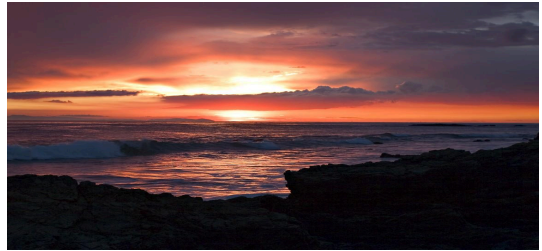


Jim Schnell passed away May 1, 2009

James W. Schnell, 78, beloved husband and father, teacher and coach, sailing enthusiast, singer, tennis player, jewelry designer and world traveler, died Friday, May 1, 2009, at his Cape Coral home with his family by his side. He was born March 4, 1931, in St. Albans, N.Y.



Raised in Rockville Centre, N.Y., he graduated from Rutgers University, where he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in education.

He served in the U.S. Army in Korea from 1953-55 as first lieutenant, civilian personnel officer, 226th Ordinance Base Depot, in Pusan.

After returning from Korea, he taught elementary physical education in Sayville, N.Y., for 30 years. He also coached many sports, including tennis, football, wrestling and basketball.

While living on Long Island and in the Cape, the Schnells belonged to several sailing clubs and traveled the seas from Cape Cod to the Florida Keys and the Bahamas.

For 50 years, the Schnells summered on Schoodic Lake in Milo, Maine, where he designed and built a home.

In 1998, he was commodore of the Cape Coral Sailing Club. He was an avid tennis player and captain of the Blue Team at Park Meadow Tennis Club. He was also a member of the Good Fellas Bocce League.

His travels included the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, and a 16,000-mile RV trip to Alaska.

While in New Zealand, he learned the art of bone carving, making unusual pendants and earrings. He also enjoyed woodcarving, painting, carpentry and singing.

He was a member of the choir of Epiphany Episcopal Church and was past president of the Sounds of Florida Chorus.

He was preceded in death by his parents, James J. and Charlotte Schnell.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Laura Svenson Schnell; daughter, Barbara Schnell (Brett) Howland of Port St. Lucie, Fla.; sisters and brothers-in-law, Jane and Arthur Kossmann of Scituate, Mass., Eileen and Alfredo de Zayas of Miramar, Fla., Ingrid and Carey Herdman of Monroe, N.C., Barbara Svenson of Charlotte, N.C., and Jeannine Svenson of Montgomery, Ala. He was also a much-loved uncle to 17 nephews and nieces.

Friends and relatives are invited to attend a funeral service at 1 p.m. May 16 at Epiphany Episcopal Church, 2507 Del Prado Blvd. A reception at the church will follow the service and burial of ashes in the church memorial garden.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Hope Hospice, 9470 HealthPark Circle, Fort Myers, FL 33908, or Epiphany Episcopal Church are welcome.

A note from Lee Van Voorhees:

You had to know him!

Jim Schnell was one of a kind. Yes, at the end of his career, he irked some people; but Jim had a heart as big as NY and down deep, was a kind, caring wonderful man, and, a great teacher.

I got to Sayville in 1962 and was assigned to an elementary PE position. Jim Schnell was THE man. He started the program and I just followed his plan. He was an organized mentor to me and one who I will always admire. We had a good PE program and it was all because of him. He was inspirational, inventive, thorough, and always put the student at the top of the pyramid. Jim Schnell was all right!

As a Rutger's graduate, I tried to put him down a peg, being from Cortland. But Jim's strong personality over-rided any college preferences. His "Plan" for Elementary PE was right and the one we followed. Barry Fitz, Rich Lewin, and I all have Jim to thank for our jobs! Our longevity! Our retirement!!

Jim worked with many partners, Gina Barath having the most tenure with Jim. She and Jim never saw eye to eye, but together, brought Cherry Ave. and Sunrise Drive PE to new heights and respectability. Jim was an innovator and PE Champion. Even the HS benefited from his belief that PE should be a solid part of a child's daily program. Because of Jim and his unfailing beliefs, PE was given to the Elementary School 5th and 6th graders, 3 times a week. Jr. and Sr. High School programs were reduced, but still given to each student, every other day. Not bad for this day and age.

I got lucky as Ed Maden picked me off the Soccer Field in 1968 and made me his assistant FB coach. Jim used to help me all the time. His experience at Rutger's was extremely helpful later when I took over as Head Coach. He was always there for me.

I know Jim's last few years were tough at Sayville. He was outspoken and a bit rough around the edges. But Jim Schnell was my mentor and a friend I counted on throughout my career. I'm going to miss him.

Jim Schnell passed away last night, I assume from heart failure. He battled that disease for the last 10 years. We're all going to miss him.

Van