



## Larry James Blythe

August 1, 1951 - August 28, 2022

Sheffield - Larry James Blythe passed away unexpectedly, but peacefully in his Sheffield home on Sunday, August 28, 2022 at the age of 71. He was born on August 1, 1951 in Shelbyville, IL to Bertha (Thomas) and Reo Ray Blythe.

James graduated from East Peoria High School in 1969 and proudly enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, where he served two terms from 1971 to 1979. Once discharged as a Marine Corps Sergeant E5, he attended ICC and Illinois State University. James was a computer programmer by trade who provided services for many top tier companies during his career. In his later years, he was a volunteer at the Little Rock Veterans Outpatient Clinic where he taught TaiChi as a physical and meditative therapy technique.

To condense a lifetime into a paragraph hardly seems possible so here's a bit more about our dad...

HE WAS A SURVIVOR. He survived childhood trauma, active military duty, alcoholism, Hepatitis-C and lung cancer. He celebrated his "birthday" on July 5th of each year, the day that he took his last drink thirty-nine years ago. The emotional battles which he fought in his early years left personal casualties, and he spent the second part of his life trying to make amends. Some he managed and others he didn't; He never stopped thinking of the people who he had let down or disappointed and struggled to believe that he was an

amazing father and friend despite it all.

Dad was a great storyteller and some of the best memories start with him saying, "Have I ever told you about the time..." We may never know how much truth was mixed in with his embellishments, but we learned to not try to sort fact from fiction. Simply listening to him was a pleasure.

He had many passions in life and was an avid reader and well-educated on political history. He had often shared that he would have liked to have been a college instructor, but he settled for filling his Facebook feed (and his family's ears) with his opinions on current world affairs. He never left home without his Kindle and he had a passion for the works of Robert A. Heinlein. He loved learning and experimenting with new things. He once cut hundreds of cardboard triangles and duct-taped them together to make a giant dome in his yard because he was considering building a dome-shaped home. He also researched and successfully built an aquaponics system to grow a ginormous garden; he was sketching out an improved system not long before he passed. He was also quite proud of his recipe for home-brewed, non-alcoholic ginger beer which he had branded as "Rakehell Jim's Ginger Beer" in honor of his grandmother; She often told him as a young boy that he would "rake the coals of Hell just to stir up more trouble!"

At some point, he decided that ballroom dancing would be enjoyable (or a great place to meet women) and he became quite skilled. He was so dapper! He loved the tango especially and had a spare closet full tuxedos and suits. Dad also owned about fifty different hats and never left home without one. His handle-bar moustache looked best under a fedora, he was certain.

He was an artist and over the years produced amazing leather work and macrame items. He had recently made a business card for his macrame, calling himself "The Knotty Old Man." He passed the cards out with a grin every time.

Our father was not a religious man but did embrace a deep level of spirituality; he would often listen to the teaching of Lai-Tzu, Daoist philosopher while he worked on his macrame pieces. He found comfort in meditating through Tai Chi forms and believed in an interconnectedness of all living things. He understood that we were here to learn, teach, grow and evolve.

Our father was a friend and a confidant. He will be dearly missed and never forgotten.

Surviving James, the ever proud father of his five daughters; Michelle (David) DeVoss of Sheffield, Illinois; Angela Blythe of Knoxville, Tennessee; Jacque Blythe of Celina, Ohio; Jennifer Blythe-(Cyle) Schumacher of Charlotte, North Carolina; and Joni (Rick) Matlock of Atlanta, Indiana. He had fifteen grandchildren and eleven great- grandchildren.

Dad was preceded in death by his biological father and loving parents, Thomas and Bertha Green.

In lieu of flowers may be directed to Freedom House in Princeton, IL.

A military funeral service will be held in his honor at the Rock Island National Cemetery on September 16, 2022 at 11:30am with his family and closest friends in attendance.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Sheffield, IL Community Center from 2:00pm-4:00pm and all are welcome.

Online condolences and memorials may be directed to [www.norbergfh.com](http://www.norbergfh.com)

Arrangements by Norberg Memorial Home Inc. & Monuments.

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

SEP **16.** 11:30 AM (CT)

Rock Island National Cemetery  
Rodman Ave  
Moline, IL 61265  
(309) 782-2094

## Celebration of Life

SEP **16.** 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM.

Sheffield

# Tribute Wall



“ *Beautiful Dreams* was purchased for the family of  
*Larry James Blythe.*



---

September 08, 2022 at 04:36 PM