

James E. White Ph.D. (1939 - 2011)

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James E. White, PhD, 72
St. Cloud
April 7, 1939 - July 9, 2011

A gathering of friends and family will be held on Friday 6pm, July 22 at 912 Regency Plaza, St. Cloud, MN.

Jim grew up in Denver, Colorado. He was anti-authoritarian from an early age, getting into lively debates with his Sunday school teachers. This led to his interest in philosophy. He received his PhD from the University of Colorado in 1968, and taught philosophy at St. Cloud State University for 36 years. He published the textbook "Introduction to Philosophy" as well as ten editions of "Contemporary Moral Problems," the latest of which came out in 2010 and includes the 4th edition of "War, Terrorism, Torture and Assassination," a project which he first began after the events of 9/11. Dr. White was a popular professor because of his entertaining lectures and his ability to simplify difficult concepts, using examples that young people could relate to. In his retirement, he continued to enjoy weekly discussions with his colleagues.

Jim was an avid mountain climber. He climbed Mount McKinley, the tallest peak in North America. He went on two Himalayan expeditions with his brother Gene and was involved in rescues on both McKinley and Makalu in Nepal. He married his wife Elena in 1963, and the two of them climbed the Matterhorn together, among countless other adventures in the outdoors. They would go on to have two sons, Mike and Leif, and enjoy 48 years of marriage.

Jim was a legend in the local bike and ski community. Well after retirement, he could be found going on difficult group rides with people half his age. He was a strong competitor, winning his age group in almost every race. But it was his magnetic personality and unique sense of humor that attracted people left and right. Jim prioritized recreation over the expensive house and fancy car. If there were any new innovations in biking or skiing equipment, he was the first-adopter. As his collections grew, it was Jim's way of helping young local athletes to give them bikes and skis and equipment that would otherwise be impossible for them to afford. Find someone out riding or skiing or rock climbing, and there's a decent chance they got started in the sport thanks to a piece of Jim's donated equipment.

Jim was a source of fun, humor, and inspiration to many, and he will be sorely missed.

Jim is survived by his wife, Elena, sons, Michael and Leif, and a half brother, Joseph White.

He is preceded in death by his parents and brother, Gene.

Memorials are preferred to The Arc of Minnesota, and the Nordic Ski Club of Central Minnesota.