

Jimmy (Jim) Merle Atwood passed away peacefully at home in Tucson with his wife by his side on December 22, 2021, from a hard fought battle with colon cancer. He was born January 10, 1945, in Fort Morgan, Colorado, to Joan Porter Atwood and Albin Arthur Atwood. Jim grew up in Fort Morgan, where he attended grade school through the fourth grade. His parents moved to Loveland, Colorado where he attended Campion Church School for 5th and 6th grades and met his wife to be. For 7th and 8th grades, he attended Loveland Adventist Church School. His high school years were spent at Campion Academy where he graduated in the class of 1963. He attended Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, his freshman year.

In 1964 he and a friend started a business building campers. This was during the Vietnam War and his friend decided to reenlist into the army. Jim then went to work for Gold Star Campers. Sales were slow so he went to work for Hewlett Packard in 1965. On August 22, 1965, he married Nancy Gail Nelson. A son, Merle Anthony, was born August 20, 1967. At this time Jim was driving a delivery truck for Silver State Plastics. In the summer of 1970, he took flying lessons and became a private pilot. This brought him great pleasure and he owned a plane for about a year. In 1972 he moved his family to Centralia, Missouri, and worked for SS Plastics. Then in 1973 he moved his family to Portland, Tennessee and worked for Pratt Plastics. After a year he moved his family back to Loveland, Colorado. He worked for ListenUp, a stereo store in Denver. In the following year, ListenUp started a warehouse called RMAD (Rocky Mountain Audio Distributors) and Jim worked there and also made visits to audio stores in Wyoming and Montana getting orders. In 1978 he went to work for Newark Electronics. He got tired of driving to Denver so in 1980 he went to work for 3Cs Electronics in Loveland for four years. As a salesman he won a trip each year he was there. One of these was a cruise to the Bahamas and the other was to Mexico City. Next he worked for HMS Richards Elementary School as a bus driver, janitor and subbed for a teacher when one was needed. In 1987 he went to work for the Thompson R2J School District. He started out as a bus driver and after a year he was asked to work in administration because of his computer skills. He spent 17 years there and retired in January 2004.

Jim loved to play tennis after work and on weekends until his arthritis got so bad he had to have knee replacement in 2007. He and Nancy were in a group that had season tickets to Colorado Rockies baseball games for several years. They enjoyed taking friends and relatives to the games. They also worked as fill-ins for a company that served fresh squeezed lemonade, cotton candy and squishes at the Rockies games and Colorado Rams Football games. In 2005 they went in their RV to Tucson for Rockies Baseball Spring Training working every game played in Tucson. They did that until the Rockies moved to Phoenix. They enjoyed Tucson so much they began going earlier and staying longer. They parked in a mobile home park and eventually bought a double wide. In 2016 they sold their house in Colorado and made their permanent home in Tucson.

They loved to travel, going on mission trips to Yava Pines Campground in Arizona, Palmer and Kenai, Alaska, and Ecuador for Maranatha International. Other travel took them on cruises to Alaska, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, and Mexico. They also visited Costa Rica. Since Nancy worked for Hewlett Packard, for years they would take their RV and go to Hermit Park near Estes Park, Colorado, and spend weekends during the summer with Nancy's sister and brother-in-law, Judy and Chuck Paulien.

Jim took up painting at a class during one of the winters in Tucson. He was a very good artist. He did about 20 paintings. He was also a ham operator and his call was KCOIYO.

In about 2000, he met a fellow who did hot air ballooning and got hooked on flying a balloon as well as crewing with Nancy. They went to Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta several times. When they moved to Tucson they hooked up with Southern Arizona Balloon Excursions and made many flights.

Jim had a great love for organ music. At Campion he would sit with his roommate and turn pages for him. He had a classmate from Campion who is on the board for the LA Philharmonic at the Disney Center, and she would get tickets. He and Nancy would go four times a year to an organ concert in LA. In the early days Virgil Fox was his favorite organist, and he was able to go to a concert at Union College. A more recent favorite was Cameron Carpenter. Jim and Nancy were able to go to several of Cameron's concerts.

Jim will be remembered as a wonderful husband and friend to all. He loved to read, and one of his favorite authors was Vince Flynn. Jim challenged his mind with difficult computer games. He was diagnosed with stage 4 colon cancer, a very aggressive and hard to detect variety, in May 2021. He was bound and determined to beat the cancer and fought against it valiantly.

He is survived by his wife Nancy of Tucson, Arizona, son Merle (Darlene) of Greeley, Colorado, granddaughter Jordan of Greeley, Colorado, brothers Sam (Patty Lucio) of Arvada, Colorado, and Mike (Lee) of Fort Morgan, Colorado. He is also survived by nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles and cousins. He was predeceased by his parents. Memorial contributions may be made to Campion Academy Worthy Student Fund. Arrangements pending, cremation has been done and burial will be at Resthaven, Fort Collins, Colorado.