



## James Peter Vanderwoud

June 7, 1971 - November 3, 2022

James Peter Vanderwoud

Jim (“Jimmy”, “Sleepy”) Vanderwoud left this world on Nov 3, 2022 after a short but courageous fight with appendiceal cancer. He passed away at home in Windermere, FL, surrounded by family.

Jim was born June 7, 1971 to Marilyn (DeGraaf) and Roger Vanderwoud in Grand Rapids, MI. He could not wait to take on the world, and was born even before his father could park the car and walk to the delivery room. Jim attended Blandford Nature Center for gifted children and graduated “most likely to succeed” from Creston High School, Class of 1989. He pursued water polo, tennis, student government, theater, Junior Achievement, and caddied at Kent Country Club. This would lead him to receive the esteemed Evans Scholarship to attend the University of Michigan. Jim was always a proud Wolverine, a die-hard fan, and cherished the relationships with his Evans Scholars brothers and sisters.

Jim graduated U of M class of 1993 and eventually landed in Chicago, where he met his future wife Dina (Adad). They married in 2000, after which Jim received his JD from the Kent School of Law in Chicago. In 2004, they welcomed their daughter Annika and Jim became the World’s Greatest Dad. He treasured his time with Annika, his greatest joy. Together they enjoyed

playing sports and music, attending concerts, and traveling. They later moved to Florida where Jim continued his practice in Real Estate Law and worked on his golf game.

Jim embraced life and did not shy away from making memories. From running the naked mile at U of M to being the sole parent jumping on the trampoline at Annika's volleyball match, Jim kept life exciting. Asking Jim about a band was an invitation for him to share his extensive appreciation for music of all kinds. He was passionate about exploring new bands and curating and sharing his music collection.

If Jim's personality was larger than life, his heart was larger still. He offered infinite love, enthusiasm, patience and wit to all. He explained his unwavering commitment to friends and family in part by saying, "Friendships validate your strengths" and by helping people find respect in themselves. Jim was surrounded by fun, caring, and loving friends through his final days.

Jim is survived by his mother Marilyn Kimberlin (De Graaf), wife Dina, daughter Annika, brother Mike, sister Karen (Steve) Martin, nieces, nephews, cousins, and an amazing group of friends. He is predeceased by his father Roger Vanderwoud and step-father Clarence Kimberlin.

In tribute to Jim, his family would ask that you live by his mantra of making someone happy or laugh everyday. Stay tuned to <http://www.degusipefuneralhome.com/> for updates.

A celebration of life for Jim in Grand Rapids has been set. It will be held Saturday, February 11th from 3-6pm at The Rezervoir Lounge, 1418 Plainfield Ave NE, [www.RezLounge.com](http://www.RezLounge.com). For any questions, please call Karen Martin at 419-509-3173.

In Windermere, FL a celebration of life will be held Sunday, December 18 from 2-5pm at his home. In lieu of flowers, those wishing to donate in memory might consider the Evans Scholars Foundation at [wgaesf.org](http://wgaesf.org). For any questions, please call Dina Vanderwoud at (407)879-0868.

# Tribute Wall

SS

“ Hi, I knew Jim all through elementary school, K-6th grade, probably had every class together at Aberdeen, then I moved away after that but was able to reconnect on Facebook in later years and I was happy, but not surprised to see how well he was doing. My childhood memories of him are all good. He was always a nice kid. Always seemed to do good in school and was always one of the 3 cutest boys in class. I'm very sorry to hear this sad news. I pray for peace of heart and mind to all who are hurting. God Bless you and be with you.

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**shannon smith** - February 07, 2023 at 11:06 PM

AF

“ Only recently found out and am still shocked. With his unique spirit/attitude/general love of life, Jim was not on track for an early exit from this world.

Meeting Jim a little more than 20 years ago and, being way to selective when it comes to friends, he was one of two persons from grad school that became close. We were roughly the same age had Very similar tastes in music but it was more than that. Fairly quickly there was a familiarity and connection that there was no doubt in this mind that we would be life-long friends and, frankly, thats not a long list.

While we met out at many shows over the years, once we had both escaped IL, those opportunities were few and, not being one for phone chats or e-mails, we only connected about 1-2/year (my fault).

saw him last time in Orlando when it seemed (to me anyway) that many people had lost their minds. In a few hours of "bar-lecture" he convinced me that it was all cyclical and that, while a few were indeed acting in bad faith, the majority truly did not know any better. Having Covid-time to explore these ideas, it became clear Jim had (gently) introduced his old, less intellectual (!) friend to the idea of consciousness....while, of course, also discussing recent punk/alt-rock shows in a not-so-great bar over several beers. This was invaluable for me at that time and am eternally grateful; wish id had a chance to thank him face to face.

While the conduct of so many is guided by fear, anger, hate, or worse, pride; Jims proceeded from good will and a deep love for this difficult world. On a certain level, this is a loss even for those who did not know him.

Speaking to a friend from grad school (the other one!) the other day and we agreed:

"The term 'great' is used so often referring to 'good' guys that it has (practically) lost meeaning. Jim was textbook Great guy".

We are all lucky to have known him.

Be selfish, tell your family and friends you love them; not for their sake....for yours

**a friend** - January 11, 2023 at 10:49 AM

MM

*Wow!! What an amazing description of your friendship with Jim. Thank you,  
Marilyn, Jim's mom.*

**marilyn Kimberlin, Jim's Mom** - January 18, 2023 at 03:41 PM

KM

*Dear friend of Jim's, it is difficult to describe my little brother's mark he left on everyone he met. You have helped make it clearer. He truly did approach the world with good will, no matter who you were, or your social or political background. Thank you so much for sharing. I'd love to meet you, if you are able to make Jimmy's celebration of life Feb11th. ....Karen*

**Karen Martin** - January 21, 2023 at 09:23 PM

TK

“ Jim was my favorite student and became a great friend in the short time I knew him. His sense of humor was absolutely superb and he was an incredibly intelligent man.

We shared an uncanny amount of interests, the main one being golf. I had the pleasure of sharing my golf knowledge with Jim on a number of occasions and all we would do when we were together was laugh and share stories. You are greatly missed mate. I have nothing but the forest of memories with you.

#### A POEM FOR MY FRIEND JIM VANDERWOUD

For Jim had a soul that was one of a kind,  
A man of such brilliance is so hard to find,  
His heart was created from the purest of gold,  
Why was he taken? Not even that old.

Our friendship was short but felt like forever,  
The laughs were so common when we were together.  
A man of such wit is what I'll remember,  
A sad day in our lives,  
Was the third of November.

But I am not here to speak of that date,  
I'm here to smile as I think of my mate,  
The memories I have will just live in my brain,  
And I'll smile until the day I meet you again.

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**Tony Keeton** - December 17, 2022 at 06:33 PM

KM

What a wonderful Tribute, Tony, for my little brother. Thank you so much.

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**Karen J Martin** - January 13, 2023 at 03:24 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of James Peter Vanderwoud.*



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December 15, 2022 at 01:33 PM



“ *Jim was my attorney and friend for over 15 years. I truly loved him and miss him much. All my love to Dina, Annika and the rest of the family.*

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**sidney Wiener** - December 08, 2022 at 06:59 PM



*Jim made me laugh on many occasions and still does when I think back to moments in time with him. The first time I met him was unforgettable. He, Dina & Annika had recently moved in behind us. Jim found out we were going to have backyard spooky hay rides (w/friends hiding to jump out or control the fog machine) for our oldest daughter's birthday. He said he wanted to help and be a part of the fun to scare the kids. He succeeded & exceeded our expectations wearing a Michael Meyers costume with a spotlight on him and even playing the ever so spooky music. We miss him!*

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**Debbie Scott** - December 16, 2022 at 04:17 PM