



## James R. Greer

December 17, 1939 - May 2, 2015

James Greer passed away on May 2, 2015, at Dixie Regional Medical Center in St. George, Utah, with Marilyn Kaiser, his wife of 36 years by his side. Jim was born December 1939 in Kansas, reared in Morrison and Denver, Colorado, and graduated from South High School in Denver. He attended the University of Northern Colorado where he served in the Air Force Reserve Officer Corps, and graduated with a bachelor of arts from the University of Denver.

In Morrison in his formative years, he roamed the Red Rocks area, the Bear Creek Valley, and the Hogback. It is there where his boundless love of nature was born, instilled by a fly fishing, horseback-riding mother, Mary Bessie, and a grandfather who taught him to hunt. He spent summers outdoors from sunrise to sunset rock climbing, hiking, fishing, reading and daydreaming. His father, John, worked construction all of his life and taught Jim many skills of the trade.

In addition to Marilyn, he is survived by and the proud father of daughters Holly McConnell and Courtney Dressler, and son John Greer; grandchildren Lauren & Katie Dressler, Ryun & Madison McConnell, and Cameron Turner; siblings Mary Ann Murphy, Dan (Jacque Purcell), and Dianne Alcantara (Lanny). He was preceded in death by his parents and daughters, Michelle Greer and Heather Turner.

Jim worked in a variety of jobs and professions. Some of his favorites included: working for the park service at Mesa Verde National Park in archaeology; elementary school teacher in the Denver Public Schools; teaching at Denver Community College and the University of Colorado; various jobs in Colorado State government including Budget Director for three governors, Director of Internal Audits for the Department of Institutions, and Manager of Construction for group homes for the disabled.

His book jacket describes what happened to Jim at age 40: "...Jim Greer was haunted by the kind of dreams that afflict people...dreams of running away from respectable careers to live intensely, on the edge, by the sweat of your brow and the skin of your teeth." He and Marilyn chose Gunnison, Colorado, a location high in the central Colorado Rockies containing wilderness and outdoor opportunities beyond belief. Jim's diverse set of skills, talents, characteristics and abilities, including his love of cooking, storytelling, teaching and his outdoor skills, his sense of humor, and love of animals, people and nature created for the families and hunters incredible experiences in the high country.

Jim took a hiatus from guiding and outfitting and was hired as Business Manager and Budget Director for Western State College of Colorado in Gunnison and loved working with the students and their parents, faculty and staff for 5 years. He then returned to guiding and outfitting and running a 60+ horse stable for years.

In 1998 he and Dr. Charles Miller, Professor Emeritus at Western State College of Colorado, submitted a book for publication to the Colorado University Press. The book, *Riding West: An Outfitter's Life* was published in 1999.

Jim was a voracious reader of archaeology, anthropology, biography, history, science, classic literature, and fiction, with a special regard for Hemingway, and tried to instill in his high country clients, as well as anyone who'd listen, an appreciation of the past, as well as the geography, geology, flora and fauna of the Gunnison Country. Jim was a captivating storyteller. One of Jim's favorite sayings was, "Don't let the facts get in the way of a good story." Jim lived his life passionately and was not afraid to try his hand at new skills and adventures throughout his life.

Jim and Marilyn traveled, camped and hiked throughout the US, Scotland and Ireland, with countless camping trips to Eastern Utah and archaeological sites in the four corners area. Jim loved motorcycles, scooters, x-country skiing, and biking. He appreciated jazz, folk music, saddle songs, classical and bagpipe music.

Because of health issues, Jim and Marilyn had to relocate from their beloved home in Gunnison, County, Colorado, at 8000 ft, and in 2011-12 traveled the Western US searching for a new home at a lower elevation in their Airstream (another adventure!). When they stopped in St. George, Jim was enchanted by the beauty of Zion National Park, and once they found the Sun River community, they knew they had reached their "place of refuge."

During the last year, his life had become much too narrow for his liking because of health issues. He continued, however, to meet each day with enthusiasm and love of life until his big, beautiful heart quit him.

A friend long ago bestowed on Jim something descriptive of Jim's life. The quote is from the Dhammapada, a collection of sayings of the Buddha in verse form: "Few among men are they who cross over to the further shore. The others merely run up and down the bank on this side."

Jim cared deeply for animals. In lieu of flowers, please donate in his name to your local animal welfare organization.

Jim will be cremated in St. George. Family and friends may share condolences and memories online, upload photos and video, and/or share on Facebook at the following website: [www.SerenityStG.com](http://www.SerenityStG.com).

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Jim Greer Memorial: A gathering of friends of Jim Greer will be held at 2:00 PM on Saturday, September 12, 2015 in Gunnison County, Colorado on the deck at Harmel's Ranch Resort on the Taylor River.

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# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

SEP **12.** 2:00 PM (MT)

Harmel's Ranch Resort  
6748 County Road 742  
Altamont, CO 81210

# Tribute Wall

JM

“ Dear Marilyn and family,

*We have never met which is my loss. I am writing this on July 20, 2015. I am saddened this day to have let the time pass and missed getting together with Jim over the years. I worked with Jim for about 4 years when he worked in state government; often as member of Gene Petrone's staff. I lost track of Jim in about 1975, but eventually heard he had relocated to Gunnison. I moved to New Mexico in 1981, and always thought there would be a time when our paths would naturally pass. I even applied for a finance job at Western during the time he worked there, and looked forward to getting that job (didn't happen) so we might again work together. Jim was always fully present when I wanted to talk though a problem and special in so many other ways. Most importantly he was interested in everything around him, had such varied interests from most other state employees, and asked such insightful questions. It did not surprise me he had changed careers to something closer to the land and its stories. One time, my wife and I were at his Denver home and Jim had an old Sharps or Springfield rifle above the mantel and he wanted an original 45-70 government cartridge for it. I had collected old cartridges since I was 13 years old so said sure, and in a few days I traded him one cartridge for a far more valuable civil war cartridge box - with a story. I have held that leather cartridge box and leather belt near and dear since. He told this story about how he got the items. Jim and others were on an Archeology field trip (probably sponsored by U of D) along the New Mexico and Colorado border and he found the civil war leather cartridge box (with big NJ brass oval on the front) and its accompanying leather belt (with a brass US circle and NJ brad belt clip) on the floor of a small cave. We both knew they were likely left there by one of the Texas volunteers involved in the Battle of Glorieta Pass, NM during the civil war. Many years later this little known battle site would become a national monument, and the research and language for the memorial's designation would in part be written in DC by my step-son - Mike Mulligan. I looked forward to the day our paths would pass so we could relive those days and I*

*could again show him his cartridge box and belt finds. I so enjoyed seeing the pictures of Jim at his 70th birthday. I too turned 70 this year. I read about a memorial service being planned in September of 2015 and I would most like to know more even though I have long-standing plans to be in northern Minnesota through September 4th.*

*Jim McLaughlin*

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**James N. McLaughlin** - July 20, 2015 at 11:27 AM

WW

“*Dear Marilyn and Family,  
I met you both in the summer of 1982 when four of us came west from U. Maine to work at Harmel's for the summer. You allowed us to borrow your house to hang out in on days off and Jim made the job much more interesting and fun. I stopped by the ranch in 2005? with my family and Jim was there! ...he remembered the day when we arrived from Maine after driving for 39 hours mostly straight and we set to work unloading hay.  
I will always remember the stories Jim would tell, his kindness to us all and his sense of adventure and he will always be a part of the fabric of our 'western experience'. Back then he talked about how proud of his family he was.  
We are praying for you all in this sad time and he will be sorely missed by all that met him.  
Blessings and hugs to you all,*

*Wendie Moore Wilhide*

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**Wendie Wilhide** - July 03, 2015 at 08:34 AM

BR

“ We were so sorry to hear that Jim is gone--he was one of a kind for sure. Our family first met Jim when our twin boys, now 40, were about 8. He took us on a trail ride from Crested Butte to Aspen and back--a once in a lifetime experience. And you can just imagine all the tales we heard on that trip, not to mention a whole encyclopedia of how to live in the out of doors. Since that time we have come back to Harmels many times, though not every year, and ridden with Jim many times. Our favorite ride, that we repeated with Jim just a few years ago with our grown up boys, is up to Doctors Park. So Marilyn, our greatest sympathy--just know that he is still part of our lives in our memories of experiences that shaped our lives and that of our boys as well. And we so fondly remember our lunch at your house not that long ago.

*I am looking for pictures from that era, when our boys were small, and will send them if I find any. I did see a letter that Jim replied to Chris when he wrote him asking if he could be a wrangler and Jim answered that he had to be at least 12.*

*Betsy and Bud Rowe (Shawnee, Kansas)*

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**Betsy Rowe** - June 30, 2015 at 04:39 PM

“ My wife Karen and I, had the privilege of having Jim and Marylin as neighbors for nearly 15 years. When we first moved to Gunnison, they made us feel so welcome in our new home town. At that time, they had a big sheep dog, an Australian Shepherd, or something close to that, named "Bubba." Our dog, Cody, loved the entire Greer family, and they loved her back. Sometimes we would realize that we hadn't seen Cody for a while, only to find that she had gone with Jim, Marylin, and Bubba on their daily walk up Antelope Creek. Bubba was always so good to her, and we never worried about her if she was with Jim and Marylin.

Every time we would see each other when walking on the road, or pass one another on the trail, Jim would say, "hi neighbor!" And give a huge smile and wave. His friendliness and joy of living were completely genuine.

Jim accomplished so many things that contributed to the improvement of our subdivision, and our community as a whole, that there are far too many to name. He spearheaded the development of our local animal shelter, and he and Marylin continually fostered dogs that needed a home. Jim served on the board of our HOA, and was extremely instrumental in bringing a new water system to the Antelope Hills subdivision. Without his leadership and tenacity, our entire housing development could quite literally be without any water at all today.

We were very sad to see the Greer's move away, and we still miss them, and talk about them regularly. In our 33 years of married life, they were some of the best neighbors we have ever had. I still look out the kitchen window every day and admire their property, remembering the tireless efforts they made to improve it inside and out.

Marylin, we have started feeding your flocks of finches over the last couple of years. We do our best, but I know they miss your abundant care. Karen and I want you to know we will be thinking of

*you, and praying for you in this time of loss.*

*John and Karen Clement*

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**John Clement** - May 14, 2015 at 02:55 PM

JU

“ 12 files added to the tribute wall



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**Jean Urban** - May 10, 2015 at 05:35 PM

RE

“ Jim Greer was one of those great characters in your autobiography that will never be lost in the story. I came to Harmel's in the summer of 2002 wide eyed and ready to take in Colorado. I will never forget the "wrangler breakfast" that I attended on the first morning. I knew from then on that I was in for an exciting and educational summer. After 3 weeks of taking out low rides, I got the chance to take over the overnight wrangler position. At first I thought it was a cool excuse to go camp every night and see the country. I couldn't have been more right or wrong at the same time! Not only did I learn what it meant to sleep and eat in nature, I soon learned what it meant to see the world through the eyes of great people that have passed. No one can truly explain the feeling you get every morning after everyone is saddled and mounted and underway. You look back down your string as you round the corner to see all the horses heads are low and nose to butt in the line. They know they're going home. Just as you relax after seeing all the riders upright in their saddles, there it is! You break out of the willows in the creek, through the aspen stand and boom! The valley opens up beneath you. It feels like you can see every inch of God's green earth! It is then that you realize what all of the people who settled that country saw, and you are seeing it the same way they did. Off of horse back. I haven't been back in a while but I can still close my eyes and see the view of the world coming alive between two upright horse ears. It is a sight and sound that I will never forget for the rest of my life.

So...when I think of Jim Greer, I think of the man who taught me how to live in that country and see him as a person who forever changed my horizons. So Jim, thank you for opening my eyes to the natural world in all its glory and RIP in the world beyond.

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ronnie elliott - May 08, 2015 at 04:21 PM

KE

I was only there a few weeks...but Jim is someone I'll never forget ! Thoughts and prayers for his family and friends..

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Kerry - May 09, 2015 at 02:10 PM

JU

*We have known Jim for over 36 years and loved him. He was extremely smart and quite a smart ass. You always knew where you stood with Jim and he had no qualm about letting you know. We will always remember Jim's 70th Birthday party (photos posted). Marilyn put on an incredible event even with a bagpipe player; he was quite the Scottish music aficionado. I can't believe he is gone but he will not be forgotten. We love and miss you!*  
*Jean and Stan Urban*

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**Jean Urban** - May 10, 2015 at 05:35 PM

ML

“ *Three years ago I was lucky enough to buy a home across the street from Jim and Marilyn and their 2 great dogs, Molly and Bella. From the very beginning we were friends. We talked, we walked our dogs together, and had an evening toddy on one of our patios. Jim and Marilyn were a wonderful couple and it was fun to be with them. Jim, we will all miss you. My family loved to hear about those "horse tales" and your adventures and misadventures!*

*Many of us at this age in our lives look back and see how our lives changed through the years. we all had so many different and wonderful adventures throughout the years and we will always have our memories of all those years ago. Jim and Marilyn certainly made a mountain of them together. And if we are all fortunate, we will have many friends from many different places. Jim will never be forgotten. Jim will be surrounded by his friends and family forever.*

*Goodbye, dear friend, Monte and Racine*

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**Monte Long** - May 07, 2015 at 03:17 PM

LC

“ Jim was such a ham! We loved listening to his stories and will now really cherish his book. He was so "sweet" to Katelyn, in a Jim sort-of-way, and taught her so much about wrangling. He gave her a bandana her first week at Harmel's, which made her feel official. Thank you, Jim, and I loved looking at the pictures you have posted, Marilyn. I miss you, and we look forward to celebrating his life with you in September.

*Love you, Linda and Bill Chambliss*

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**Linda Chambliss** - May 07, 2015 at 11:00 AM

SS

“ Jim was one of the first people I met and got to know when I moved to Gunnison in 1993, 22 years ago now. I was working as a wrangler at Harmels. I instantly took to Jim. I loved the way he said what was on his mind... if it looked like s\*\*\* and it smelled like s\*\*\*, Jim just called it s\*\*\*! Loved him. Went on many a rides with him while at Harmels. And I'll never forget his mule and how he just loved that old mule and took such good care of him. Now I have to share the story of the Harmel crew in the Cattlemen's Days parade. This is bad. Hope I don't get fired! I said "doesn't that field look wonderful to run a horse across?!" This is the now soccer field across from McDonalds. Several said "No! We can't do that!". Jim said, "Oh hell, come on, let's go." So off a couple of us went, Jim leading the pack, running our horses full bore across the field. We got yelled at back at the ranch, but it was worth it... so much fun! I'll never forget you my friend. Rest in peace until we can see each other again and run our horses across some field up there in heaven! My condolences to you Marilyn. My heart goes out to you and I will keep you close in prayer. God Bless you all. Sue Oberly-Spritzer

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**Sue Spritzer** - May 07, 2015 at 10:43 AM

JN

“ Hoka hey, Jim. See you down the trail, buddy. Thanks for the great memories in Gunnison Country, for inspiring so many young wranglers and thousands of families and dude riders, for your care for your horses, for your bagpipe music in the morning at the stables before rides, for walking around the sunny lunch room at Harmel's above the Taylor River, visiting with the guests, making their day and their stay better, and for the great rides we had up in the high country that we both love so much. We'll never forget you. Our condolences to you, Marilyn, you're in our thoughts and we wish you all the best. John and Lisa Nelson, Pagosa Springs, CO

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**John and Lisa Nelson** - May 07, 2015 at 09:40 AM

SR

“ Stan, Jean, Nicole & Ryan purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of James R. Greer.



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**Stan, Jean, Nicole & Ryan** - May 07, 2015 at 09:23 AM

PC

“ Marilyn, Chuck and I are so sad to hear of Jim's passing. We are thinking of you. Pam and Chuck Cunningham

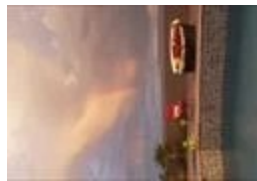
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**Pam Cunningham** - May 07, 2015 at 07:31 AM

TR

“ Jim was one of those rare people that touched us all. He had an infectious love of life that was a joy to be near. He came to our home and couldn't get enough of all the views. I remember standing with our arms around each other in the driveway. He touched my heart admiring the simple beauty around us. Marilyn always so patient and loving waiting for him to get his fill of the view. Besides his quiet and sage advice he was the life of the party. What a character and we all couldn't get enough of his stories. What a great friend you and Marilyn have been to my mom. And through my mom we were grateful to know you and call you our friend as well. I'm sending this photo of a rainbow in our backyard. It made me think of Jim. We are all here for you Marilyn and we hope your memories will bring you comfort at this tough time.

*God speed our friend. Rob and Terri Roe*



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**Terri and Rob Roe** - May 06, 2015 at 07:38 PM

ST

“ Jim was a great storyteller, who reveled in spinning a tale of his adventures as an outfitter. With his slouch hat and impish grin he snuck out when our backs were turned.

*We will miss you buddy!*

*Sandi and Bruce Tuthill*

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**Sandi and Bruce Tuthill** - May 06, 2015 at 03:49 PM

ST

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Sandi & Bruce Tuthill - May 06, 2015 at 03:36 PM

KP

“ Love and prayers to the Greer family and especially to one of the nicest ladies I've ever known. Love you Marilyn..... Kathy Pruett

kathy pruett - May 06, 2015 at 08:29 AM

MA

“ 2 files added to the album New Album Name



Marilyn - May 05, 2015 at 04:47 PM

MA

“ 4 files added to the album New Album Name



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**Marilyn** - May 05, 2015 at 04:43 PM

DN

*Love you both, he will be deeply missed by many. Love you*

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**Debi Nielsen** - May 06, 2015 at 02:31 PM

MA

“ 4 files added to the album New Album Name



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**Marilyn** - May 05, 2015 at 04:38 PM

MA

“ 4 files added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Marilyn** - May 05, 2015 at 04:33 PM

MA

“ 5 files added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Marilyn** - May 05, 2015 at 04:28 PM

MA

“ 4 files added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Marilyn** - May 05, 2015 at 04:23 PM

MA

“ 6 files added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Marilyn** - May 05, 2015 at 04:18 PM

MA

“ 2 files added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Marilyn** - May 05, 2015 at 04:13 PM

AW

“ You had to pay attention when Jim was talking, for there was bound to be something funny and/or profound coming. He never stood on any kind of ceremony, and he had the rare quality of giving you instant ease, making you ready to enjoy his company. His honesty, integrity, and joy in life were readily apparent and contagious. His choice of Marilyn as his wife was brilliant, as was hers to join up with him.

--Anna Warner

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**Anna Warner** - May 05, 2015 at 11:32 AM

MK

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Marilyn Kaiser** - May 04, 2015 at 10:16 PM

MK

“ 1 file added to the *tribute wall*



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**Marilyn Kaiser** - May 04, 2015 at 10:13 PM