



## James Massey Sparger

December 27, 1935 - August 30, 2020

### SPARGER, JAMES MASSEY

Jim Sparger, 84, of Jupiter, passed away on August 30. He fought a long and courageous battle with cancer and the loss of the love of his life in May of this year.

Jim was born in 1935 in Mount Airy, North Carolina, and was raised there. Mount Airy was known as the birthplace of Andy Griffith, besides that of Jim Sparger. Jim was a 1954 high school graduate there. Following graduation, he served in the U.S. Army at the end of the Korean War. He attended UNC-Chapel Hill on the GI Bill. In addition to earning his Liberal Arts degree, the major occurrence of his college experience was meeting his "Mrs. Molly." He gained both a degree and a wife.

Jim and Molly Sparger brought their infant daughter Kelley to Jupiter in 1962 to seek their fortune. They found it and never looked back. Jim became a Social Studies teacher at Jupiter High School; a career that lasted 30 years. He was owner and manager of commercial properties in the Jupiter area and a charter member of Jupiter/Tequesta United Methodist Church.

A major part of Jim's life was his devotion to music of all kinds. Rock and roll was born in the era of Jim's high school years, and his interests ranged from Chuck Berry to the Beatles to Pavarotti. Although he grew up in a hillbilly area, he came to appreciate that music more in his later years. When Jim was in high school, he was a member of the chorus as a tenor. He also sang in the choir at his Mount Airy church. By the time he was teaching at Jupiter High

School, he had been introduced to Motown and Folk. His eclectic tastes in music affected every aspect of his life.

An avid reader from an early age, Jim developed a deep interest in all things historical along with national current events. This helped him become the excellent teacher that he came to be.

After retiring from teaching in 1992, he often referred to himself as a "professional volunteer" and became involved in his community through JayCees and the Chamber of Commerce (where he served as president in 1971). He helped found Habitat for Humanity Thrift Store as well as home construction for the organization. As a docent at Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse/Loxahatchee River Historical Society, he led tours for many years. In addition, he gave many hours of volunteer time to Jupiter Elementary School.

Jim was predeceased by his wife of sixty years, Molly Short Sparger. He is survived by two daughters: Kelley Burns (Vince), Jupiter, and Shannon Sparger, Jupiter; son Todd Sparger (Kim), Port Orange, FL; granddaughters Courtney Sparger, Lauryn Sparger, both of Florida; Shaina Burns of Florida, Erica Burns, of Arkansas; and great-granddaughter Ellie Grace Dietz, Florida, great-grandson Liam Burns, Florida. He is also survived by his sisters Sara Doty, North Carolina; Patricia Loffer (Frank), Arizona; and Lacy Jenkins (Tom), North Carolina; brother George Sparger (Kathy), Miami, Florida; stepmother Betty Jones Sparger, North Carolina, and stepbrother Larry Dinkins (Mildred) Georgia.

A memorial service will be held for both Jim and Molly on Saturday, October 24 at the First United Methodist Church of Jupiter-Tequesta. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to: Jupiter Elementary "save the auditorium" 200 S. Loxahatchee Drive, Jupiter, FL 33458 or the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and Museum, 500 Captain Armours Way, Jupiter, FL 22369.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

OCT **24**. 10:00 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church of Jupiter/Tequesta  
815 Indiantown Road  
Jupiter, FL 33458

# Tribute Wall



“ *James Massey Sparger*

October 22, 2023 at 10:17 AM



“ *He was always such a kind teacher (I was at JHS in the 1980s). Last year, I was in Jupiter last year as my mother was dying in the local hospice and thought I caught a glimpse of him walking outside the building with someone else...it took a moment to connect the dots in my head, but I wasn't sure it was him and hesitated to say hi....Now I wish I had stopped him and told him thank you. It brought back memories of him and some of our best teachers at JHS. We were so fortunate to have him there. Sending lots of love and light to the family.*

Susan Lewis - October 24, 2020 at 11:52 AM



“ *He was a wonderful person, and an engaging and well-loved teacher at Jupiter High School. My sympathy to the family. -- Lissa Calvert Dailey, JHS Class of '65.*

Lissa Dailey - October 23, 2020 at 12:11 PM

ID

“ Thank you Mr. Sparger for all the times that you had a great smile on your face.

Thank you for the times that you met the need of books for our children that didn't have.

Thank you for all the times I saw you reading to a child in the hallways of our school.

Thank you for the times that you would haul all of those wonderful books in our hallways.

Thank you for your endless demonstration of love to our children even if you would never even meet them.

You were a true inspiration to me to never stop giving, never stop loving to your dying breath.

Forever Grateful,

Inez Diaz-Pena, School Counselor at Jupiter Elementary School

---

**Inez Diaz-Pena** - October 21, 2020 at 08:31 AM

SG

“ Six years ago I met Mr. sparker, I remember that I didn't know how to speak English or read in English He was the person who helped me out a lot mostly to communicate with other students. He was the person Who help me learn how to read an English. Thank you Mr. sparger because now I can speak and read English like if it was my first language. I will never forget about you. Thank you. You well always be remembered.

---

**sulivenia Gomez Gomez** - October 20, 2020 at 06:19 PM

EB

“ There are so many memories of our friendship with Jim and Molly. Have known them over 50 years. We toured together at the Lighthouse and I had the privilege to be the first one to entertain him to be a docent. From there his Talents expanded to be one of the best Tour Guides we had. Our three kids, Debbie, worked with him at the High School, Jack and Dianna had him in class. He was "Mr. Jupiter High". We loved you both Jim and Molly, now share your companionship together in Heaven. We shall sadly miss you. In Sympathy and Friendship, The Bates Family, Wally and Evelyne.

---

**evelyne bates** - September 07, 2020 at 04:32 PM

NB

“ We didn't know him well, but he touched our heart in a special way...I remember years ago when he gave us a tour of the Jupiter lighthouse, and had so many great stories, and knew all the history. Neal and I were very impressed. His wife Molly was just as special...Our thoughts and prayers are with Kelley, Shannon, and the rest of the family! Rest In Peace, Jim and Molly!!

*Neal and Norma Burns*

---

**Norma Burns** - September 05, 2020 at 10:26 AM

AB

“ Although I didn't know you for a long time, you touched my heart like you touched many. Your endless fight with a smile on your face, you singing old song from the kazoo band you were in and your beautiful yard that shares so much about history and your passion. I learned so much from you and I will always have that close to my heart. Thank you. Rest In Peace.

---

**amanda b** - September 04, 2020 at 01:28 AM

T(

“ I was fortunate enough to be taught by Mr. Sparger at Jupiter High School (Class of 74) and I use the knowledge he imparted to me every day. He made learning so interesting and so much fun which is probably why I remember it almost 50 years later. My sincerest condolences to the Sparger family. Your dad was a great educator and I know there are many like me who feel the same way.

Teri Newman (Sutcliffe) - September 02, 2020 at 04:08 PM

LY

He was a great teacher and very kind person. What a sweet obituary, to read about all the other things he did. We loved having him at our events. My heart goes out to the family.

Lori Young - September 06, 2020 at 08:11 PM

NA

“ Let us never be sad for a life well lived!...  
How fortunate I am! Jim Sparger lived his life well as a dedicated husband to Molly, a friend to his community, and teacher to many...never be forgotten! Our JHS Class of 1969 had its' 50th class reunion last fall when Mr. Sparger was so kind to take the time to provide us, his former students a tour of the old schoolhouse on Loxahatchee Drive. Our history teacher in high school, "Mr. Sparger" gave us the history lesson of a lifetime...his story of how Jupiter became his home with his precious wife Molly! Those who participated were awestruck by his school spirit, his love for Jupiter, and his unyielding zest for life! We are blessed to have been able to share that special time with him and Molly. Respecting Mr. Sparger as my teacher and coming to know him as a friend in my adult years is a very special gift for which I am very thankful.  
Rest in Peace Mr. Sparger... May your spirit for life transcend to the heavens!  
Until we meet again!  
Nancy "Sylvester" Abbott

Nancy Sylvester Abbott - September 02, 2020 at 04:03 PM