



## James Robert Innerebner

April 26, 1947 - February 25, 2026

James R. Innerebner, 78, passed away at Ball Hospice House on February 25, 2026. He was born April 26, 1947, in Clintonville, Wisconsin, to Herb and Irene (Seefeldt) Innerebner. When he was about a month old, he and his mother moved to Michigamme, Michigan, where his father was employed.

Jim graduated from Michigamme High School in 1965, where he was a talented and well-known basketball player. After high school, he attended Northern Michigan University, graduating in 1969. While there, he married his high school sweetheart, Bernadine (Vadnais), on December 14, 1968. Together they completed their degrees and began their teaching careers at Brimley Area Schools.

Jim taught sixth-grade math and science for thirty years. He and his wife often referred to their students as “their kids,” creating many lasting memories over the years. Jim’s classroom was especially memorable, filled with live gerbils, snakes, frogs, and many interesting displays. His students cared for and enjoyed the classroom pets. In recognition of his dedication, Jim was selected as Teacher of the Year by his peers and honored by the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District.

In addition to teaching his regular classes, Jim taught Hunter Safety and POPS classes, started a student safety patrol program, and helped with the

Boy Scouts in Sault Ste. Marie, where he and his grandson enjoyed participating in the Pinewood Derby. He also taught driver's education and often joked that he had taught most of the kids in Brimley how to drive, though he claimed no responsibility for any later infractions they received.

Jim also coached Junior Varsity girls basketball in Brimley. For many years he had very successful seasons, earning championship trophies. True to his nature, however, it was never only about winning—it was about building character. He always made sure that everyone got into the game.

One of Jim's favorite memories was when Al Demroske asked him to help coach football. Even though Jim had never played the sport himself, he gladly helped wherever he could.

Jim was a Christian and a member of the Congregational Church in Brimley, where he served on the church board and was a leader of the youth group alongside his mentor, Imogene Schraeder. Together they shared God's word while also leading many fun outdoor activities.

He was also a member of the Brimley Ambulance Corps for many years, serving alongside Francie Robbins and Avic Alcorn.

Jim had a deep love for history and became involved with the Wheels of History Train Museum in Brimley. He later created a Facebook page that he faithfully updated each day with historical information and local updates. He also did the same for his hometown of Michigamme.

Jim volunteered with Ball Hospice House in Sault Ste. Marie, generously giving his time to support patients and their caregivers. He visited homes to read with patients or spend time with them, allowing caregivers a chance to run errands or take a break from their daily routines. Jim was always ready to

lend a hand when he could, sometimes even delivering medical supplies to households in need.

After retiring from teaching, Jim also drove a van that transported veterans to Iron Mountain for medical appointments. He often said that he got more out of those trips than anyone else, as he enjoyed listening to the veterans' war stories along the way.

Jim was a humble man who did not seek attention, instead remaining steadfast in doing what was right and helping others whenever he could.

Jim is survived by his wife of 57 years, Bernadine (Vadnais) Innerebner; daughter Jami (George) Moran; grandson Anthony (AJ) Violetta; and great-grandson Dominic. He is also survived by his son Nicholas (Alison) Innerebner; grandson Andrew Innerebner; and twin granddaughters Laura and Julie Innerebner. Additional survivors include step-granddaughter Andrea (Eric) Dillon and step-great-grandson Owen.

He is also survived by two brothers, Donald (Sandra) Innerebner and John Innerebner; one sister, Carla (Dennis) Skytta; and many nieces and nephews, including Bobbi Soban, Lisa Walsh, and Matt and Dana Skytta and their families.

Jim is also survived by his very best friend, John (Doris) Morrison, whose friendship became a brotherhood. Over the years they built a camp together and raised their sons like brothers. Their friendship remained strong until the very end.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Herb and Irene Innerebner; his in-laws, Al and Judy Vadnais; and his beloved sister-in-law, Viole Innerebner.

A private family burial will be held this summer on Mission Hill.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Jim's honor to Ball Hospice House, 308 W. 12th Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783; the youth group at First Congregational Church, 6984 M-221, Brimley, MI 49715; or the Wheels of History Train Museum, 6799 W Depot St, Brimley, MI 49715.

Condolences may be given to the family at [www.familylifefh.com](http://www.familylifefh.com).

Obituary as submitted by family.

# Cemetery Details

## Mission Hill Cemetery

Bay Mills Township  
14740 W. Lakeshore Dr.  
Brimley, MI 49715

# Events

**Details are pending.**

# Tribute Wall

DM

“ *To Jim's family*

*So sorry for your loss. I remember Jim from coaching girls basketball. Nice fellow with a very nice demeanor. Always enjoyed talking to him.*

*RIP, you will be missed by many.*

*Dave Miller*

*Former DeTour Girls Coach*

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**David Miller** - March 17 at 04:48 PM

DL

“ *Mr. I was my science teacher in the Brimley school. Polite and very social. Helpful and always give his honest opinion. R I P You will be missed but never forgotten.*

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**Donna Link** - March 10 at 02:06 PM

IH

“ *Innerebner Hildegund lit a candle in memory of James Robert Innerebner*



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**Innerebner Hildegund** - March 10 at 01:51 PM

CC

“ I wasn't lucky enough to have Mr. I as my actual teacher as he and Mrs. I joined Brimley schools the year I started 7th grade, but my sisters both had him. I was so jealous. He had the most amazing classroom I'd ever seen! He always had a smile on his face, and such a calm demeanor. He did, however teach me to drive. He never raised his voice or appeared flustered. I still don't know how he managed that one. He was an amazing man and we were blessed to have him at Brimley. I'm so very sorry to hear of his passing and I send my deepest condolences to Mrs. I and the rest of his family. He will be missed by so many!

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**Cyndi Doran Clark** - March 09 at 04:58 PM

PD

*Jim's love of learning, teaching others, his keen interest of history, and his faith in God was an inspiration to many. He was such a good man, caring, hard working, and he had such a great sense of humor. Jim will surely be missed by many. Our condolences to Bernie and family.*  
-Jack and Pat Dean

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**Patricia Dean** - March 11 at 04:23 PM

LG

“ I am so grateful to have known Mr. I. Several years ago, when I was in the U.P., we stopped at the Train Museum and were treated to his kindness and storytelling. Blessings to his family. May he always be remembered.

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**Larry Guengerich** - March 09 at 04:23 PM

CG

“ ‘Mr.I’ taught both of our kids in school, and they loved him. The camping outings were a great favorite time for our kids, along with many other classroom adventures!  
We know that he and our son, Alan, are ‘catching up’ in the presence of Jesus!  
We’re so sorry Bernie, you and your family are in our thoughts and prayers.



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**Chris/Lynn Gillies** - March 09 at 03:14 PM

HM

*I was “one of his kids” Mr I as most of us knew him, was my sixth grade teacher, one of my coaches, and taught me and many others how to drive.... He was a powerful and positive influence during my developmental years I am grateful to be part of his story!!! His teachings live on!*

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**Harold Mittlestat** - March 09 at 05:54 PM

JB

*I am so sorry to hear this. Jim was a great guy and a good friend. I coached Pickford when he coached Brimley. He was a good coach and a really nice man. I also helped coach his granddaughter Laura when she played at Sault High when she played for my son. We will miss him. Our prayers are with his family.*

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**John Bennin** - March 10 at 08:25 PM