



## James Vincent Lacey

July 26, 1931 - December 9, 2024

James Vincent Lacey has left us after 93 years. It was quite the journey. Jim, or, alternatively, Dad, Pop, Pops or Pop-Pop, was the guy that everybody liked.

Jim was born in Brooklyn and lived through the tumultuous and adventurous childhood of an Irish kid during the Great Depression. He tried to join the New York National Guard before he was legally old enough, then left his hometown at age 17 to proudly serve in the Navy. With many a story to tell (some of which can still be shared), Jim trained as a Destroyer Sonarman Seaman at Key West, graduated in June 1950, and served during the Korean War. He enjoyed meeting Ernest Hemingway and Harry Truman, amongst other luminaries...Hemingway, of course, in the bar! He served on multiple ships and spent time with two of his brothers on the same destroyer. Following the service, he was a framer, a carpenter and a restaurant founder and owner. He later attended Middlesex College at night on the GI Bill while working at Union Carbide; first as a lab technician, then as a department manager, where he first learned materials science-particularly adhesives.

He is remembered in so many ways: fishing on his motorboat with his kids in Raritan Bay in New Jersey, teaching his daughter 'Irish carpentry', walking his granddaughter to feed the ducks and the deer in Johnson Park in Piscataway, and working as the night shift manager at Betham's adhesives plant in Bound

Brook.

He chose an early retirement due to challenges with his central vision; damage done by raising pigeons as a kid. Although blind by some definitions, he managed to work, do chores around the house (including carpentry), and was always willing to try to fix things. There was a sense of optimism and 'no quit' in him.

His retirement led him to The Villages of Central Florida. He spent 32 years there perfecting his retirement golf game, playing the mandolin and harmonica, and spending time with family. He had the luxury of both a brother and sister living in Florida, with his sister Joan just a golf cart ride away. His vision challenges eventually overcame his golf game; but, as an optimist, he kept a golf cart...just in case.

He and his wife Sylvia, prior to her passing in June of 2023, cherished 72 years together. They enjoyed sitting on their lanai, holding hands on the couch, cuddling with their dogs, and welcoming family to their home. Jim loved spending time on his lanai playing harmonica and practicing the mandolin. Because he couldn't see the music, he taught himself to play by ear. He never missed an opportunity to listen to live or recorded music...often singing along in true harmony!

Following Sylvia's passing, Jim continued to love his dog Jayney (the last in a series of loved canine companions), joined his friends for lunch and dinner at the dining hall, and enjoyed watching baseball, game shows and, most recently, 'The Voice' -- he missed just the last show!

Jim leaves three children, his younger brother, three grandchildren, two great grandchildren, and nieces and nephews, some of whom have also adopted The Villages as their home. He was, as he expressed to anyone who chose to

listen, "proud of them all." Jim built a legacy of friends and friendliness enjoyed by many. Everyone, family and friends, will miss his smile, laughter, dancing, infectious joy, humor, and music. As he leaves us, we can all imagine him raising a glass of gin to each of us and sharing his famous advice, "Don't take any wooden nickels!"

Jim's life will be remembered with military honors at The Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida on December 19, 2024.

# Cemetery Details

## Florida National Cemetery

6502 SW 102nd Avenue  
Bushnell, FL 33513

# Previous Events

## Military Honors

DEC **19**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Florida National Cemetery  
6502 SW 102nd Avenue  
Bushnell, FL 33513

# Tribute Wall

PS

“ It's hard to sum up the years we shared. I will always be his Patsy  
🍀  
I remember how he navigated my drive from Jersey to Florida. He  
outsmarted TomTom 🚗 Enjoyed many hours sitting at the table  
chatting or eating or playing games just being family 🍷❤

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**Patricia Sielewicki** - December 20, 2024 at 11:34 PM