



James Alan Merzlak

January 18, 1962 - February 24, 2024

James Alan Merzlak (January 18, 1962 – February 24, 2024)

In earlier times “The Richest Hill on Earth” located in the Big Sky Country, where the deep blue skies appear to be touching the majestic Rocky Mountains, was one of the largest and most notorious copper mining boomtowns in the American West.

James A. Merzlak, along with his twin brother, received the blessing of life on January 18, 1962, in this beautiful country more commonly known as Butte, Montana. As a son of the late Clarence Paul Merzlak a Veteran of the Korean War and a hard rock miner Hoisting Engineer and the late Ellen Louise (Perrault) Merzlak a very strong woman, spiritual mentor, and a wonderful cook. James put them to the parental skills test, as they would have happily admitted. A sibling to two older brothers, Edward, a Vietnam War Veteran, and Steven, an older sister Terrie, a younger brother Robert, and his twin John, made family life very interesting that James cherishes.

During early childhood, being somewhat a large child, his nickname was “Fats” and his size allowed for a guaranteed starting position during the football season at the Whittier Elementary School. As he progressed through sports and slimmed down, Jim was selected as a starting first baseman on the Little League Allstars. Involvement in sports, fishing, hiking, adventuring, and living on the base of the Rocky Mountains, made it clear that he was not an academic over achiever and always wondered what was on the other side of those huge mountains and would hike to the peak for a look.

This peak over the mountains has led Jim too 46 states and working at one of the largest shipyards in the Pacific Northwest, solvent extraction/electrowinning of Copper in Arizona, producing aluminum products in Tennessee, making of steel in the hills of eastern Kentucky and southern Alabama and providing Technical Support to the Global Steel Industry. Enlistment in the U.S. Navy allowed James to peak at places such as Australia, Singapore, Africa, Japan, Philippines, and sail the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

“Fats” has often returned to the Rockies working in the mining industry, gold exploration and attending higher level of education at Montana Tech of the University of Montana, formerly Montana School of Mines, currently Montana Technological University. In 1996, James earned a BS Metallurgical Engineering degree along with a BS Engineering Science degree. James continues his love of learning by earning a MS degree in Strategic Analytics at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts.

James considers his favorite blessings to be his daughter Jaime Lynn (Iraq War Veteran), his two son’s Jason Paul and Michael James, his granddaughters Trinity Rose Hedberg and Jaisann Ray Merzlak, and his grandson Jentyn Paul Merzlak and watching them climb their own peaks and taking a look.

James is preceded in death by his father Clarence Paul Merzlak, his mother Ellen Louise (Perrault) Merzlak, and his sister Terrie Louise (Merzlak) Svejksky.

Cemetery Details

Holy Cross Cemetery

4700 Harrison Avenue
Butte, MT 59701

Previous Events

Funeral Service

MAR 14. 11:00 AM (MT)

Wayrynen-Richards Funeral Home
1800 Florence Ave
Butte, MT 59701
(406) 723-3221
<https://wayrynen-richards.com/>

Tribute Wall

GD

“ I met James at the Dialysis center in Ohio. In spite of how bad he was feeling most days that I saw him, he always had a smile on his face. It was a pleasure to have met him and I feel honored to be able to call him a friend. Sending heartfelt condolences to his family and friends.



Gretchen Denison - April 09, 2024 at 02:21 PM

JA

“ 2 files added to the album WithFamily



Jason - March 12, 2024 at 12:37 PM



“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of James Alan Merzlak.



March 11, 2024 at 04:24 PM

JM

“ Jason M. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James Alan Merzlak.

Jason M. - March 11, 2024 at 04:24 PM