

In Memoriam
C. James Owen
January 24, 1937 – August 16, 2018

C. James Owen was born on January 24, 1937, in McKeesport, Pennsylvania. His family came to Fort Wayne in 1938 thanks to a Depression Era job, and like many transplants to Fort Wayne, this became home. He attended St. Vincent Villa, Saint Patrick Catholic grade school, and Central Catholic High School. It was in these formative years that he was given the nickname Buzz which he preferred to his given name.

Buzz started his adult public service career by volunteering for the military. He was a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne based out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina until he was honorably discharged in 1959. That fall he enrolled at Indiana University to study education and social studies. More importantly, that fall he met Susan Joan Poplett. Buzz and Susan got married on September 1, 1962.

After finishing his bachelor's degree, Buzz and Susan returned to Fort Wayne where he started teaching at Hoagland High School in East Allen County Schools. After a couple of years of teaching high school, he took a leave of absence to pursue graduate studies at the University of Notre Dame earning a master's degree in 1967. He was awarded his Ph.D. in 1973. Buzz's dissertation was the basis for his classic textbook on government consolidation, *Governing Metropolitan Indianapolis: The Politics of Unigov*, published by University of California Press.

Buzz taught at IPFW for the first time in 1970 and joined the faculty full time in 1975. He was well-respected and appreciated by his colleagues. One colleague wrote, "Jim's civility and student-first approach to his job were always appreciated. I particularly liked the way one could visibly see him walk from office to office across campus and stop and engage in personal conversations with his friends and colleagues at the University....Jim's example was to engage individuals directly, and I believe there is a lesson in his approach to interpersonal relations accordingly." Another wrote, "Those of us who worked with him admired his professionalism coupled with a quick and humorous wit made him a model for new faculty. I smile as I think of him now." We were lucky to have him as a fixture on the IPFW campus until his retirement in 2001.

From early on, Buzz blended scholarship and service to the community. He worked for the City of Fort Wayne and served on boards and commissions for over 25 years during the terms of five mayors. He served on the Fort Wayne Board of Works, Storm Sewer Utility Task Force, Fort Wayne City Plan Commission, Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne Community Trust Board, and the Fort Wayne Education Foundation. He is also a member of many professional societies, including the American Society for Public Administration, American Planning Association, and the Urban Affairs Association. In 1991, Dr. Owen was a Fulbright awardee and lectured on urban government in Poland.

After Buzz retired from IPFW, he continued to be an educator by reading with third and fourth graders at Washington Center and Holland Elementary Schools and volunteering with the Snider High School tennis and golf teams.

Buzz is survived by Susan, their children Andrew, Sarah, Leon, their spouses, and nine grandchildren.