

Legacy of Topeka South Rotary



James Marshall (Jim) Brown

December 11, 1938 – January 24, 2013

Jim joined the Topeka South Rotary Club in 1989, shortly after its founding. Jim was sponsored into the club by Carl Seufert, who was a long-time staple in my Friday mornings.

Jim was a native Topekan and graduated from Topeka High School and went on to become a member of the local Pipefitters Union #165 and was a member until he passed away in January of 2013. He was also a member of the Golden Rule Masonic Lodge for 50 years, Scottish Rite Valley of Topeka and the Arab Shrine.

Jim was a dedicated family man who believed in working hard and enjoyed the simple pleasures in life like hunting, fishing and spending time with his kids and grandkids. Jim and Sandy were married for 55 years.

I started calling on Jim and his company back in 1987 as an inexperienced sales engineer. Jim was always easy to talk to, albeit a very soft spoken man. Jim taught me one of my first 'hard' lessons of dealing with mechanical contractors by 'sticking it to me' in a way that only Jim could do. He acted more like my father who was trying to prepare me for the cruel world ahead of me, and made the ordeal palatable and more of a life-lesson. I guess that I must have passed the test that Jim threw at me, because it was not long after that when he asked me to visit the TSR Club as his guest.

I consider myself one of the lucky ones that got to know Jim on a personal level as well as a professional level. He always conducted his business in a professional and ethical manner and was a true testament to The 4 Way Test.

He was a very reserved man but I knew his love for Rotary ran deep. He was always one of the first to offer his help and guidance in his area of expertise, but never one to force his opinion on others. I knew how much he looked forward to the Friday morning meetings and meals as an opportunity to catch up with his friends and colleagues.

My wife and I were lucky enough to share a table with Jim and Sandy at one of my early TSR Holiday parties, and I found out that Jim did indeed loosen up a little more after a couple of trips to the bar. We had a great time with Jim and Sandy that night.

Unfortunately, we lost Jim all too early, the result of his early days working hard in the plumbing and mechanical business working with asbestos. But through all of it, I never heard Jim complain once. He was a very stoic man who provided a great example of being a Rotarian.

– *Tim Swope*