



James William Lewis

August 10, 1939 - April 12, 2024

Lovingly written by the family...

James William Lewis, age 84, of Mt. Vernon, Missouri passed away on Friday, April 12, 2024 at his home. He was born August 10, 1939 in Minneapolis, Minnesota to Harry and Mary (Keranen) Lewis.

On June 4, 1956 he married Margie Ingram in Downey, California. He lost her in 2008, the day after their 52nd wedding anniversary.

Jim grew up in Los Angeles, California and attended Huntington Park High School. He spent summers on the family farm in Minnesota with his maternal Finnish grandparents who spoke little to no English. In 1967, he was transferred from California to Mt. Vernon as an employee of Carnation Can Company, where he worked for many years. Jim spent fifteen years as a truck driver for J.B. Hunt Transport winning numerous safety and Driver of the Year awards. He was also a farmer.

In 1954 he purchased his dad's 1941 Chevy Coupe and built his first street rod. At the age of fourteen Jim jumped into the fledgling sport of drag racing—on the track and on the streets. He was an early member of the Maywood Drag Wagons car club with Ed "Big Daddy" Roth and spent countless hours learning the ropes at Mickey Thompson's garage. He briefly held the unofficial

California state record for fastest quarter mile in C/Stock Class. Throughout his life he was recognized as “Little Jimmy Lewis” at car shows and National Hot Rod Association events all over the country.

At the age of 82 Jim gave up his beloved motorcycle. While in his seventies he rode over 160K miles earning dozens of Iron Butt Association certifications and patches. The first qualifying ride is 1500 miles in twenty-four hours, which Jim accomplished with a broken shift ankle. His biggest run was from Key West, Florida to Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. The IBA required twenty-one days to make the one-way trip. Jim made the round trip, including an overnight stop at home, in twenty days.

Jim’s favorite ride was his 1949 International pickup truck, an anniversary gift from Margie many years before. He spent three years turning it into a one-of-a-kind street rod. He participated in Hot Rod/Motortrend Magazine Power Tours all over the country, making his last tour in December of 2023. At the age of 84 recovering from a broken hip, Jim ran his last quarter mile at The Strip at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway. It was a good thirteen seconds. He received a ticket for street racing in Arizona on his way home.

Jim is survived by two daughters, Lisa Lewis and her husband, Bill Petrus, of Springfield, Missouri, Jami Lewis and her husband, Eric Corey, of Mt. Vernon, Missouri; seven grandchildren, three great grandchildren and many cousins, friends, and neighbors.

He was preceded in death by his wife and parents, daughter Vicki Lewis Gunter, and grandson William “Billy Joe” Harris.

A visitation will be held from 1—3 p.m. Saturday, April 20, 2024 at the Jones Memorial Chapel in Mt. Vernon. In lieu of flowers please make a donation to the charity of your choice. Arrangements are under the personal care and

direction of Lakin Funeral Home in Pierce City, Missouri.

Previous Events

Visitation

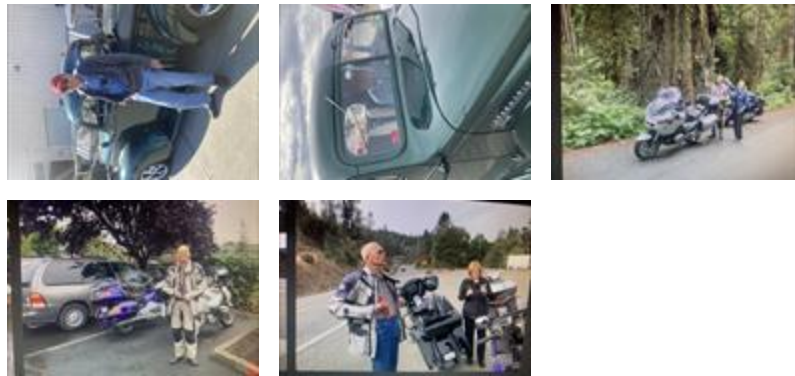
APR **20**. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Jones Memorial Chapel
11110 Lawrence 1137
Mt. Vernon, MO 65712

Tribute Wall

BR

“ I was thankful to know Jim Lewis. These are some memories we shared. He was one of my father in law’s best friends (Al Hazeltine) I got to ride in Red woods, Laughlin, Death Valley, and Pinks for His Iron Butt club. once in Long Beach He pulled close and bumped bags (good memory). also on a Laughlin ride I was going to race Him on Hwy 95 .at 110 mph He blew by. Later He said he shut her off At 140 mph. 🙄 A few years back he visited His friend Al and Frenchie in the Fullerton hospital. He lost them both, days apart. Last of all I got to go with Him on His last Power Tour. He let me drive Old Green out of Vegas and Home. I will miss you Jim. Thanks for the memories.



brian - April 18, 2024 at 06:42 PM

PH

“ JAMIE AND FAMILY,
I'M SO GLAD JIM HAD SUCH A FULL LIFE. PRAYERS FOR
YOUR FAMILY.
PAM HENDERSON (SCHUBERT)

PAM HENDERSON - April 17, 2024 at 01:58 PM