



James Walter McCurry

April 18, 1930 - December 21, 2019

James W. McCurry, 89, passed away peacefully Saturday, December 21st in R.P.V., CA, in the company of family. He was preceded in death by his childhood sweetheart, Ann McCurry of Rancho Palos Verdes, CA, and survived by their five children: James B. McCurry of Madison AL, Dr. Robert D. McCurry of Canon City CO, Don R. McCurry, Sally Lou McCurry Brodhead and Mari Ann McCurry Alvin, all of Southern CA, their spouses, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Jim was preceded in death by his mother and father Mary and Walter McCurry, and beloved older sisters Ernestine Coppinger and Mattie Evelyn Oldham. He was born in Benham, KY and moved to Horse Cave, KY as a teenager, where he met his high school sweetheart and future wife of 67 years.

Jim graduated from the University of Kentucky with a bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineer with highest honors, in 1952, was commissioned in the US Air Force as a Second Lieutenant in 1953 and earned a Master of Science degree in Aeronautical Engineering in 1955. While in the Air Force he worked on the B-66, XB-68 and North American B-70 programs. In 1958 Jim was honorably discharged from the Air Force and continued working on the B-70 program as a Civil Servant. In 1959 he went to work for North American Aviation in El Segundo, CA. In 1960 he joined Space Technology Labs (STL) to work in the Mercury-Atlas Booster Project office prior to the four Mercury-Atlas orbital missions. In June of 1960 the Air Force formed a new, government-sponsored, non-profit Corporation to assume the responsibilities for all the ballistic missile management effort currently being done by STL. This new company, under contract to the Air Force, would be responsible for "Scientific and Technical Planning and Management of Missile Space Programs". The name of this new company was The Aerospace Corporation. Jim became the 179th Aerospace employee and was now the Manager of Mechanical Systems and Propulsion. He continued to work on the Mercury program until its end and became Aerospace's Director of Airborne Systems Engineering for the Gemini manned space program. In 1967, at the end of the Gemini program, he accepted a job with TRW (the old STL) in Houston, TX and moved the family to Nassau Bay to become the manager of TRW's Systems Engineering and Integration Lab that directly supported the Apollo program at the Manned Spaceflight Center. During this time, Jim also became

the Scout Master of the local scout troop that included his three sons and several sons of Apollo astronauts.

Toward the end of the Apollo program in 1972, Jim accepted the position of Assistant Program Manager for TRW's new High Energy Astronomical Observatory (HEAO) program in Huntsville, AL and managed by the Marshall Space Flight Center. HEAO budget cuts in the Fall of 1973 caused Jim to relocate the family back to Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. In the summer of 1973 Jim accepted a three year assignment by TRW to be the program manager of a classified Navy command and control program. In 1977 Jim moved the family back to CA permanently as he became the assistant program manager for the Attached Shuttle Payload Organization within the Defense and Space Systems Group and later a Project Manager for the group. In 1983 he became a Business Assistant Program Manager for the Defense Support System Satellite Program and in 1985 the Program Manager for the Army Maneuver Control System, Systems Engineering and Telecommunications section. In 1991 he became the Deputy Operations Manager for TRW's Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence Systems (C3Is) Operations program. Jim subsequently retired from TRW in 1992.

In retirement, Jim took on a very active role as a member and trustee of the Rolling Hills United Methodist Church and in the construction of the new sanctuary. He also became the design engineer and construction manager of his son Bob's medical office. Jim and Ann were bestowed the honor of becoming Kentucky Colonel's and Jim was inducted into the University of Kentucky's Engineering Hall of Distinction. He also enjoyed fishing, traveling, genealogy, his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

At the urging of family, he put to paper his memories in his book "Reflections on my Career" which can be found in the library of the University of Kentucky Engineering Department. His wit, his humor and his love will be cherished and missed by those who knew him.

Events

JAN **Visitation** 04:00PM - 08:00PM

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Cove Suite

27501 S. Western Ave.,, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA, US, 90275