

Sabetha, KS

James R. McKenney, 73 of Sabetha died Sunday, April 5, 2015 at his home surrounded by his family. He was born on November 17, 1941 on the family farm in Brown County near White Cloud, Kansas. James is the son of Dana Augustus McKenney and Luella Lorene (Butrick) McKenney.

Jim attended grade schools in Leona, Hiawatha and Sabetha, Kansas, plus one year in Clarksdale, Mississippi. Jim graduated from Sabetha High School in 1959. He was married to Vera Louise Creutzmeyer on June 2, 1962 in Horton, Kansas. Four children were born to this union, Shari Sue, James Louis, Tami Jo and Debbie Ann. Jim also took his nephew, Nick Bernhardt into his home after his sister was murdered.

Jim worked for Bowlinger Roofing early on and also worked for a corn sheller in the area. He worked for the company that was putting up the cement elevator on Grant Street in Sabetha. Jim first went to work at the Sabetha Farmer's CO-OP in 1962 grinding hay for hay pellets. He advanced to running the pellet mill and then later the feed mill. Jim retired from the CO-OP and the feed mill after forty-plus years.

In 1966, Jim lost his left hand in a work accident and was known around Sabetha as "the man with the hook". Jim loved children and his hook was one thing that all little ones noticed, so he loved to tell those brave enough to ask him that an alligator bit it off.

Jim spent every summer fishing, camping, boating, coaching baseball and umpiring both baseball and softball games for years. Jim even came out of retirement in 2013 and umpired four games with his granddaughter, Samantha White.

Jim also spent many years at the local gyms, either refereeing basketball games or cheering and offering the kids coaching advice. He was an avid bowler for many years and received many awards and trophies. Jim later donated all his trophies to the youth bowling league in Sabetha. He retired from bowling when the Sabetha Bowling Alley burned.

Jim always put others in front of his needs and was a very giving man. Jim loved his family and after his retirement he visited his mother every day to eat breakfast with her and spend time visiting. He loved his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and attended as many of their activities as possible. Jim was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and fought this disease for five years, including going into remission twice.

He is preceded in death by his parents; one brother, Danna E. and his sister, Mary Lou Bernhardt. He is survived by his wife, Vera, of the home; brother, Albert (Bonnie); his son, James (Cassie); three daughters, Shari (Dale) Williams, Tami (Michael) Haffner and Debbie (Danny) White; 12 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren and one great great grandchild.

As per Jim's wishes there will be no funeral or memorial services. The family will be receiving guests from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Sabetha Community Building, 1116 Main Street, on Saturday, May 2. A private family inurnment will be at Mt. Olive Branch Cemetery in White Cloud, Kansas. Memorials can be made to the Caring Neighbor Cancer Fund or the Nemaha County Home Health & Hospice sent in care of Popkess Mortuary, 823 Virginia Sabetha,

Kansas 66534.

www.popkessmortuaries.com