



James Richard Penaligon

MAY 6, 1953 - NOV 4, 2024



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Jim Penaligon, 71, longtime resident of San Diego, California, died unexpectedly on November 4, 2024 while surfing in San Diego.

Jim's sudden death shocked everyone who knew him. Since his childhood days, Jim was a natural athlete. In adulthood he conquered the slopes, skiing black diamond runs with speed and grace. He earned many trophies in competitive volleyball, and he made running and hiking look easy.

Yet more than snow, sand or trails, Jim was most at home in the water. He won several awards with his flawless butterfly stroke, and his form was admired by many at the swimming pools. He was in his absolute element in the ocean. He covered impressive distances so far from the beach that he appeared as a dot in the distant waves. This annoyed the life guards who feared the unknown, but Jim always convinced them that he had more than enough stamina to swim with endless joy.

Jim was born on May 6, 1953 to parents Dorothy and Jack Penaligon. He and his siblings, Nancy McKenney (FL), Carol Allen (CA) (Bob), and John Penaligon (CO) (Janet), spent their childhoods in Fayson Lakes, New Jersey. Jim graduated from Villanova in 1975 and established his own CPA practice after moving to San Diego.

His family and friends enjoyed his cheerful outlook on life, and he was known for his laughter, his smiles, and his kindness. His parents predeceased him and he leaves behind his wife, Barb, his siblings, his brother-in-law, Henry Ruczewski, and many cousins, nieces and nephews in California, New Jersey and Florida.

While hiking in an adventure club, he found the love of his life, Barbara Ruczewski. They were married in 2004 on the big island of Kona, Hawaii. Jim was a good husband and a devoted stepfather to Isaiah, and he loved spoiling his beloved dog, Presley.



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Jim and Barb's shared passion for hiking took them to our national parks, as well as Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Poland and England. Jim was also a long-time member of his friends-based surfing club that traveled regularly to surf in Baja.

Jim made lifetime friends wherever he went. He maintained cherished connections from Fayson Lakes that dated as far back as kindergarten, and as recently as this year's acquaintances from San Diego and his and Barb's global travels.

A portion of Jim's ashes will be scattered at his favorite surfing spot, Tourmaline Surf Beach.

A celebration of life is planned in San Diego, in January. Exact dates and times will be provided soon on this website, (www.greenwoodmemorial.com) If you cannot attend, please consider posting a remembrance at this website. Your memories will be cherished by his family and friends.

Though an undetected heart issue took him away from our world, his loving heart has left a beacon of light and precious memories for all of us.



Tribute Wall

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RK

Richard Kramer posted:

I remember Jim from our days at Villanova (1971-1975). We never kept in touch, but we were in the same graduating class, were in many of the same classes and lived in the same dormitory for a couple of years. I'll always remember him telling me that his plans after graduation were to relocate to San Diego and finding / establishing an Accounting position there. I just happened to see his obituary while I was recollecting people that I went to college with. My heart goes out to his family and dear friends! I'll always remember Jim as a very kind, gentile person who was a top student and always had a smile on his face.

July 28 at 12:22 PM



Derek Someda posted:

Jim was a consistent Positive attitude at Volleyball. When he first learned to surf He took me to Blacks in his new truck for an afternoon of the largest SD summer surf we could find . I will always remember that day as he kept at it and became, "most excellante ", as he would say. He was more than my and my wife's family CPA. He was super prompt, responsive, knowledgeable, helpful for my last minute filings. He always wanted to show me his cat run course and Presley. Jim was and is my Dear FriendDerek Someda

March 9 at 8:31 PM

JW

Jb Watson posted:

I knew him from the SDH3 group first, then as an excellent accountant for a company I worked in. His combination of humor, calm and professionalism were rare. I enjoyed the times we were in person, whether talking or running on a trail, or my asking accounting questions. From the pandemic on, our interactions were virtual, and that is an unfortunate by product of the day. I would have benefited from more in person time with Jim.

January 19 at 6:29 PM

RH

Rich Hoffmann posted:

Just heard of Jim's passing and wanted to send my condolences. I was Jim's roommate freshman year at Villanova. He was a fine roommate and a great person. He will be missed!Rich hoffmann

January 10 at 4:27 PM



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JB

Joseph Bonis posted:

I just learned of Jim's passing today, Jim and I have been friends since our freshman year at Villanova. We were both accounting majors, lived on the same dorm floor and pledged the DPE fraternity together. We have so many fond memories of the great times at Villanova and afterward. I will always remember our trips to CA and when Barb and Jim visited out here. Jim was truly a great friend and will be dearly missed. Please accept my condolences and know that Jim, Barb and the rest of his family are in my thoughts and prayers. Joe Bonis

January 10 at 10:24 AM

HS

Heather Schultz posted:

I had the good fortune of having Jim as my tax accountant for many years. Jim was an exceptional person. Such a kind, gentle, and genuine soul. I'm deeply sorry for your loss and wishing you strength and peace during this difficult time. Heather Schultz

January 1 at 7:47 AM

AJ

Anne' Josefson posted:

I Played volleyball with Jimmy at DeAnza Cove on Neal's net. I wasn't a pro and Jimmy always treated me with kindness and respect. He didn't talk much and you could ALWAYS rely on Jimmy to play his position with good humor and generosity . What a dear, dear man. Condolences to his family. We will always miss him. He made a big difference in our volleyball world. ❤️🌊

December 28 at 12:29 PM

RT

Richard Lang Thompson Jr posted:

I just found out today of his passing from Derek Someda - Jimmy played Volleyball at Deanza Cove with us for at least 20 years - Neal White passed away 7-20-23 -Neal led our group for at least 20 years - I took over since then. We would play with Jimmy's dog Presley and I would talk to Jimmy re tax stuff as my Dad and Bro in law did taxes too. He was the nicest guy in the world - wish I knew jimmy better - we guys tend to not share as much as the women! Surprisingly, I didn't know he surfed! I was a bodysurfer - We are the same age - just 5 months apart - hope I can attend his memorial service.

December 24 at 6:54 PM



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SK

Scott Kelman posted:

Thanks Jim for the many years of friendship and accounting help. One of the most gentle, kind and competent souls I have ever known. This is a hard loss.

December 22 at 4:18 PM

DA

Dan posted:

We will greatly miss our friend and long time tax accountant. He has been helping us for over 25 years with our taxes and he is such a kind man. I hope he is at peace surfing and playing with Presley his little dog. Good bye Jim. Thank you for everything.

December 20 at 10:54 AM

HR

Henry Ruczewski lit a candle in honor of James.

Jim was not only my Brother in Law but my beloved friend. Jim always had a loving and giving heart accented with his ever present smile. A gentle soul whose kindness and zest for life will not be forgotten. Rest easy my friend. Love and miss you buddy.



November 25 at 6:30 AM

AR

Annie Revel posted:

As a 40-year friend and tax client, I was so very sorry to hear the news. Jim was always an upbeat, happy man and I treasure every minute with Jim from the beach and from my home where he prepped my taxes. What is truly beautiful is that he had a great last day, doing something he loved and passing quickly. RIP my dear Jimmy P.

November 18 at 2:16 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring James by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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