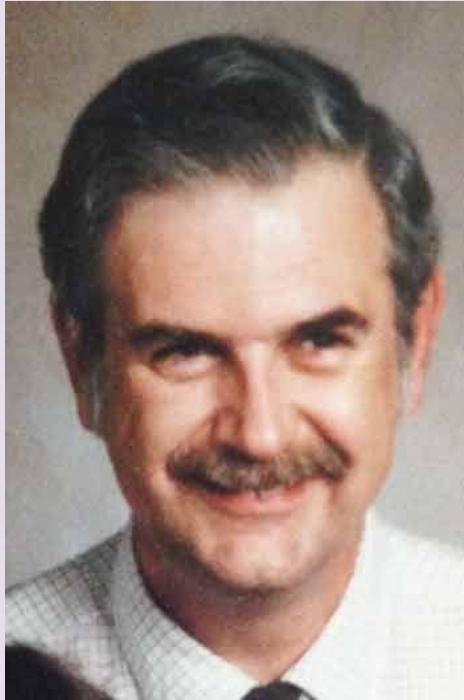


JAMES W. THEISEN



James Willard Theisen, of Plainwell, MI, passed away peacefully, Monday, April 27, 2015 at Life Care Center of Plainwell. He was born Aug. 26, 1939, in Chicago, the only child of Joseph and Eleanore Theisen.

The family moved to Paw Paw when he was five-years-old, and he graduated from Paw Paw High School in 1957. After earning his BA from Western Michigan University and his Master's Degree from the University of Michigan, he started teaching high school in Albion, MI.

A summer in Europe in 1964 resulted in 12 years of teaching with the military overseas high schools, one year in the Azores and 11 in Wiesbaden, Germany. His teaching career focused on English and history, and he was so admired by his students that it became common for them to seek him out years later.

He was a beautiful writer and an accomplished photographer, and in 1977, wrote "The Horizon is Farther from the Hilltop," a much-loved collection of his impressions and photographs.

He moved to Washington, D.C. in 1978 to work at a publishing company, and later as a writer/editor with the U.S. Veterans Administration and several defense contractors. He was also self-employed with a photography business. He returned to teaching in the late 1990s, and retired as an online professor for Strayer University.

He moved back to Michigan in 2004 when his first grandson was born. Jim was a very tall man at 6'6", but he liked to joke that he was 4'30".

His loves and interests covered a wide range of areas, including classical music, antique cars, Santa Claus, the Titanic disaster, the lost city of Atlantis, thunderstorms, and paranormal and unexplained phenomena.

He also enjoyed serving on the Board of The International Fortean Organization, and as editor-in-chief of its quarterly publication, "The INFO Journal."

Jim was preceded in death by his father in 1977; and his mother in 2009. He is survived by his doting daughter, Lisa "Kidlet" (Otto) Gustafson of Kalamazoo, and his grandsons Otto "Joey" and Anders "Andy". He also leaves behind a large, loving family of friends in the Washington, D.C. area, including dear friend, Mark Cobb.

Per Jim's wishes, his body has been donated to the University of Michigan Medical School.

Friends may meet the family Saturday, May 9, from 2 to 4 p.m. at Langeland Family Funeral Homes, Westside Chapel, 3926 S. 9th St., Kalamazoo.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the cultural or social organization of the donor's choice.

Visit Jim's personalized webpage for online guestbook, or to leave a condolence at: www.langelands.com.

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