



## James William Tunnell

November 9, 1947 - February 23, 2023

James William Tunnell passed away on the morning of February 23, 2023. Jim was most recently a resident at Kaweah Manor Convalescent Hospital in Visalia, CA and at 75 years old lost his battle with cancer. The first child of William "Bill" and Alice "Becky" Tunnell, he was born November 9, 1947 in Coffeyville, Kansas. He grew up in the central valley with his younger brother Randy. His parents moved to California in the '50s and raised their two sons in the Orosi/Sanger area. Jimmy played football and graduated from Orosi High in 1965.

Known to many as "Bird", a nickname fitting as the son of "Buzzard", he worked at his family's business Tunnell Produce. Jim was a born salesman, he had a witty sense of humor, a sparkling smile and a charming personality. He worked as a produce broker for many years in the valley including summers in Santa Maria brokering strawberries. Jim married Genevieve Mendes (m. Brown) and had two sons, Robert and Scott. Jim had a passion for life and spent his weekends entertaining his boys with father son camping trips, water and snow skiing, three wheeling and eventually golf.

In the '80s he met Sherry Cooper Maze and lived with her at their home near the Visalia Country Club where they were members and avid golfers. Jim spent many days at the club and nights down at the Visalia Elks Lodge #1298

playing cards, rolling dice and betting on sports. He left Visalia to spend time with his mother Becky, after his father's death, in Shell Knob, Missouri. Jim became a member of Eagles Lodge 4155 and enjoyed a simpler life before returning to Visalia in 2015.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his granddaughter Amber Salas and baby. He is survived by his sons Robert (Alicia Tunnell) of Visalia and Scott (Tennille Tunnell) of Arroyo Grande. He is also survived by his brother Randy (Janet Maffy) of Sebastopol and Sherry Maze of Visalia. Jim has two grandsons Noah and Logan, a granddaughter and two great-grandchildren Marissa Klemm and her children Conner and Cora.

A Memorial Service will be held at the Visalia Elks Lodge, on Saturday March 4, 2023 at 12:30pm.

Services have been entrusted to Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel. Memorial Tributes and condolences may be offered by logging onto [www.salseranddillard.com](http://www.salseranddillard.com).

# Previous Events

## Reception

MAR 4. 12:30 PM (PT)

Visalia Elks Lodge  
3100 W Main St  
Visalia, CA 93291