battle with polio and then graduating in the class of 1960. He persevered to become an exceptional athlete focusing his attention to football. Under the guidance of Coach Charlie Galbraith, he grew to become a team leader. His hard work and dedication earned a football scholarship to Oklahoma State University. He loved to tell stories of practices and games and highly regarded the opportunity to play under the leadership of Athletic Director, Mr. Henry Iba. He recalled Mr. Iba telling his mother he would make sure her son would get a college education. He shared fond memories of friendships and stories of college life and especially those involving dear friend, Jim Teeter.

Jim earned his Bachelor of Education degree in Health and Physical Education at OSU. While teaching and coaching in Midwest City, he furthered his education at Oklahoma University earning his Masters of Education in Secondary Administration and Doctor of Philosophy in Special Education and School Psychology. He moved from Midwest City to become Director of Special Education and football coach at Harrah Public Schools in 1975 and touched the lives of many students and families. Jim then moved to Tulsa in 1984 to accept the position of Director of Special Services for Tulsa Public Schools where he retired. He worked part-time after retirement for Fort Gibson

Public Schools and Tahlequah Public Schools. Jim often shared fond memories of students, players, colleagues and friends he met along the way. Many stayed close throughout his life.

A career highlight and one he was most proud of was the opportunity to participate in state committee planning for Medicaid School-Based Services. Long hours and numerous meetings resulted in additional assistance for schools to provide services for students with special needs. Jim had a warm heart for students with special needs and often assisted in Special Olympics. He had the opportunity to meet with Eunice Kennedy Shriver discussing the importance of support for Special Olympics.

After retirement, Jim was convicted to focus toward his Christian beliefs. He was mentored by Pastor Billy Parker and Pastor Lance Sawyer who he dearly loved. In future years, he served the Lord through counseling in the church setting. Jim accomplished many things in life, but he felt he had finally listened to what God intended him to do before leaving this earth in helping Christians work through difficult times.

Jim treasured his weekly lunch dates with "the guys" and looked forward to deep discussions of sports, politics and religion, especially with friends Jerry Belton, David West and Earl Garrison. Dr. James A. VanZant distinguished himself as a teacher, coach, school psychologist and counselor and friend, touching the lives of numerous individuals. He will be greatly missed.

Jim was preceded in death by parents, Roy and Rozella VanZant and brother, Charles VanZant. He is survived by his wife, Susan of Fort Gibson; sister, Thelma McDaniel of Harrah, Oklahoma; brother, Harold VanZant of Prague, Oklahoma; sister, Georgia Hoover of Fort Gibson, Oklahoma; stepson, Cliff Psomas and grandson, Cole of Lee's Summit, Missouri, stepson, Jon Psomas and fiancé' Desiree Shasa of Greeley Colorado; many nieces, nephews and treasured friends.

A family conducted memorial service will be 11AM, Saturday, March 7, 2020 at Fellowship Bible Church in Fort Gibson, OK. In lieu of flowers the family requests memorials be made to Fellowship Bible Church of Leukemia and

Lymphoma society at: <https://donate.lls.org>.

# Previous Events

## Family conducted memorial service

MAR 7. 11:00 AM (CT)

Fellowship Bible Church  
1411 E. Popular  
Fort Gibson, OK 74434

# Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. James Arthur VanZant*

October 23, 2023 at 09:38 AM



“ *He always walked with a strut and always related to the best in each of us. Looking back, he and Coach Evans seemed the happiest to be around. May his family be blessed in this sad time*

**gerald lamar clopp** - March 08, 2020 at 10:27 AM



“ *Billie Flannery and Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr. James Arthur VanZant.*



**Billie Flannery and Family** - March 05, 2020 at 09:39 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dr. James Arthur VanZant.*



March 04, 2020 at 04:11 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. James Arthur VanZant.*



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March 02, 2020 at 03:09 PM



“ *Thank you for believing in me coach.*

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**Joe Washum** - February 29, 2020 at 02:21 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. James Arthur VanZant.*



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February 28, 2020 at 08:11 PM