



James Mares

May 13, 1937 - February 13, 2025

James Arthur Mares was called to heaven on February 13, 2025, at the age of 87.

Born on May 13, 1937, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Jim was the third of five children born to Albert and Edna Mares. In 1941, the family relocated to Bremerton, Washington, where his father worked as an electrician at the Bremerton Naval Yard. Jim fondly recalled his early years in the “projects” in Bremerton and later, the rustic farm they moved to in Port Orchard. The family proudly grew their own food on the farm, and it was there that Jim developed a deep love for hunting and fishing, passions that stayed with him throughout his life.

Jim met his future wife, Yvonne, while attending South Kitsap High School. They were married on November 21, 1958, and shared over 66 years of marriage. Their first home was in Seattle, where they both worked at Boeing. In September 1960, Jim joined the Army and was stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, for most of his 3-year service. Their first child, Lisa, was born in 1963 during this time.

Following his honorable discharge from the Army in 1963, Jim pursued a career with the Kitsap County Sheriff's Department as a deputy. After two years, he transitioned to the Washington State Game Department, where he served for 34 years. Jim's career allowed him to combine his love for law

enforcement and the outdoors. His first assignment was in Long Beach, Washington, where their son, Paul, was born in 1965. He was then transferred to Hoquiam/Aberdeen, spending the next nine years working in the forested areas of Grays Harbor. During this time, Jim also served as caretaker for a Girl Scout Camp, where the family lived surrounded by wildlife. Over the years, they cared for abandoned deer, bear cubs, and even a raccoon, nurturing them back to health before releasing them into the wild or transporting them to a game farm.

In 1974, Jim received a long-awaited transfer to Wenatchee, Washington, where the family settled on 3 acres near Malaga. It was a perfect spot for raising a family, and Jim enjoyed tending a small orchard of cherry trees for many years.

Jim retired from the Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly the Game Department) in 1999 after a distinguished 34-year career. After retirement, he spent three summers working at Pangborn Field, maintaining the fire crew's equipment.

One of Jim's greatest joys was spending time with his family, and he passed on his love of reading to his children. He also enjoyed playing the card game "hucklebuck," a family tradition that continues today.

Jim is survived by his wife of 66 years, Yvonne; his children, Paul (Diane) Mares and Lisa (Robb) Myers of Wenatchee; three grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents and his four siblings.

The family would like to express their gratitude for the wonderful care Jim received during his final months, particularly the staff at Regency Rehabilitation Center and his hospice nurse, Amy, for their exceptional support.

A Celebration of Life will be held in the spring. Chapel of the Valley is handling the arrangements.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Jim's name to the American Red Cross, a cause he supported as a lifelong blood donor.

Tribute Wall

JE

“ I just saw where Jim passed and had memories of the elk season in the Colockum when I worked with him. That was in 1999 when he retired. He knew the roads and canyons well and I learned from him. He had his new Ford truck and loved it. He took one day off, and I drove his truck with one warning, "Don't drive on the Bruton road." He called it the brutal road. He will be missed by everyone who knew him.

John Erickskon - August 27, 2025 at 11:15 AM

WY

“ Lisa and Family so sorry for your loss.

My Forever Memory was the prank on Doug Hunter in the Stemilt sales office. Doug, an avid fisherman and Lisa had an ongoing feud of pranking from fake snakes to firecrackers, but when her Dad showed up in uniform to question him about sending an illegal fish to a buyer friend in California, it was the best.. I was always just an innocent bystander enjoying the creativity. ;-).

RIP Mr Mares.

William P. (Bill) Young

William Young - June 18, 2025 at 02:33 PM

GG

“ My friendship with Jim goes back nearly 70 years. I met Jim when his family moved to the Long Lake area near Port Orchard, Washington. We were in our middle teenage years, Jim being a couple of years older than me. We both liked outdoor sports, but he had the knowledge and would show me how to rig up fishing gear and how to cast the lures, and how to handle guns and set up duck decoys for hunting. Kind of like a big brother would do. I learned a lot from him, both in outdoor sports and life in general. I think he inspired me to be a better person.

I have many memories of those days: one particularly sticks out in my mind. Jim and I were ice skating Long Lake and I broke through the ice about a mile and a half down the lake and he immediately flattened himself on the ice reaching out to help me get back up out of the water. He helped me there risking himself to the same fate. Another memory is of Jim taking a German language class in high school and in his witty humor would speak out once in a while with a German/English phrase . This earned him the nick name of "Herr Jim" or "The Herr". Another great and grateful memory I have is when Jim drove over halfway across the state to be Best Man at my wedding and in his witty humor said that the wedding ring should be 'large enough to go on the finger, but small enough that it won't fall off'. In more recent times I have the wonderful memories of him taking me boat fishing and ice fishing up at Fish Lake. Yes, of course, he would show me how to rig up the fishing gear and where to fish. Be sure my fishing license up to date also.

Though sometimes years would pass before we would see each other, I always thought of Jim " Herr" Mares as the best friend I ever had. I am sad of his passing, but I am also happy that he has had such a loving wife and lovely family to share his life with.

Gary Goodwin

GARY F GOODWIN - March 03, 2025 at 07:33 PM

DO

“ *Jim was a good friend and fellow GAME WARDEN. My best to the family. doug swanson*

doug - February 20, 2025 at 06:12 PM