

James Breinig, 62

May 7, 1941 - Nov. 18, 2003

DES MOINES – Jim E. Breinig was born in Jackson County, MN, at home May 7, 1941, the youngest child of Adolph Julius and Celma Rigmor Rasmussen Breinig. The family moved back to Iowa near both the Rasmussen and Breinig families. They settled in the Norwegian Community of Irwin. Jim suffered polio when he was seven years old and had full recovery after spending several months at Blank Hospital in Des Moines. He attended Jefferson County #7 country school until fourth grade then attended the "town" school in Irwin until he graduated in 1958. He belonged to the Norwegian Lutheran Church in Irwin but could only be confirmed in the Danish Lutheran Church in Kimballton. He was always very active in the church activities starting as a teen teaching Sunday School. Jim then moved to Des Moines to attend Grandview College. He has remained active as an alumni member.

To help pay for his college, Jim worked at Broadlawns Hospital where Barbara Westvold was a student nurse. God brought them together during a snow storm that shut down the city Christmas Eve of 1961. They met on the psychiatric ward - they were actually working. They began dating in March.

They were married a short time later Oct. 6, 1962, after Barbara graduated from nursing school. They were married in the Palestine Lutheran Church in Huxley, where they attended as members until 1967. That union was blessed with three daughters, Dawn Rene in 1964, Wendy LeAnne in 1966, and Kara Rae in 1970. Jim, Barb and family moved from their home on the east side to their new home in Cottage Grove, which led them to Redeemer Lutheran Church. Jim was an active member participating on committees, the council and was president for several years. Jim joined the Des Moines Police Department in January 1964 and retired as a Lieutenant in 1996. He went through Iowa Regency Police Academy, Iowa Law Enforcement Academy and the University of Kentucky in Louisville for Crime Prevention. He worked in nearly all the divisions at some time or another and gathered numerous community service awards including Policeman of the Year in 1971. The first year on the Police Department he began working with Des Moines Police Explorer Post #21. It became a way of life for him for the next 34 years and he remained Committee Chairman until the time of his death. Post #21 became nationally known and Jim received many local and national honors including the William H. Spurgeon Award. It was through his relationship with Grandview Athletics that buses got into his Danish blood and he began Five Oaks Charter Bus Company in 1987 in preparation for when he retired from the police department. He joined and participated in the Danish Brotherhood where he diligently worked on his personal goal of strengthening and promoting the Danish Heritage ties with Grandview College and the Danish communities of Elk Horn and Kimballton. Through events he worked to keep the Danish customs here in Iowa as well as trying to increase the fund-raising for scholarships so students could attend Grandview College. He died Nov. 18, 2003, following a long battle with cancer at age 62.

Jim was preceded in death by his mother, Celma, in 1994; his father, Adolph, in 1998; and a niece, Cynthia Book-Westfall in 1993. He is survived by his wife, Barbara Jane Breinig; his daughters, Dawn R. Breinig and Wendy L. Breinig of Des Moines and Kara R. Breinig of Garland, TX; two sisters, Velma (Tootie) Book of Portland, OR and Verlee (Ed) Logue of Ft. Scott, KS; and mother-in-law, Marge Beard of Madrid; one niece, Laurie (Mike) Uehling of Harrisburg, MO; and four nephews, Dale Sorensen of Lincoln, NE; Randy (Deb) Sorensen of Irwin; Scott (Michelle) Sorensen of Centralia, MO; and Kendall Logue of California; and other relatives.

A memorial service was held Nov. 22, 2003. Eulogies were given by Merri Armentrout, a lifetime friend; Drew Burham, Des Moines Police; Lou Yacinich, Grandview College; Earl Sande, Danish Brotherhood; Robert Tompkins, Police Explorers; and Richard Paulsen, Redeemer Lutheran.