

JAMES MAAG Obituary

James Scoville Maag of Topeka, passed peacefully on May 18, 2025, at the age of 85, after living with Parkinson's for several years. Jim was born November 24, 1939, in Ottawa, Kansas, to Mildred and Louie Maag. He spent much of his early life on a farm in Appanoose, Franklin County, Kansas. He graduated from Appanoose High School, where he benefitted from the instruction of deeply committed teachers, and the love of his three sisters and his parents. He enrolled at Washburn University, where he immersed himself in college life, joining Alpha Delta fraternity, serving as class president, student council president, and captain of the varsity tennis team. He graduated in 1961 with degrees in political science and history.

He taught middle school in Anaheim, California for a year, before returning to his beloved home state and earning a master's degree at the University of Kansas. Soon after, he met Kathy Covert, and the two were married in 1964. They moved to Dodge City, where Jim taught history at Dodge City Community College. Political aspirations soon took hold, and he ran for the State Legislature in 1968. Jim represented the 116th District in the Kansas House of Representatives from 1969-1976, serving as speaker pro tem in 1974. Before joining the Kansas Bankers Association (KBA) in 1980, Jim served as legislative liaison to Governor Robert F. Bennett and as Assistant Secretary of State.

Jim spent 24 years with the KBA, retiring in 2004 as the organization's President and CEO. During his time there, he led the effort to find the KBA a new home, and in September of 2001, the organization moved to a new building in west Topeka. Jim was also well known for his wit and wisdom, which was on full display in the popular "Land of Blahs," a charity show bent on political satire, where he served as writer, producer, and emcee. "Blahs" raised thousands of dollars for charities during its 10-year run.

Jim was a member of First United Methodist Church for nearly 40 years and took special delight in chronicling the church's beginnings and helping create a History Wall. Between work and many rounds of golf with family and friends, Jim's community involvement was of great importance to him, especially with his beloved alma mater, Washburn, where he served as

president of the Alumni Association; as a member of the Washburn Endowment Board of Trustees; a member of the Washburn Board of Regents; and was instrumental in fundraising for the construction of the Bradbury Thompson Alumni Center on the Washburn campus. His passion for Washburn extended beyond the classroom to athletics, and he could often be found heartily cheering on his beloved Ichabods. In 2004, Jim was awarded an honorary doctor of commerce from Washburn for his lifelong work for the university and his contributions to Kansas banking. He also served many years on the Kansas Guardianship Program.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents and his eldest sister, Dora Stolfus. Survivors include Jim's wife, Kathy; daughter Laura (Brian) Lutz; son Jared (Melissa) Maag; grandchildren Preston (Erin) Lutz; Mallory Lutz; Emma Maag; and James T. Maag; great-granddaughter Lutz due in August; sisters Donna Eichenberger (Carl); and Linda Perney (Jan); as well as many beloved nieces, nephews and great-nieces and nephews.

The family is forever grateful to the incredible staff at Homestead of Topeka for their unparalleled care and concern for Jim, especially in the last few weeks of his life. Visitation will be Friday, May 23, 2025, at 10 a.m. at First United Methodist Church, 600 SW Topeka Blvd., in Topeka, immediately followed by services at 11 a.m. The ceremony will be live-streamed at [www.fumctopeka.org/media. Memorial](http://www.fumctopeka.org/media.Memorial) contributions may be made online or by check to the Jim & Kathy Maag Business Scholarship and sent in care of Washburn University Foundation, 1700 SW College Ave., Topeka, KS 66621, www.wualumni.org; or to the Kansas Oral History Project at www.ksoralhistory.org or sent in care of KHOP, P.O. Box 67051, Topeka, KS 66667.