

# W. JAMES BESEMER



W. James Besemer

March 27, 1928 - May 4, 2017

SOUTH BEND - W. James “Jim” Besemer, 89, of South Bend, passed away Thursday evening, May 4th after a brief illness. He was at peace during his final hours, surrounded by his loving wife and three children. He was born in South Bend on March 27th 1928 to Wilhelm and Martha (Schehrer) Besemer, who had both recently immigrated to South Bend from Germany. On August 5th, 1950, he married his high-school sweetheart, Elizabeth Marie “Betty” Stewart, who preceded him in death, in 1978.” On July 12th 1992, he married the second love of his life, Lorraine J. “Lorrie” Fredenburg, who survives him.

As a boy, he was active in sports and achieved the rank Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts. He continued his love of sport as an adult playing softball, bowling, and golf (especially enjoying time spent at the 19th hole). After graduating from Washington Clay High School, he served in the Navy for two year as an air-radio operator, on PBY amphibious, search & rescue planes. After the Navy, he earned a degree in Mechanical Engineering, from Tri-State University in Angola, Indiana (now known as Trine). After college, he continued his interest in aircraft by going to work for Bendix, Energy-Controls Division, where he served as an aeronautical engineer for 42 years, before retiring in 1992. He is perhaps

most proud of his work on the proto stealth bomber, the SR 71 “Black Bird” and the F-111 fighter-bomber. He remained good friends with many of his colleagues and business associates from Bendix, and really enjoyed his Thursday “board meeting” luncheons “with the boys.”

He will also be dearly missed by many friends, as well as, his sister, Rosemarie Hofferbert (John Morse), of Venice, Florida; his two sons, Jim (Anne Jacko) Besemer, of Portland, Oregon and Dave (Susan) Besemer, of South Bend; his daughter, Linda (Erika Suderburg) Besemer, of Los Angeles, California and his four grandchildren, Michael Besemer, of Portland, Oregon; Elizabeth “Lizzie” Besemer, of Portland, Oregon; Abby Besemer, of Madison, Wisconsin and Andrew (Jenny Agostino) Besemer, of South Bend.

Funeral services will be held at 12:00 Noon Monday, May 8th in the Welsheimer Family Funeral Home North, 17033 Cleveland Rd. with Rev. William Wildey of Zion United Church of Christ officiating. Committal services and burial will follow in St. Joseph Valley Memorial Park, Granger. The family will receive friends in the funeral home on Monday from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the service.

In lieu of flowers donations could be made to Pet Refuge of South Bend, and the Clay Township Fire Department whose help and service to Jim was invaluable. Family and friends may leave email condolences at [www.welsheimer.com](http://www.welsheimer.com).  
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