



## James M. McKenna

April 20, 1948 - May 18, 2024

Townsend – James M. McKenna, 76, passed away peacefully at home on May 18, surrounded by his family after a brief illness.

James was born in Leominster on April 20, 1948, a son of the late Willis and Florence (Gionet) McKenna. Shortly after graduating from Ayer High School, he was drafted into the U.S. Army, where he proudly served his country during the Vietnam War. After his honorable discharge, James returned home where he spent his career working for the James River Paper Co., in Pepperell for over 37 years until its closing. James retired from the Varnum Brook Elementary School, where he worked in the maintenance department and as a crossing guard, a job he always enjoyed.

James was a member of the Pepperell VFW and an avid sports fan, especially the Red Sox and Cleveland Browns. He loved trout fishing, going to the beach, and Florida vacations. Most of all, James loved his family and always looked forward to time spent together. He will be greatly missed.

He is survived by his children, Katy McKenna and Ben Noyes of Townsend, Timothy McKenna and wife Amy of Williamstown, Emily McKenna and James Leonardi of Shirley; wife, Paula (Keane) McKenna of Williamstown; grandchildren, Eileen, Colin, Reagan, Charlotte, Sylvia, and bonus grandchildren, Kelsey, Makayla, and Olyvia; siblings, Donna Soukaras Yadao

of FL, Peter McKenna of Fitchburg, Mark McKenna of TX, Sally Boyer and husband Michael of Shirley; many brothers and sisters-in-law, nieces, and nephews.

Calling hours will be held in the Anderson Funeral Home, 25 Fitchburg Rd., Ayer on Wednesday, May 29, from 4-7PM. A prayer service will be held at 6:30pm. A celebration of life will be held on Sunday, June 2nd, at the Pepperell VFW, 55 Leighton St., Pepperell, MA 01463 from 12:00 - 5:00 PM. In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial contribution to Clear Path for Veterans, 84 Antietam St., Devens, MA 01434.

# Previous Events

## Calling Hours

MAY **29**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Anderson Funeral Home - Ayer  
25 Fitchburg Road ~ Route 2A  
Ayer, MA 01432  
(978) 772-2355

## Prayer Service

MAY **29**. 6:30 PM (ET)

Anderson Funeral Home - Ayer  
25 Fitchburg Road ~ Route 2A  
Ayer, MA 01432  
(978) 772-2355

# Tribute Wall

AL

“ Jim was a client of mine at Mirror Salon here in Pepperell, he was always a walk in and I was always so happy to see him! He talked so fondly of his kids and grandkids and all his wonderful trips he was able to take with them. To say he loved his family is an understatement. I haven't seen him in a while, so I decided to check to hopefully not see the worst.

*I am eternally sorry for this loss. He was truly an amazing and kind soul in every aspect. My heart breaks for his family. And he will always have a special place in my own heart.*

*Rip Jim, always thinking of you ❤️*

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**Amanda Leedberg** - July 11, 2024 at 11:31 AM

TA

“ We just heard and were so sad of Jim's passing. I had the honor of getting to know Jim at Varnum Brook. So many days afterschool he would be cleaning up the rooms and my son who was in first grade at the time, would join him. Jim always let him help out and over the years, they built a nice friendship together. After that, every year on my son's birthday, Jim would come in afterschool and bring pizza and wings to celebrate! Even after he retired, he would come in and bring Scotty along too. Pizza and wings! He never forgot the date. They would talk about fishing or Florida or the latest things happening in my son's life. He was a very special man with a heart of gold. He will truly be missed.

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**Tammy Anderson** - June 10, 2024 at 09:32 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of James M. McKenna.*



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May 30, 2024 at 09:35 PM



“ *Paula and family, our thoughts and prayers are with you as you go through this difficult time. Jim was a dear friend, I wish we had kept in touch over the years.*

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**David & Bonnie Lambert** - May 27, 2024 at 10:50 AM



“ *Uncle Mark purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of James M. McKenna.*



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**Uncle Mark** - May 24, 2024 at 05:06 PM



“ *Jim's children, grandchildren, siblings & all other family, I am so very sad for all of you for the passing of Jim. I am sad myself. He & I met in highschool. So very handsome & such a nice guy. I think all of us girls were gaga over him! The years go by....soo many years. Then, you run into each other at a local establishment. And, you were just as handsome & sweet & it was soo nice to see you. We were able to connect a few more times at the BullRun when you would join me & other friends from highschool for Sunday brunch. I am sending hugs & prayers of comfort to you all*

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**Denise Stepleton** - May 23, 2024 at 02:52 PM

LD

“ may he be fishing with dad in heaven great guy prayers to his family  
lori durno

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lori durno - May 22, 2024 at 12:34 PM

LR

“ So many memories of Jim working for the school district and ant the  
VFW events. Always a smile, always so youthful looking and just a  
really good guy! Paul and I were so sad to hear this news. Love,  
hugs and prayers to you all 🙏❤️

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linda and paul rakiey - May 22, 2024 at 11:53 AM