



James Arthur Lee

June 9, 1940 - January 9, 2026

James “Jim” Lee, 85, passed away on Friday, January 9th, in Austin, Texas. Born on June 9, 1940, in Mt. Vernon, New York, Jim grew up on a working farm in Lakewood, New Mexico, alongside his sisters Susan and Linda and his brother Dean. He attended Artesia High School and later Texas Tech University, where he pledged Sigma Chi and graduated in 1962 with a degree in Mathematics and a minor in Physics.

Jim married Jean Alexander in 1961, and they welcomed their son, Bradford Mason Lee, the following year. Shortly after, he enrolled in Air Force Training School at Lackland AFB and was later assigned as Commander of Base Communications on Mactan Island in the central Philippines at the start of the Vietnam War. For his service, he received the United States Air Force Commendation Medal.

During his time in the Philippines, Jim decided to pursue an MBA and was honorably discharged to attend Harvard Business School. He graduated in 1968 with a focus in Finance and New Enterprise. His entrepreneurial spirit carried him across the world—from New York to Los Angeles, to England, and ultimately to the Middle East. He spent five years in Al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia, where he served as President of Pool Arabia Ltd., an international oil drilling company. It was there that he met Glenda Kenter, and the two later moved to Houston, marrying in 1977. Their children, Montana and Britton, were born in 1982 and 1983.

Jim spent many years in Houston working in real estate investment and

pursuing a variety of entrepreneurial ventures. He was a long-time member of St. Luke's United Methodist Church and deeply valued that community. In his later years, he moved to Central Texas to be closer to his granddaughters, who were truly the apples of his eye.

He is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, Britton and Ashley Lee; his daughter and son-in-law, Montana and Ben Hooten; and his beloved granddaughters, Elliott and Margot Hooten. He is also survived by his sister Susan Lee Davis; his sister and brother-in-law, Linda and John O'Black; and his brother, Dean Lee. His nieces, Alexa Haas and Dacia Horn, and nephews, Brandon Lee and Weston O'Black, and several great nieces and nephews also carry his memory forward.

Jim leaves behind a legacy of kindness and an unwavering belief in the goodness of people. His optimism was unmatched, and those who loved him hope to carry that spirit with them always.

A private celebration of life will be held for family at a later date.

“The Vision that you glorify in your mind, the Idea that you enthrone in your heart—this you will build your life by, this you will become.” — James Allen, As a Man Thinketh

Tribute Wall

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“ To Jim’s Family and Loved Ones,

I had the privilege of first meeting Jim in 1976 while living in Saudi Arabia. His warmth, kindness, and ready smile left a lasting impression on everyone he met. Jim approached life with intelligence, determination, and a remarkable entrepreneurial spirit.

I first met Jim at a social gathering in Al-Khobar, and to my delight, he and Glenda walked in—allowing me to reconnect with my sorority sister, whom I had not realized was even in Saudi Arabia. That unexpected reunion, made possible by Jim, remains a memory I will always treasure.

During his time there, he and Glenda established two restaurants—the first hamburger and Mexican restaurants in the area—which became welcoming havens for those far from home. These ventures reflected not only his business acumen but also his desire to create comfort and familiarity for others.

Jim’s children are a beautiful reflection of the love and life he shared with his family. He will be remembered for his generosity, his warmth, and the countless ways he enriched the lives of those around him.

With my sincere condolences,

Linda Heck

Linda Heck - February 05 at 11:13 PM

CA

It is with sad heart 💜, that I receive word of Jim's passing; he was compassionate about life, intelligent beyond words, & strived to be the best husband/father possible. I too met Jim & Glenda in The Middle East & shared many a fun time!

Words do not assuage the loss, but am grateful our paths crossed 🙏

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Candido H. Alvarado - February 09 at 03:13 PM