



Dr. James S. Ceton

JUN 10, 1942 - AUG 28, 2011



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Dr. James S. “Jim” Ceton went to be with his Lord on Sunday, August 28, 2011. He was born June 10, 1942 in Muskegon to Sidney and Marjorie (Schroeder) Ceton. Jim and his wife of 43 years, Mary Lou Franks of Grand Haven, made their home on the southern edge of the Sahara Desert in Niger, West Africa from 1970-1991. They served the Lord there by providing medical care for the people of Niger at SIM’s (Serving In Mission) Galmi Hospital. Over the past twenty years, Jim has continued to care for people as a physician at Georgetown Medical Center in Jenison and hospitals in Zeeland, Holland, and Ludington. During this time, he and Mary Lou have continued to make several working visits to Galmi Hospital. Jim’s love for the Lord was clearly evident as he raised his family of four children with Mary Lou. Daily he demonstrated what it meant to follow Christ as he interacted with patients, colleagues, family, friends, and strangers. A humble man, he prayed that God would be honored in every situation. He shared his love of learning, carpentry, nature, bow hunting, manual labor, and discovery with many. Jim was a man of patience, compassion, humor and attention to detail. He carried a pen and 3x5 cards in his chest pocket to draw explanatory sketches for his patients and to jot down things to remember. He loved to teach in a medical setting as well as to make complex medical issues easier for people to understand. Jim was a member with Mary Lou of Calvary Church in Grand Rapids. He was Board Certified in General Surgery, and he was a member of the American College of Surgeons and the Christian Medical and Dental Associations. Jim and Mary Lou cherished the Lord, each other, and their family. She survives him, along with four children: Randall (Rebekah) Ceton of Hesperia; David (Laura) Ceton of Niamey, Republic of Niger; Karen (Matthew) Jackson of Greensboro, NC; and Rebecca (Nicholas) Risedorph of Grand Haven; 8 grandchildren: Seth and Luke Ceton; Andrea, Joel and Renée Ceton; Jacob, Lydia and Grace Jackson; 2 sisters: Ginger (Roger) Wolffis of Muskegon and Rebecca (Albert)



Obituary

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VanSteenkiste of DeWitt, MI; and mother-in-law, Shirley Franks of Norton Shores. Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Sidney and Marjorie; and father-in-law, James Franks, Sr. The MEMORIAL SERVICE for Jim will be 7PM, Tuesday, September 6, at Calvary Church (707 E. Beltline NE, Grand Rapids) with Rev. James Carlson officiating. VISITATION with the family will be prior to the service, 4-6:30PM Tuesday at the church. Contributions may be made to the Jim Ceton Memorial Fund at Michigan Commerce Bank, 333 Washington Ave, Grand Haven, MI 49417. Please share your memories of Jim online at www.systemafh.com. Arrangements by The Lee Chapel, Sytsema Funeral Homes, Inc. 6291 S. Harvey St. Norton Shores, MI 49444 231-798-1100.



Tribute Wall

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Anonymous posted:

We are saddened by Jim's home-going. We have such fond memories and appreciation for the man, husband and doctor Jim was during our times together in Galmi. We are trusting God for all of the family that comfort and grace will evident day by day during this sad time. Our hearts rejoice for Jim as he enjoys Jesus' presence but our hearts are also sad that he is no longer with us. Prayers to you all.##imported-begin##Lynn and Sandi Philpott##imported-end##

September 12 at 12:18 PM



Anonymous posted:

Ginger: My heart felt prayers are with you and your family at this sad time. You have been such an inspiration to me through the grief group and I know your faith in our Lord will keep you strong in the days ahead. Keeping you in my prayers....Linda Parker##imported-begin##Linda Parker##imported-end##

September 7 at 1:23 PM



Anonymous posted:

In the mid 1990s, I was fortunate to meet Dr. Ceton in the emergency room of ZCH. My son, Connor, was 4 at the time and was due to have a forearm cast removed. He was desperately afraid of the cast saw and commenced a temper tantrum so wild we were ultimately sent from our family doctor's office to the ER. There, Dr. Ceton took time to explain to this small boy how he was going to carefully remove the cast without hurting him. He then inched a tongue depressor little by little under the cast and only ran the saw above it. It took a full 20 minutes for that cast to come off, but not a tear was shed! This in itself is a testament to the type of practitioner Dr. Ceton was, but the rest of my story tells about the type of man he was... Twelve years later, I was privileged to work with Dr. Ceton in surgery at SCWM. On our first day together, I took his hand and told him that I never forgot how, many years earlier, he showed such patience and compassion to my little boy, who was terrified of a cast saw. He simply smiled at me and said, "Oh! You must be Connor's mom! I've thought of him often. How old is he now and what is he up to?" I now know I should not have been shocked by this. He was an amazing man, who embodied the spirit of Christ in gestures both small and large. I will miss him much and am grateful his suffering has ended. The community in heaven is blessed to have him. My prayers are with your family.##imported-begin##Cindi Wiersma ##imported-end##

September 6 at 6:09 PM



Tribute Wall

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Anonymous posted:

Dear Mary Lou and family! Thank you so much for sharing the journey of this past year with us! I only met you and Jim once - at the wedding of your lovely daughter, Karen, to my nephew, Matt Jackson - but I remember it well! Thank you for following the Lord completely, in everything! I pray that He will comfort each of you daily till the day you reunited with Jim and our Lord Jesus! Love and prayers, Linda##imported-begin##Linda Wanaselja##imported-end##

September 4 at 11:00 PM



Anonymous posted:

Dear Ceton family - Please know you are in my thoughts and prayers. What a hole has been left in your family. But, we will see him again! Jim lived out Galatians 5:22-23 - he was one of the most loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, self-controlled, and (gracious) men I have ever met. I loved watching him interact with his family. He was so proud of all of you. He will be missed here on earth, but I like to think he is thoroughly enjoying his "new job" in heaven and reuniting with all who have gone before. I pray you feel the closeness of God in a special way in the days, weeks, months, years to come.##imported-begin##Carla Beukema##imported-end##

September 3 at 6:44 PM



Anonymous posted:

Dear Mary and family, I was shocked to read this news at the Trib web site today (Sept 3). I'm in Austin, Tx at our son's so I will not be able to see you. I am so sorry to hear of this great loss for you and for so many others. May the good Lord sustain you and comfort you all. With prayer and deep sorrow, Susie##imported-begin##Susan Barwis##imported-end##

September 3 at 6:12 PM



Anonymous posted:

Praise God for a wonderful family man and humble servant for God.##imported-begin##Dave & Squeak Opitz##imported-end##

September 3 at 4:17 PM



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Anonymous posted:

Jim and I were in Sunday School together at Berean Church in the early 1950s. We were together in Medical School at Wayne from 64-68. In the fall of 1967 we went on a senior elective to Ethiopia, and Kenya. We were scheduled to go into Congo, but it was feared we would be treated as mercenaries. On 4 occasions over the years, I was privileged to visit Galmi, and cover for Jim, so he could have a little time off. I certainly will miss him, but understand that now he is in the care of the Great Physician. Love, and Prayers for all the family, Jim##imported-begin##Jim Webb##imported-end##

September 3 at 9:05 AM



Anonymous posted:

20 years ago, when I first came to Galmi Hospital as a medical student, the Cetons had just left Galmi after over 20 years of service. I realized that Jim Ceton had had a profound influence upon Galmi, as I heard over and over again, "Dr. Ceton did it this way...Dr. Ceton always did this...Dr. Ceton said..." Years, later, when Jim and Mary Lou returned to help us out again, and I had the privilege of working alongside them, I was able to see why so many missionaries and nationals alike, spoke so highly of Dr. Ceton. Jim was a hard-working, compassionate, humble man who not only touched lives with healing, but took a genuine interest in the lives and spiritual needs of the people he came in contact with. He always had time for people, and remembered names, relationships and children names, even years later. Each person he talked to always felt like he took a personal interest in their lives. We have all been blessed to learn from the life and example of this godly man. We will miss you greatly, Jim.##imported-begin##Kendrick Lau##imported-end##

September 2 at 6:20 AM



Anonymous posted:

I was privileged to work with Dr Ceton at Memorial Medical Center in Ludington. I learned many lessons from Dr Ceton, but the most important was to treat each patient with dignity, kindness and caring, as he did with every patient he cared for. I will miss him every day and never forget him. My thoughts and prayers are with his family.##imported-begin##Laurie Hinman##imported-end##

September 1 at 4:24 PM



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Anonymous posted:

JIM - A note to say I miss him. Have not seen Jim since 1960. We attended, as good friends, Muskegon Hts High School together. Jim, as a boy, was quite a man and now, I see, A CHRISTIAN MAN. Thank you JESUS. I have considered finding Jim for many years and now I have missed him again BUT HE IS HOME. GOD BLESS YOU ALL. I will see you in the future Jim...!##imported-begin##Mike Kuncaitis##imported-end##

September 1 at 11:18 AM



Anonymous posted:

Oh how Jim will be missed by so many! He was truly one of the greatest men I have ever had the privilege to know! He touched so many lives and was an example for all of us to follow. We are praying for Mary Lou and the entire Ceton family.##imported-begin##Amy Hoffman##imported-end##

September 1 at 5:34 AM



Anonymous posted:

Greetings Ceton Family, Growing up as Tim Wolffis' best friend, I became acquainted with your family. Then in 1987 while I was on a college missions trip, I had the pleasure of visiting your family at the hospital compound in Niger. I seem to recall that Jim and the boys were out in the drive working on an old Land Rover when we arrived! I know that Jim joyfully invested the better part of his life (and gave-up a doctor's lifestyle in the States) to serve our Lord by helping the poorest of the poor. His was a life well-lived! Know that my family and I are praying for all of you. Sincerely, Tim Ryan##imported-begin##Tim Ryan##imported-end##

August 31 at 6:25 PM



Anonymous posted:

Dear Mary Lou: I was indeed shocked when I read Jim's obituary in the paper. Please accept our sincere sympathy to you and to your family. If there were a medical unit in Heaven, I am sure he would be volunteering. I like to think that his spirit, which is now completely free, will be in attendance at his memorial service. I fondly remember the time many years ago when we spent a month working with Jim and you in Galmi. Frank Pettinga##imported-begin##Frank Pettinga##imported-end##

August 31 at 4:28 PM



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Anonymous posted:

Dear Cousin Mary Lou and family, Please know that you are in my prayers and thoughts as you go through this very difficult time. May god bless you and your family! Bill Jr.##imported-begin##William Franks Jr.##imported-end##

August 31 at 3:45 PM



Anonymous posted:

In 1976, I had just become a Christian and was trying to determine what God would have me to do with my life as I was in medical school on a surgery rotation with Jim. As we talked about the possibility of medical missions/evangelism, Jim, who had come home to do a surgical residency to be more able to help meet people's needs, strongly encouraged me to consider surgery. When I told him I didn't think so, as most of the surgeons seemed arrogant, proud, cocky and thus emulating qualities I didn't think were compatible with being a Christian, he just quietly asked, "But am I," three words I have remembered for the next 35 years of our friendship as, despite the fact that we served in different countries in Africa and only worked together at Georgetown Medical Center in the US, Jim was one of my very best friends and mentors as I tried to follow his leading in serving the Lord. I greatly valued his Godly encouragement, example and friendship. For me, and I know at least several other surgeons at BMMC (now Spectrum Blodgett), he modeled Christ in his character and comportment. We have lost a spiritual giant in my eyes and we will miss him dearly but I know he is able to breathe celestial air and no longer endure pain and suffering. Bill and Karen Ten Haaf##imported-begin##Bill Ten Haaf##imported-end##

August 31 at 1:13 PM



Anonymous posted:

Sharing in your sorrow, and praying for all of you for comfort from the Lord at this difficult time. I plan on attending the visitation and Memorial service with my niece Karen Dunlap and sister Ruth Pfeiffer, (whose ham-radio husband Herman patched through to the grandparents Randy's first cries from Galmi), and they have been a part of your prayer support all these years. Marylou, having experienced both the life of medical missions in Niger, and the passing of my beloved physician-husband, I do totally sympathize. God comfort you all.##imported-begin##Mary VerLee##imported-end##

August 31 at 10:22 AM



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Anonymous posted:

Dear Mary Lou and family,I remember well our years of serving the Lord together in Africa with SIM - you and Jim with medicine in Niger, Mary & I with education in Nigeria. Now the second generation of Rideouts and Cetons are serving together with SIM in Niger. PTL!!!Jim was a great help to our family when our son, Drew, was critically ill in 3rd grade at Kent Academy, Miango, Nigeria. He stongly recommended we send him home to Children's Hospital in Boston, MA. Drew recovered and Mary had a chance to witness to her father before he passed into the presence of the Lord.Although we grieve our loss of Mary and Jim, we know they are now healed and rejoicing in the presence of our Lord, Whom they served well!Love in Christ,George Rideout for the family"And he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall not exist any more, nor grief, nor cry, nor distress shall exist any more, for the former things have passed away. [Revelation 21:4 DBY]##imported-begin##George M. Rideout, Jr.##imported-end##

August 31 at 10:04 AM



Anonymous posted:

I did not know Jim personally, but working now in surger at Galmi hospital, I treasure Jim's legacy that he left especially in the operating theatre. He shaped many lifes snd will be missed.##imported-begin##Judith Jaeggi##imported-end##

August 31 at 8:41 AM



Anonymous posted:

A finer man on this earth I have yet to meet. May God be with you Mary Lou, and your family, through this difficult time, and always.##imported-begin##Phil Ceton##imported-end##

August 31 at 8:05 AM



Anonymous posted:

Mary Lou, you have my sympathy in the loss of Jim. He was a dear friend and a wonderful physician in our emergency room at Zeeland Community Hospital, kind and compassionate to all of our patients. He will be missed. I am praying for you and your family for comfort during this difficult time. We just had my Mom's Memorial service yesterday so they are praising God in heaven together! Love, Jayne##imported-begin##Jayne Borgman##imported-end##

August 31 at 8:04 AM



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Anonymous posted:

A good man who will be missed.##imported-begin##Curt Driesenga##imported-end##

August 31 at 7:28 AM



Anonymous posted:

I have happy memories of Jim and his family as we grew up in the Berean Church together. Often, I would go along with the family to play my accordian at one of the lay missions in which Jim's dad was involved. As I read his obituary, I am so thankful to have known such a Man of God "in the making"! Our sympathies to the family even as they are blessed to know there will be a Great Reunion Day!##imported-begin##Ken and Nancy Herlein Reynen##imported-end##

August 31 at 7:19 AM



Anonymous posted:

Our Love and Sympathy to you and your family at this time of GREAT sorrow.##imported-begin##Jerry and Bev Fawley##imported-end##

August 31 at 6:15 AM



Anonymous posted:

I first met Jim and the Ceton family in 1990 in Niger, as an STA missionary nurse, working at Galmi Hospital, Niger. I had the privilege of working alongside Jim at the hospital. He truly was a patient, caring, compassionate man and physician. When I became ill and very thin, he cared for me not just as a doctor, but with the kindness and love of a father. I experienced the warm hospitality of the Ceton family more than once during that time in Niger that has so marked my life. Later after my first, longer term at Galmi, my sister and I visited the Cetons in Michigan in 1998 and they again showed us their love. In 2002, my husband René and I, along with our children, once again visited Jim & Mary Lou as we travelled, their hospitality warm and welcoming toward us. Over the years we have kept in touch with our annual family letters and the occasional personal one. Through all these months of Jim's illness, my prayers have been for God to heal Jim. I know that He has answered in the ultimate way. Jim's earthly body no longer causes him to suffer. "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him." James 1:12 The Psalmist writes a eulogy for a godly man in Ps. 112:1-9. I believe it could have been written for Jim. Mary Lou, and family - My prayers continue for your hearts to be comforted as you grieve the loss of Jim. I weep with you.##imported-begin##Esther (Thiessen) Savard##imported-end##

August 31 at 5:36 AM



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Anonymous posted:

We had the wonderful privilege of working with Jim and Mary Lou during their last two visits to Galmi. We were both struck by their love for Jesus and their compassion for others. They encouraged us by their hospitality, example and words. A great man has gone home. He will be missed. Mary Lou, you and the rest of your family are in our prayers.##imported-begin##Dennis and Debbie Schellhase##imported-end##

August 31 at 5:32 AM



Anonymous posted:

When you look up the word gentleman in the dictionary, there should be a picture of Jim there. It was a blessing to know and work with him##imported-begin##Gene Westveer##imported-end##

August 31 at 5:23 AM



Anonymous posted:

I worked with Jim often in Zeeland's ER and also had him care for me when I came into ER with respiratory problems. His compassion, care and obvious love for his work made him such a great physician. I trusted him with my life and he faithfully did his best. I will miss him but at least I know that he is in Jesus presence now. He was truly a man of God.##imported-begin##Shirley Lynema##imported-end##

August 31 at 3:48 AM



Anonymous posted:

Dear Ceton family your tribute to Jim captures the man of God I worked with so briefly in 1990 as an SSTer with SIM at Galmi. Deeply committed to his Lord, humble and one who related so well to people from all walks of life. Although I knew Jim during that year he left a lasting impression on me of what it means to be a Godly man. One of God's great blessings to so many of us. My prayers are with you at this time.##imported-begin##Blair Donkin##imported-end##

August 31 at 2:20 AM



Tribute Wall

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Anonymous posted:

Dear Mary Lou and family, Please know of my sorrow at the home going of your sweet Jim. Ron and I were thankful to have two of your kids, Karen and David on staff at Maranatha Bible Conference years ago. Your children honored you with their excellent work ethic, their tender hearts toward others and the joy of the Lord in their lives. Now, having Jim's sister, Ginger, as my friend, is a true privilege. Jim's legacy as a husband, father and brother is evident to all. May your times together be precious as you share memories; even through tears, and revel in what his faith and service to others has meant to each of you. I pray you are finding peace and comfort in the 'Everlasting Arms'. Deut. 33:27.##imported-begin##Francine Busch##imported-end##

August 30 at 8:12 PM



Anonymous posted:

I'm very privileged to know the Ceton family. I brought a friend to Grand Rapids to attend a wedding of 2 Galmi short termers. Karen, Jana Francis, my friend and I went out to lunch with Jim and Mary Lou. Jim paid for us all. When my friend said, "Are you sure you want to pay for me too? You don't even know me." Jim said, "I have a rich Father." I see Jim in his children too. Dave is always reaching out to people in Niger, showing them he's interested in them. He has caught his dad's example. Karen called my mom for me when she got back from a short term in Niger. It didn't matter to her at all that my mom wasn't a Christian and she had never met her. I love you all and I'm praying for you. Jeanne##imported-begin##Jeanne Scypinski##imported-end##

August 30 at 1:03 PM



Anonymous posted:

It was an honor to know Jim; he was a mighty man of God, but humble and gentle in all his ways. Even across all these years and miles, we feel his loss, acutely and pray that you will all experience God's comforting presence in your sorrow.##imported-begin##Ray and Chris Lefebvre##imported-end##

August 30 at 11:52 AM



Tribute Wall

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Anonymous posted:

I know that Sunday God once again said "Well done my good and faithful servant". Through the years you and Ma'Lou have been one of those couples most of us envy. Life was not easy for the two of you but you ALWAYS put God first. I praise Him that He saw fit to loan you to us for these 69 years. The legacy you have left behind with Ma'Lou and your kids is outstanding. Truly miss you. Becky (Ceton) VanSteenkiste###imported-begin##Becky VanSteenkiste###imported-end##

August 30 at 11:15 AM



Anonymous posted:

I am deeply saddened to learn of Jim's death. I pray for you, the Ceton family during this loss of your loved husband, father and grandfather. May our Lord surround you with his presence in the depth of your hearts. Love, Larry Braak###imported-begin##Larry Braak###imported-end##

August 30 at 10:16 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Dr. James S. by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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