



## James A. Sitarski

August 10, 1945 - November 10, 2025

November 10, 2025 James “Ski” / “Popski” Sitarski, was raised in the Buffalo suburbs of Hamburg and Cheektowaga, NY. Attending catholic school in his earlier years, he found himself on the receiving end of the smack of a ruler on the backs of his hands by the nuns for his antics - which were typically due to his sarcasm and quick wit. He graduated from John F. Kennedy High School in Cheektowaga, NY in 1964.

Jim enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1965 and proudly served his country as a Sergeant on the crash rescue team. He began his military service in basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. Abroad, he was stationed at Wheelus Air Base in Tripoli, Libya. We attribute Jim’s deep, dark, year-round tan to an incident in 1968 where he fell asleep for hours in the hot, African sun. Almost got himself a dishonorable discharge for that one. Alas, after serving his country for 4 years, he was honorably discharged in 1969.

Back stateside, he met his wife, Paula, at J.H. Williams & Co. in Buffalo, NY where he worked as a machinist and she worked at playing hard-to-get. To get her attention, he resorted to pelting her with snowballs one day in the parking lot and, believe it or not, she fell for it. They started their life together at an apartment in Tonawanda as a married couple in January 1971. Six months later they brought their daughter, Tari, into the world. Do the math and surmise what you will. Paula had a son, Paul, from a previous marriage, so 10 year old

Paul now had a baby sister to tease and torture for years to come.

Jim & Paula bought their first home in North Tonawanda in 1978 and Jim added a second story to the house with the help of family so that the kids didn't have to share a room (thank goodness). When he wasn't adding entire stories on houses, he enjoyed woodworking and was a genuine Mr. Fix-It. There honestly wasn't a thing he couldn't fix.

Jim loved his family more than life itself. When he wasn't working 60+ hours a week to provide for them, he would attend the kids' baseball and softball games, even coaching one of Tari's teams in the early 80's. Jim enjoyed fishing on the nearby Erie Canal or Niagara River and never minded when the kids would catch more than him - which was often. Throughout his life he enjoyed bowling on various teams and participating in tournaments. His bowling career was cut short and abruptly ended when he pulled his hamstring in his golden years trying to pick up that elusive 7-10 split.

A lifelong Buffalo Bills and Buffalo Sabres fan, which he passed down to his kids, many games were enjoyed together with family and friends either in person or on TV. We're still waiting for that Super Bowl championship and a place on the Stanley Cup. Our day will come. It will come.

A member of the American Legion Stephen Sikora Post in North Tonawanda for more than 50 years, he spent much time with his brothers and sisters in service and was chosen as Post Commander twice during his tenure.

Jim will be remembered as a loving father, devoted husband, and a reliable friend. His legacy will live on through his children: Paul (wife, Liz) and Tari (husband, Joe); four grandchildren: Kelly, Ronald, Alexandra and Maksim; and his great grandchildren: TJ, Donnie, Rose, Sofia and Maverick.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Genevieve; his wife of 45 years, Paula; and numerous other family members and friends who we know were there to welcome him at Heaven's gate.

A celebration of Jim's life will be held during visiting hours on Saturday, November 15th at Wattengel Funeral Home, 533 Meadow Drive, North Tonawanda, NY. Visiting hours will be from 1pm - 5pm. After the service, friends and family are invited to gather for dinner at Stephen Sikora Post at 950 Payne Avenue, also in North Tonawanda. Jim will be interred in a private ceremony at a later date.

Lastly, it is Jim's wishes that guests at the celebration honor him and his love of country by wearing red, white and/or blue or something with the American flag which he so very dearly loved. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to be made in Jim's memory to the Gary Sinise Foundation, which supports veterans and first responders.

# Cemetery Details

## Acacia Park Cemetery

4215 Tonawanda Creek Rd N.  
North Tonawanda, NY

# Previous Events

## Visitation and Celebration of Life

NOV 15. 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Wattengel Funeral Home (Meadow Drive)  
533 Meadow Drive  
North Tonawanda, NY 14120  
(716) 693-0440  
wattengelfh@gmail.com  
<https://www.wattengel.com>

# Tribute Wall

MC

“ I knew Jim from Rite Aid( I truly loved him). He is to be honored and respected as a courageous loving man( God's child) Marilyn, Rite Aid Pharmacy.

Marilyn Choboy - December 16, 2025 at 08:35 AM

MD

“ Never forget our neighbors Jim& Paula from East Robinson st. Jim was a special man I helped do electrical jobs for when needed. Jim was the type of guy who always made you feel welcome. He and Paula spent many years spending time with my parents Len and Rose Daigler . Jim was a great husband who was there for Paula for everything ! Especially when Paula got sick , even when Paula didn't want him to be 😭🙏. Well Done Jim ! We'll see you again in Heaven 🙏 Say HI to Paula , Len &Rose for us . May you rest in Peace.  
Mark &Darlene Daigler

Mark Daigler - November 23, 2025 at 07:42 PM

MM

“ I knew Jim from my job at Jim Vastola's State Farm office. I never met him in person, but we shared a lot of stories about the Lord and how he was trusting in His Healing and Will to be done. He will be missed and may he now rest in God's loving arms. May his family find peace, comfort and hope.  
Mary Montero



Mary Montero - November 13, 2025 at 06:50 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of James A. Sitarski.*



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November 13, 2025 at 07:57 AM