



## Dr. James van Putten, Jr.

April 14, 1934 - October 2, 2018

Dr. James Dyke van Putten, Jr., 84, died Tuesday October 2, 2018. For those who knew Jim well they will remember a person who challenged his own paradigms, continually asking "How do you know?". He resisted any one way of thinking. They will not remember him belittling people or calling them names or working to harm them. In Holland, many may remember his years of dedication enriching the lives of its residents, the minds of its students and the institutions of its community. He was dedicated to his family and friends, sharing his knowledge, laughter, card skills, encouragement, and support. He could be found floating in Lake Michigan, driving convertibles, wearing bow ties, eating jelly beans, and proving there was nothing he couldn't fix. Born in 1934, to James and Frieda van Putten, he grew up in the great cities of the eastern and western hemispheres with his sister Barbara. Attending Hope College and the University of Michigan, he earned a Ph.D. in Physics. Jim found lifelong friends in the Fraternal Society at Hope and the Dutch House at UofM. These were friends he would return to after pursuing his love of physics. At CERN in Switzerland, Caltech and UofM, he worked with many of the greatest minds in physics including Nobel laureates. Jim's love for teaching brought him back to Holland in 1967 to revive the "moribund" physics department at Hope College, establishing courses found at larger universities. Having declared himself an engineer, Jim then established the Hope College engineering department. In 1996, with friends and Holland's community leaders, Jim co-founded the Black River Public School with the vision of a

rigorous college preparatory curriculum. Jim was also an entrepreneur. In the 1970s, he founded Macatawa Computer Services leading Holland into the digital age. Understanding the power of computers he transformed accounting and medical record keeping into paperless, a method decades ahead of its time. At one point, Jim held the record for the most computers on a manufacturing assembly line. In retirement, Jim spent most of his time at his waterside homes in Holland and the Bahamas. He continued to invent specialized radio equipment and to follow his lifelong hobby as a ham radio operator. From the time he was 15, anyone nearby could hear the sound of him calling "CQ". He broadcasted worldwide his call letters W8QT "Whiskey Eight Queen Tango" and introduced himself as Jim "Japan India Mexico". So today, Jim is calling "CQ" from a higher place and from here on earth we call to him "love and kisses" and "best regards" or in his radio codes "88" and "73."

Jim is survived by wife Sharon (Sheffield) van Putten, son James D. van Putten, III (Susan Fox) and Dirk van Putten (Carey VandePoel) and his granddaughters Samantha, Sabrina and Lily.

Special thanks to Hospice of Holland and American House for providing exceptional care. There will be a time of visitation and remembrance on Sunday, October 21, from 1-4 pm in the Fairbanks Room at New Holland Brewing, 66 E 8th St, Holland, MI 49423. Memorial contributions are to Hospice of Holland. The family is being served by the Langeland-Sterenberg Funeral Home.

[www.langelandsterenberg.com](http://www.langelandsterenberg.com).

# Tribute Wall

DB

“ Dear van Putten family --- I was working on something today that involved PID process control. I'm a lawyer. Lawyers aren't supposed to know that stuff. But I do, and it gives me a niche that almost no one else can fill. I was struck with gratitude to Jim for being a great teacher. He knew how to let me grow fast but safely, and not get too frustrated. I was planning to write him this email. Perhaps you can pass this on to him for me.

David Boundy - August 18, 2023 at 05:13 PM



“ Dr. James van Putten, Jr.

August 31, 2022 at 01:26 PM

EM

“ "Loved his Electronics course and lab (which I experienced at Hope in the mid 80s) - it was really challenging (we built a working computer) and it was probably the most rapid learning experience I ever had. The exam was in a unique one-on-one interview. I remember so much about it. What a great teacher!"

Eric Moser - January 01, 2019 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ "Sharon, Dirk, Jim, and family; Our thoughts and prayers are with you in this time of transition. Dirk and Jim, your Dad was truly an inspiration to us all. He set an excellent example and as you say way ahead of his time. I always enjoyed talking with him about all things tech. He was the first to show me what a word processor was (1984?) and always was easy to talk to. Know that his legacy lives on in all he touched and taught, but especially in you his family."

John Bos - October 08, 2018 at 12:00 AM

KB

“It has been a long time since we last conversed Dirk, I pray for you and your family that they may remember all the good times! Your father affected millions of people with all of his daily interactions, and truly defined what HOPE was about. Until we meet again.”

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**Karl Bader** - October 06, 2018 at 12:00 AM

AG

“Dirk and family, Was so sorry to see that dad had passed. Peace be with you all.”

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**Amy GADSBY** - October 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM

LD

“I can still hear Jim's laugh. He had such a positive outlook on things. My condolences to Sharon, Dirk, Jim Jr. and his family. I will always keep fond memories of him in my mind. God Bless You Jim! I know that he will appreciate you as much as we did.”

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**Lloyd Jon Driscoll** - October 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM

LH

“Dirk, Jim and Sharon, I'm so saddened to see of the passing of your dad/husband. I have SO many fond memories of spending time at your home in the summers. He was a kind and gentle man. He has touched the lives of so many. I hope you are surrounded by family and friends who help comfort y'all during this time. Sending love, Lara (Daverman) Helmus”

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**Lara Helmus** - October 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM

MC

“*Sharon, Dirk, and Jim, Please accept my condolences for the passing of your beloved husband, and father. As a Hope (music) faculty colleague of Jim I got to know him by having lunch in Kletz many times sharing great stories and enjoying his wit and wonderful sense of humor. Jim's legacy at Hope will endure for ever. May God receive him in his eternal love and peace, Mihai Craioveanu*”

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**Mihai Craioveanu** - October 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM