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**James Watts**

**Feb. 7, 1936 — April 26,  
2018**

*From Richland, WA | Born in Butte, MT*

**Celebration of Life**

📅 Starts:

Sat, May 5 2018, 11 a.m.

📍 Location:

Three Rivers Convention Center, 7106 West Grandridge Blvd, Kennewick, WA

James Lindon Watts was born February 7, 1936, in Butte, Montana to parents Earl and Margaret. His early childhood was spent in Butte until the family, which included siblings Shirley, Bob, and Dave, moved to the Tri-Cities in 1942. Jim attended Richland schools before being kicked out for riding a motorcycle down the hallway of Col-Hi. In 1955, Jim met the love of his life, Sharon Templeman. He attended Columbia Basin College in 1956, and as student body president of the first graduating class, escorted First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt on a tour of the Tri-Cities.



After CBC, he briefly attended University of Washington before eloping with his sweetheart, Sharon. Jim and Sharon welcomed their first son, Kerry, in 1958. Their second son, Kurk, was born in 1959, and daughter Vicki joined the family in 1981. Jim held a variety of jobs before beginning his career at Chevron Chemical, where he worked for eighteen years. During this time, Jim grew passionate about fighting for labor rights. He became Secretary Treasurer for the International Chemical Workers Union Local 369, which belonged to the Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council (HAMTC), and he began organizing membership in the Pacific Northwest. Jim was instrumental in establishing Nucleonics Alliance when he determined that a change in representation was needed to protect the rights of his membership. In 1977, he led Nucleonics Alliance to merge with the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers International Union. Having displayed his skills for organizing and negotiating difficult labor contracts, he was tasked by OCAW to spearhead their organizing efforts throughout the United States and Canada. Jim spent the next 23 years as president of his local union, the largest in HAMTC, and as the president of his district in

the international union, which encompassed the western United States, including Alaska and Hawaii. He served as Tridec Executive Committee Board President of the Hanford division. He became the Benton Franklin United Way Treasurer in 1990 and was twice appointed by Governor Booth Gardner to the Washington Citizens Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials from 1991 to 1994. His involvement in the community was extensive, ranging from membership on the Hanford Advisory Board and the establishment of the Hanford Reach Museum, to providing support for charities and improving the economy of the Tri-Cities. Jim retired from the union by 2000, but he wasn't done yet. He was invited to become a partner in Federal Engineers & Constructors--Jim agreed to join if they met his condition that all labor would be union represented. Jim spent many years consulting and helping to resolve labor issues locally and in England. Jim still found time for his many hobbies, which included drawing, gardening, writing books, making chocolate rum balls, beating his grandkids at cribbage, and of course, playing golf with his friends at Horn Rapids.

Jim was preceded in death by parents Earl and Margaret, siblings Shirley, Bob, and Dave, and nephews Scott and Steve.

His memory lives on in Sharon, his wife of 60 years, sons Kerry (Jan) and Kurk (Jackie), daughter Vicki Castleberry (Jimi), grandchildren Krystal, Kimberly, Brennan (Abbie), Jake, Braydyn and Brocton, numerous nieces and nephews, and his best four-legged friend, Buddy.

A celebration of Jim's life will be held at the Three Rivers Convention Center, located at 7016 West Grandridge Boulevard, Kennewick, WA 99336, on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, at 11 a.m. The family requests that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Hanford Reach Museum in Jim's name.

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