



James Riley "Jim" Montgomery

October 24, 2023

James Riley "Jim" Montgomery, age 93, retired attorney, Major General, and Virginia Tech administrator, passed away peacefully in his Blacksburg, VA home on October 24, 2023. Jim was born to Elizabeth and Charles Montgomery in Knoxville, Tennessee. He attended Knoxville High School and was active in sports and the Boy Scouts, achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Continuing his participation in Scouting after high school, Jim served as National Conference Chief of the Order of the Arrow in 1950. He graduated from the University of Tennessee in 1952 and entered the Army as a Second Lieutenant. On leaving active duty, Jim continued his military career in the Army Reserves while also pursuing his education. He earned his MA from the University of Tennessee and his PhD from Columbia University. Jim started his career in university administration at a time of great demand for higher education, and he pioneered the field of Institutional Research and Planning. He served as the Director of Institutional Research at the University of Tennessee and later at Virginia Tech. Jim was named a Distinguished Member of the Association of Institutional Research and helped to organize the Southern Association of Institutional Research (SAIR). The SAIR established an award named in Jim's honor, and he was the first recipient of the James R. Montgomery Service Award. He authored five books and published over 50 papers in history and educational research. In addition to his academic career, Jim remained in the Army Reserves for 36 years and retired as a Major General. His assignments included the command of the 310th Theater Army

Area Command with a NATO Cold War mission for which he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. After retirement from Virginia Tech, Jim obtained a JD from Dickinson School of Law, Penn State. He returned to Blacksburg, founded Montgomery Law, and worked for 27 years as an attorney. His volunteer activities included service on the Boards of the Virginia Tech YMCA, the Agency on Aging, the Montgomery Chapter of the AARP, and the Blacksburg United Methodist Church. In addition, Jim served with the Montgomery County Christmas Store, the Boy Scouts of America, the Christiansburg-Blacksburg Rotary Club, the Torch Club, and the American Legion. He also served at state and national offices of the Reserve Officers Association and as a member of the Board of the Roanoke Retired Officers Association. Jim was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 59 years, Mary Bryan Blackshear Montgomery. Survivors include their children: Charles T. Montgomery (Cathy) of Richmond, VA, James B. Montgomery (Diane) of Charleston, SC, and April D. Montgomery (Kelvin) of Norwood, CO; grandchildren: T.J. Montgomery (Kati), Meagan M. Lemon (Preston), Ivy R. Montgomery, Suzannah M. Gills (Daniel), and Madison J. Montgomery (Heather); and eight great-grandchildren. A memorial service will be held at 11am on January 13, 2024, at the Blacksburg United Methodist Church. He will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions may be made to the Endowment Fund of the Blacksburg United Methodist Church or to a charity of one's choice. Condolences may be expressed at www.mccoynfuneralhome.com.

Cemetery Details

Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington, VA

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 13. 11:00 AM (ET)

Blacksburg United Methodist Church
111 Church Street SE
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Tribute Wall



“ Rest in peace my leader. You were a great warrior. COL (R) Dan Carro

Dan Carro - July 30, 2024 at 07:09 PM



“ With love from Ann, Shannon and Pat planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James Riley "Jim" Montgomery.

With love from Ann, Shannon and Pat - January 08, 2024 at 03:11 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of James Riley "Jim" Montgomery.



January 08, 2024 at 03:11 PM



“ Gerald & Josetta McLaughlin & Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James Riley "Jim" Montgomery.

Gerald & Josetta McLaughlin & Family - January 05, 2024 at 11:53 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of James Riley "Jim" Montgomery.*



January 05, 2024 at 11:53 AM



“ *Jim and I first met at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. This was at the first meeting of the Association of Institutional Research in the mid-1960's. We became fast friends and he and Mary along with me and my wife, Ancy, visited in each others homes and took several cruises together. Although he retired from Virginia Tech and began practicing law we remained friends and visited by phone and email for the next many years until his death. Jim will be missed by many and I will sincerely miss my dear friend.*

Jim Firnberg - December 27, 2023 at 02:06 PM



Jim Firnberg and Jim Montgomery were two of the key individuals founding the field of Institutional Research. I first worked for Montgomery when I was a graduate student at Tennessee in the late 60's. When i left active duty (in an assignment at West Point that he worked out for me) I had to opportunity to work for him in IR at Va Tech for almost 20 years. He was always encouraging and often had a "Zeke" joke to help move forward in even the most difficult situations. He set a high bar of professionalism and integrity that leaves a positive mark on higher education and on those who knew him. He is missed.

Gerry McLaughlin - January 05, 2024 at 10:36 AM

JM

“ 3 files added to the album More Tribute Wall



Jim B Montgomery - November 13, 2023 at 11:11 AM

KK

Much loved and admired, and is very much missed. So sorry for your loss. End of an era. We are so glad we have some of the family stories he shared at our family reunions on video. Will have to get them digitized and shared sometime. With April's help Peggy and Jack and I were able to talk to Jim by phone a few weeks ago and hear his voice. Precious memories. Will always remember the times running all over the mountain behind Uncle Charles's House.

kathy krantz - November 13, 2023 at 03:19 PM

AS

“ Jim was the first lawyer in the New River Valley to welcome me here in 2003. I was a Richmond lawyer but moved to Blacksburg for family reasons. Jim was courteous and friendly and we remained close up until he passed away, though I wished I had been able to spend more time with him in the latter, challenging years. Jim was a gentleman and had scores of friends. I was lucky to have known Mary, very accomplished in her own right, for a short while as well,. I wish the best for the large family they behind. I know they understand the value of the great legacy. Arthur Shaheen

Arthur V. Shaheen - November 08, 2023 at 06:51 PM

DA

Mr Montgomery was so helpful when I was trying to deal with my Dad's estate and then helping with my own will, etc... I so appreciated his kindness as well as his advice.

To his family and colleagues... I trust your wonderful and precious memories will give you much comfort.

"Thank you Mr. Montgomery"

Deneise Austin-Altizer

Deneise Austin-Altizer - November 11, 2023 at 08:25 PM

KK

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kathy kraintz - November 17, 2023 at 10:57 AM



I rode around Blacksburg with Jim searching for land on which Habitat for Humanity of the NRV could build homes for low-income families. We finally located land for two homes.

Leon Roper - January 07, 2024 at 08:17 AM

KS

Mr. Montgomery was my Professor at New River Community many moons ago and is one of the reasons I furthered my education. He was a kind, caring and highly motivated to assist his students with their education. He has been brought up in many conversations between my college buddies over the years as he was a very memorable man. He always had a kind word for his students and left a lasting impression on many of us for the years to come.

Kathy Sweeney - January 11, 2024 at 08:24 AM