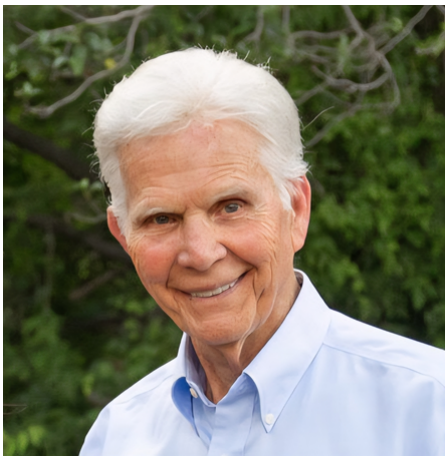

James Elwood Boone Johnson

April 26, 1938 ~ February 8, 2026

James “Jim” Elwood Boone Johnson passed away on February 08, 2026 after living a full life with his family at the center. Jim was born in Tucson, Arizona in 1938, he was the 2nd child of Zelda Hardy and Luther Boone. Later he was adopted by his stepfather, Teague Johnson. Jim grew up surrounded by his cousins and family. As the adult men went off to fight in World War II, his mother and aunts brought the families together, living together to help support one another. This experience shaped Jim where his cousins were as close as his siblings, growing up together, not wealthy, but happy and close.

Jim openly admitted that he was “trouble” for his mother throughout his younger years, into his teens and even into college, stating that he deserved all of the punishment he received, and he never would have graduated if it weren't for her. Due to Teague being in the military they moved around the US when he was a child. When Teague was assigned to Germany Jim decided he would not go and stayed with aunts and uncles in Arizona instead. Jim excelled in football, earning football scholarships to both Eastern Arizona Community College, and then later at Texas Western College, later renamed the University of Texas El Paso. Jim graduated college in Health and Biology Education and soon became a high school teacher, teaching health sciences and coaching high school football.

Jim met his late wife, Mary Jane Crandall, while teaching and coaching at Skyline High School in Salt Lake City. They dated for 3 years until Mary Jane finally gave him an ultimatum. They were married in the Salt Lake LDS Temple in March of 1970, they lived In SLC for a time, but soon they moved to Twin Falls, Idaho, where he continued his teaching and coaching career and owned a 40 acre horse and cattle ranch. Jim earned Coach of the Year award after taking his Murtaugh, Idaho high school team to the state championship.

Jim and Mary Jane moved to Draper, Utah in 1974, where they raised their girls and taught school for the next 30 years. He bought a horse soon after they were married and continued to own horses until a month before his death. Jim taught and coached at many schools, but spent the majority of his time coaching at Brighton and West Jordan High Schools, being called “coach” by his students for most of his life. Jim and Mary Jane have two daughters, Brandee and Jaimee, and he is described by his daughters as being both loud and dramatic, as well as being fun and an excellent father. Jim was never afraid to tell you what he thought, he was opinionated and well intentioned.

Jim and Mary Jane were staples in the neighborhood, making lasting friendships and memories for decades while living in the same house to which they moved in 1974. Jim’s extended family, those loved cousins, created one of the longest running continual family reunions in the United States. The Hardy Reunion was a proud feature in Jim’s life, and maintaining those relationships was of paramount importance to him. That love for family was passed on to his children and grandchildren, who attend that same reunion every year like he wanted. Jim could be hot headed,

but his grandchildren never saw that side, they only saw a supportive and loving grandpa. Jim made every little league and high school game, even in his last year of life, unable to walk, Jim was present and cheering from his wheel chair.

Mary Jane loved to travel, Jim loved to stay home to spend time with his animals and be available for whoever needed him, together that odd couple made a good life with many memories, most of those memories were made after Mary Jane tricked him into a trip or two.

As Jim’s health declined he needed assistance from family, and eventually he moved in with Brandee and Mike. He commonly talked about missing Mary Jane who passed away just six months before he did. Jim also still enjoyed football. Family and football are the things Jim loved and knew well.

Jim is survived by his two daughters Brandee and Jaimee, son-in-law Mike, grandchildren Karson, Cameron(Alyssia), Kenadee and Colter. His loss will be felt by many nieces, nephews and cousins from the Hardy family and nieces and nephews from the Crandall family.

He is preceded in death by his ever patient wife Mary Jane, sisters Shirley(Peter) & Sandra, brother Walter, his mother Zelda, his father and step fathers, grandparents, and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

A viewing will be held Sunday, Feb 22 at Draper 7th Ward 12353 South 600 East Draper, Utah from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm and Monday, Feb 23 there will be a viewing in the same building from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm. Funeral to follow 1:00 pm. Interment Larkin Sunset Gardens in Sandy, UT next to Mary Jane.

To view Jim's service, please click on the blue tab above that says "Watch Services".