



Bernard "Bernie" J. Zant

February 6, 1940 - April 29, 2025

Bernard "Bernie" J. Zant, 85, of Peoria, passed away on Tuesday, April 29, 2025 in East Peoria.

He was born on February 6, 1940 in Peoria, IL to Russell and Marcella (Boehle) Zant. He married Cinda Lackey in October of 1983 and later married Lori Hampton in 2002.

He is survived by his two daughters, Caitlin Zant of Manitowoc, WI and Chloe Zant of Champaign, IL. Also surviving are four siblings, Dolores Kieseletter of Metamora, Brother Louis Zant, OFM of Pontiac, MI, Kenneth (Elaine) Zant of Hartsel, CO, and Cecilia Colvin of Redmon, OR; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his first wife, Cinda Zant and two brothers, Fred and Joseph Zant.

Bernie received his PhD in Sociology from the University of Illinois and worked as a Professor of Sociology and Criminology at Bradley University for over 50

years. He was a founding member of the Peoria Rugby Club, a member of the Peoria Ski Club, a Board Member of the ACLU of Illinois, and a former cast member with the Peoria Players and Corn Stock theaters. Bernie enjoyed singing, acting, and loved music. He was an avid runner, participating in the Steam Boat Classic several times, and also enjoyed cycling, skiing and golfing.

Cremation will be accorded and a Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. Schmidt-Haller Burial and Cremation Services is in charge of arrangements.

Memorials may be made to TAPS Animal Shelter, the Peoria Rugby Club, the ACLU of Illinois, or other local cause of your choice. Words of comfort can be shared with the family at www.SchmidtHaller.com.

Tribute Wall

TH

“ I only learned of Bernie's passing this past week. RIP Bernie. I am sure you are having some great conversations in the next life.

Tom Higgins - August 11, 2025 at 09:05 AM

CE

“ Mr. Zant was one of my favorite professors at Bradley. I am sad to hear of his passing. He was a wonderful teacher and human being.

Celia - May 13, 2025 at 10:25 AM

KT

“ Bernie was a mellow, well-meaning man and a long-time good friend of mine. A good athlete, I savor memories of Colorado ski trips and golf outings with him over many years. I cannot accept I won't be able to spend time with him again. My condolences to his daughters, whom he cherished, and to all his family. Kevin Teeven

Kevin Teeven - May 11, 2025 at 09:29 PM

AZ

“ We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ Schmidt Haller Burial and Cremation Services

A Memorial Tree was planted for Bernard ("Bernie") J. Zant - May 01, 2025 at 09:06 PM