



James Robert Higgins, 85, passed away March 25, 2018 due to complications from Alzheimer's disease. Jim Higgins was from Hillsboro, Ohio and was a 1954 graduate of Ohio State University where he graduated with a degree in Animal Science. Jim met his wife of 55 years, Lois Mary Prucha, at OSU and their first date was spent in the projection booth at Ohio State where Jim was the projectionist. A member of the OSU ROTC, Jim served as a Captain in the U.S. Army stationed in Ft. Leonard Wood, MO and was a member of the U.S. Army Reserve. After his active duty, Jim and Lois purchased a 274 acre farm in Highland County where they raised their 5 children. Jim farmed raising grain, hay, and Christmas trees, and also owned and operated the Higgins Construction and Supply Company, a builder's supply and tool rental business for many years. The Higgins Construction Company built over

2700 buildings in the region. Jim had numerous interests including being an aircraft pilot (member of the OSU Flying Farmers of America), SCUBA diving, beekeeping, apitherapy, traveling, photography, classical music, Christmas tree grower, and was the first professional post frame building contractor in southern Ohio. Jim was a founding member of the National Frame Builders Association, member of the NFBA Board, was a co-owner of Tri-County Implement, past president of the Highland County Beekeepers, and on the Board of the American Apitherapy Society. Jim was a dedicated member of the Lynchburg United Methodist Church, and the Lynchburg Lions Club. Jim is preceded in death by his wife Lois, daughter Sharon, and brother George. Survivors include his children Cathy Wallach (Tom) of Traverse City, MI, David (Brenda) of Hillsboro, Ernie Collins (Kitty) of Lynchburg, and Laura Sue (David J. Walters) of Des Moines, IA, as well as many grandchildren.

His children will remember his wonderful sense of humor, his many practical jokes, and his love for the Grand Traverse Michigan region (well instilled in all his children). The kids all learned to drive cars at a young age as Jim let them steer the car home from church on Sunday morning down Spickard Road. Jim always had a sweet tooth and fancied himself a professional taste tester and would almost always comment that baked goods from the Higgins kitchen had something wrong with them that required additional sampling to determine the root cause. He was a wonderful whistler, and all of us will remember his signature white hard hat. Most of all he was a caring and loving father who was loved very much by his family.

Jim Higgins was a long time member of the AAS dating back to at least 1994 when he was elected to the Board of Directors taking on the position as Secretary. When Jim first joined the AAS he was the President of the Highland County Beekeepers Association and kept sixty five hives of bees himself. He first became interested in bees some twenty years earlier when at the advice of a local old timer he discovered that eating honey on a regular basis relieved his allergies. As his knowledge of beekeeping increased, so did his knowledge of Apitherapy. In the 80's in order to hone his knowledge of bee venom therapy he studied under the world master, Mr. Charles Mraz of Middlebury, Vermont. It was during this time that the discovery of bee venom's effect on Multiple Sclerosis began to unfold and he helped Mr. Mraz treat the second person ever to be treated specifically for MS.

Understanding that bee venom therapy was taught in Chinese medical schools, Jim took advantage of an opportunity to visit China in 1991 with a group of beekeepers. It was during this visit that he became acquainted with Dr. Fang who was the director of the China Research Center and hospital devoted entirely to Apitherapy. This was the first meeting of the western world with the East's three to five thousand year tradition of bee acupuncture. This meeting resulted with Jim Higgins, along with twenty five other members of the American Apitherapy Society, traveling to Nanjing, China in September of 1993 to take part in the second international Apitherapy Health Care and Bee Acupuncture Conference.

Jim began administering bee venom to several members of his own family and over time has treated and instructed others to do so either at his own home or at the many conferences that he so faithfully attended. For many years Jim was the midwest regional contact for the American Apitherapy Society arranging treatment for people all over the United States. He has also trained people all over the country individually, at conferences, and has also participated in workshops and lectures on apitherapy nationwide. Jim was also featured on the TV program Life Choices which aired nationally and was also a guest speaker on Dr. Tew's Beekeeping Course broadcast nationally from the Ohio State University.

Jim was a charter member of the American Apitherapy Society and felt that it was quite an experience being on the ground floor with the AAS development and also with the development of BVT for MS patients in addition to meeting the Chinese and spreading the word via television. Jim quickly became a board member of the AAS initially taking on the position of Secretary and he remained on the board for the remainder of his life. Jim had a vision of seeing the medical world opening up to apitherapy as they have to acupuncture. He also recognized the critical need for lay people (non-medical) to be in the forefront helping this to happen but also in preventing its becoming the private domain of our doctors. He was hopeful that whole new fields would open up as the world discovered that the Chinese could treat 50+ maladies of man with Apitherapy. Jim considered himself as one of Charles Mraz's disciples which became his motivation for joining the AAS Board of Directors.