

## **Kathleen's words a the memorial service of James Martin Hawkins, January 19, 2007**

My name is Kathleen and I am Jean's oldest daughter. My father died when he was three years younger than I am now. He was an exceptional man, and his shoes were hard to fill, but James Hawkins came along and did a spectacular job. A family could not find a better step-father. When he and my mother met, Jim was the captain of a boat that took tourists shelling off Marco Island in Florida. He asked her to go along on a tour. How could she resist a pick-up line like that?

Jim was a wonderful companion to her. They enjoyed traveling together east to the Holly Land, where they walked where Jesus walked, and in the foot steps of Paul; and they traveled west as far as Hawaii. She encouraged him to play golf, and offered to teach him, but she warned him he would not enjoy the game unless he learned to hit the ball straight down the fairway. She says he worked very hard at it. One could not ask for a better student. He started to play at 60 years of age, and during only 20 years of golfing he made five certifiable hole-in-ones! That has to be a world record!

Jim was a big part of the lives of his step-grandchildren, Krista and Michael, when they were young, and Krista fondly called him "MY Jimmy".

In Florida he was a volunteer at their church's pre-school program, and was truly loved by many of the children. Unfortunately, exposure to childhood illnesses made it necessary for him to give up this volunteer work. He made a difference in other family's lives through volunteer time with Habitat for Humanity. He donated gallons of blood, and often showed off the donor medallion he kept on his key chain.

Jim was always willing to lend a hand to Fritz and me, and helped us with mechanical problems. With his farming background, he immediately recognized the Wisconsin engine in the high-lift we use to restore our old house, and he helped us keep it running. He often helped to figure out electrical issues, and he could balance a ceiling fan in no time! He tried to teach me to use an ohm meter, or whatever it's called... I was not a very good student, and will sorely miss his talents.

He was a friend to birds and cats alike, and kept us stocked with tomatoes and green peppers in the summers.

Jim was always ready with a joke and we can not remember him being in a sour mood, even through tough times with his health even when he broke his ankle.

Molly, his step-niece, who is here today, wrote a note to Jean with some of her memories of Jim, and I would like to share part of that note: "He sure loved to stay busy, just like last summer when you were at my Mom's, all I did was mention that my bracelet fell through the cracks in the dock. Jim went right to work engineering a thing-a-ma-bob to hook it with. What a guy. He will be missed. He is probably driving a boat in heaven right now giving newcomers a tour. In his full glory, too!"