



James E. Sizemore

October 3, 1937 - September 24, 2018

James E. “Jim” Sizemore, a resident of South Baltimore, retiree of the Social Security Administration Art Department, and cartoonist, died of lung cancer at Gilchrist Center in Towson on September 24. He was 80 and would have turned 81 next week.

Jim had been a Visual Information Specialist in the Social Security Administration’s Art Department in Woodlawn for 23 years until he retired early, in 1988, to become a free-lance cartoonist.

Born in 1937 in Covington, Virginia, in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Jim spent a few childhood years in Front Royal, arriving in Baltimore in 1943 when his parents, Floyd and Lucy Sizemore, came here with their seven children; they found work in the shipyards during World War II. The family lived in South Baltimore, and some of Jim’s fondest memories were of his childhood adventures in the big city, and of the sights and tastes of Cross Street Market. Jim remained especially fond of the city life of South Baltimore, but Fort McHenry was his special love; for many years, he was a daily presence at the Fort as he did his four-mile fitness walk.

At 17, Jim joined the U.S. Army and volunteered for one of the earliest units of the Special Forces (“Green Berets”); he became a paratrooper and was stationed at Fort Bragg. After his military service, he landed work as a clerk at the then-downtown office of the Social Security Administration. During that time, he began to pursue what would be a lifetime career in art. He became a graduate of the “Famous Artists Correspondence School,” earning a certificate in commercial and editorial cartooning; he later earned a painting certificate from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Jim was a member of the National Cartoonists Society for years; he specialized in single-panel “gag” cartoons but also did humorous illustrations. Cartoonist Bob Weber of the Moose Miller strip, also from Baltimore, said, “Jim was the closest friend I had in Maryland and was a very special person.” For several years, his work has been included in the CartoonStock collection, a London-based cartoon library and database. His cartoons were published in magazines such as The Wall Street Journal, TV Guide, and the Saturday Evening Post, as well as in the Baltimore Sun. Walt Carr, cartoonist and longtime friend, a retiree of SSA where he was Jim’s boss for many years in the Art Department, said, “Jim was intense and something special! He always pushed me in my own cartooning endeavors.”

Jim was also a playwright. During the 1980s and 1990s, he had three plays produced in the Baltimore Playwrights Festival, two of them drawing on his working-class Virginia roots: Cecil, Virginia: 1964 and Joe Pete. The third play, Local Talent, turned a mirror on community theater itself. He also designed posters for some of Baltimore's community theaters, especially Fells Point Corner Theater. During the 1990s, Jim developed a popular educational program, "Cartooning for Kids," and travelled to numerous communities and towns in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Washington, D.C. In it he shared his "how to cartoon" ideas with thousands of schoolchildren. He also gave occasional lectures on cartooning at local colleges and museums.

"Jim loved artistic work of all kinds and encouraged it in others," his longtime friend, Jo-Ann Pilardi, said. In recent years, he published Doodlemeister's Weblog, a mix of creative writing, photography (his own and others'), and his cartoons. He urged as many people as possible to contribute to the blog and designed it to be a shared, interactive experience. In later years, Jim took up swing dancing and enjoyed the community of Friday night swing dancers in Towson. His sense of humor and play charmed his friends and family, and his inquisitive conversation was well-known. His granddaughter Samantha Sizemore also describes him as a loving and devoted grandfather: "He was my teacher, my cheerleader, my guide, and my backbone, a stable foot on the ground when I couldn't think clearly. He made me see the bigger picture."

On September 24, 2018 James E. Sizemore Devoted Father of Shawn J. Sizemore and his wife Angela and Vincent J Sizemore and his wife Mickey. Loving grandfather of Samantha T. Sizemore, Amanda M. Sizemore and Vincent J. Sizemore. Beloved great grandfather of Allison Sizemore and Kaiden Sizemore. Special Friend of Jo-Ann Pilardi. Also survived by many other loving relatives and friends.

Family invite friends to call at the Charles L. Stevens Funeral Home, Inc. 1501 E. Fort Avenue, Locust Point MD 21230 on Saturday 4:00pm – 8:00pm. Funeral service will be held at the conclusion of the visitation on Saturday evening at 7:30pm. Interment will be private. Family request in lieu of flowers contributions be made to Friends of Fort McHenry, 2400 East Fort Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21230

<http://www.friendsoffortmchenry.org/ways-to-give> or The American Cancer Society www.cancer.org

or The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention <https://afsp.org/take-action/give-a-gift/>

Events

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

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Charles L. Stevens Funeral Home, Inc.
1501 E. Fort Avenue, Baltimore, MD, US, 21230

SEP **Service** 07:30PM - 08:00PM

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Comments



“ A tribute video has been added.



Charles L. Stevens Funeral Home, Inc. - September 29, 2018 at 02:28 AM



“ My sincere condolences to Jim's family and close friends. I'm saddened to learn of his passing. I enjoyed our dances and conversations at Friday Night Swing. Jim encouraged me to write - he edited a blog entry that I wrote and shared it on his blog.



Sue Royer - October 01, 2018 at 09:02 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



vince - September 30, 2018 at 10:55 AM



“ Dad,
I have wanted to call you many times already to check in. It's hard to know I won't be able to do that anymore. It hurts. I'm going to miss our talks. Love you.

vince - September 30, 2018 at 10:52 AM



“ 154 files added to the album LifeTributes



Charles L. Stevens Funeral Home, Inc. - September 28, 2018 at 11:36 PM



“ Jim,
I miss you already and will keep you in my heart.
Jo-Ann

Jo-Ann Pilardi - September 28, 2018 at 10:46 PM



“ Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of James E. Sizemore.



September 28, 2018 at 05:28 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of James E. Sizemore.



September 27, 2018 at 04:06 PM



“ Mickey, Please accept my heartfelt condolences on the death of your Father-In-Law. May you remember him with smiles and good memories. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Linda Kelly

Linda Kelly - September 27, 2018 at 11:27 AM



“ May the artist in all live forever. purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of James E. Sizemore.



May the artist in all live forever. - September 26, 2018 at 11:13 PM



“ Karen Pesek /Sizemore sent a virtual gift in memory of James E. Sizemore



Karen Pesek /Sizemore - September 26, 2018 at 09:50 PM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Shawn Sizemore - September 26, 2018 at 10:32 AM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Shawn Sizemore - September 26, 2018 at 10:31 AM



“ Marian Malecki-Bruce lit a candle in memory of James E. Sizemore



Marian Malecki-Bruce - September 26, 2018 at 08:31 AM