



James Robert Cavanaugh

September 1, 1934 - February 6, 2024

James (J.R.) was born in Detroit, Michigan on September 1, 1934, and died peacefully at home on February 6, 2024, whose father was George Cavanaugh.

J.R. attended Notre Dame on a basketball scholarship and played football, then went on to play tennis and graduated from Marquette University with a BA in Business and minor in Philosophy. Prior to that he served as a Lieutenant officer in the United States Marine Corp, where he won The Sharpshooter Award. He excelled in several sales jobs and owned several businesses. He met his wife, Marguerite and became Sales Manager for one of her companies, which manufactured Bugatti and 1923 Mercedes Benz kit cars. In 1992, after Pan Am closed where Marguerite was employed, they chose to move to Ocala, Florida, bought a farm to breed Thoroughbred race horses. He still ran the business at 89 years of age. In 1999 he and Wicklow Farm received the honor of being voted the 8th best Thoroughbred horse breeder of the year in the World. It is prestigious to be mentioned in the top 100. Horsemen have referred to him as a legend and a genius in the horse industry, as was his brother George A. Cavanaugh, in Ocala. When he first started, stud farms turned him down because he was unknown and his horses not good enough for them. It didn't take long before the stud farms were calling J. R. to ask to breed to his mares. He enjoyed playing recreational baseball to the end of his life.

J.R. was survived by his wife Marguerite, his Daughters Erin and Colleen, and son James, Kevin, Casey, and George.

A viewing will be held at Roberts Funeral Home West, on Monday from 10:00AM until 1:00PM, on Monday, February 12, 2024, followed by a Mass at Blessed Trinity Church on Tuesday morning at 10:30.

Please, you all are invited to attend to help us remember the life of J. R., who was called a unique, living, Damon Runyon character by many who spent time in his farm office listening to his many stories.

The family requests no flowers, and as J. R. always said, 'Just a few kind words.'

Previous Events

Viewing

FEB **12**. 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM.

Roberts Funeral Home West

Tribute Wall



“ *Roberts of Ocala Funerals and Cremations created a Webcast in memory of James Robert Cavanaugh*



Roberts of Ocala Funerals and Cremations - February 12, 2024 at 10:34 AM



“ *Roberts of Ocala Funerals and Cremations created a Tribute Video in memory of James Robert Cavanaugh*



Roberts of Ocala Funerals and Cremations - February 11, 2024 at 12:31 PM

AO

“ *JR was always quite a character, I can remember every time I would get up to bat he would throw dirt on my spikes then proceed to tell a joke just as the ball was pitched. He was a good man who will be truly missed.*

AI Ott - February 11, 2024 at 02:48 PM

MG

“ Only played Softball the last few years with JR. What a guy, never did an at-bat go by that he didn't give me a hard time for #1 being a Buckeye, but #2 being a member of the USAF. All in jest during the games, but just a super guy all the time, with stories to tell... Love and respect for the family!

Mark Gatchell - February 10, 2024 at 05:31 PM

PS

“ JR was a friend of mine for over 16 years. We played softball together and most of those years we played poker (boy did he love those poker games). Above all of that he was great guy and I will miss him.

Phil Schindler - February 10, 2024 at 09:41 AM

LB

“ JR was my softball teammate a couple of seasons. He always had kind words for him & I love listening to his stories. One of the finest men I ever met. Rest In Peace JR and know that I will miss you.

Lawrence J. Butke - February 09, 2024 at 04:54 PM

JN

“ Janie Niswonger lit a candle in memory of James Robert Cavanaugh



Janie Niswonger - February 09, 2024 at 01:15 PM

CM

JR was never my team mate but always enjoyed talking with him. He was always in a good mood. I will miss him a lot. May he rest in peace!



Chris Moretto - February 10, 2024 at 08:33 PM