



## James (Jack) Ellsworth Kontes

March 24, 1948 - November 18, 2023

Businessman, Husband, Family Man,  
British Car Buff, and Boater

Dear Friend,

It is with sadness that I share the loss of a member and friend.

The first word that comes to mind when I think of Jack is charming. He had a captivating smile. Although Jack was generally quiet and inclined toward listening and probing for information, when he was passionate about something he would offer his thoughts beginning with a hesitant, "Well..."

Affable and good-humored, Jack's laugh was hard to forget; it was an engaging Muttley snicker, without the squeaky aspect - An inward chuckle that made it difficult to suppress your own amusement.

One constant was the high regard he held for his father and his uncle Nontas. They were both WWII veterans, true members of "the last great generation." Not only did their

company, H.S Martin, manufacture the complicated glassware for which it remains famous, but they personally made museum-quality paperweights in their spare time. Jack spoke freely of his admiration for these elders and you could sense his love and respect. This warmth made him that much more endearing.

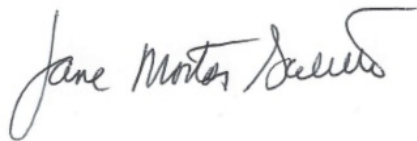
Jack and his cousin John Treires carried on the tradition of excellence, during and after the passing of Jack, Sr. and Nontas. Jack retired from the business in 2019.

Jack's fortitude in dealing with his mobility issues could serve as a role model for everyone. He pushed on, without complaint, seemingly ignoring the burden of his crutches. As I reflect on that I think of him as a warrior, made of the same stalwart stuff as his forebears.

I encourage you to read the family's well-written description of Jack.

Our condolences to his wife Vivian, sister Valerie, her husband Bob, his children Jackie and Christa, and Christa's husband Michael and their families.

Sincerely,



Jane Morton Galetto  
CU Maurice River Board President

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### Obituary

James (Jack) Ellsworth Kontes. Jack Kontes passed away with family members by his side November 18, 2023. His brief illness was due to a devastating cardiac arrest. He was born March 24, 1948, to proud parents Valerie Lois Kontes (Stevens) and James Constantine Kontes, who predeceased him in 2016 and 2014 respectively. Jack attended Vineland High School and Valley Forge Military Academy where he graduated. He excelled in gymnastics and as Captain of the wrestling team. After graduation from the Academy, he went on to the University of South Carolina and Cumberland County Community College. He served six years in the New Jersey National Guard and held the rank of Lieutenant. He joined the family business, Kontes Glass Company, founded in 1942 in Vineland, NJ by brothers Nontas, Jim and Bill Kontes. When Kontes Glass was sold in 1982, H.S. Martin, a division of Kontes, was retained by Jim and Nontas. Jack became General Manager of Kontes/Martin and eventually partnered with his cousin, John Treires, as owners. Both companies specialized in scientific laboratory glassware and distillation systems. Jack retired from the company in 2019.

In retirement, Jack was busier than ever pursuing his knowledgeable interest in vintage cars. Perhaps, it was when at the age of fifteen, his maternal grandfather gave Jack a thrilling ride in his 1963 Sebring Silver Corvette Stingray which ignited his fascination with sports cars. Over many years he enjoyed restoring British MG cars. He was a member of the British Motor Club of Southern NJ. Seeing his cars brought back to road worthy fit and finish gave him much pleasure. In the course of his passionate pursuit of this hobby, he made many good and lasting friendships. If Jack wasn't peering under the hood of one of his project cars, he might be found down on his dock adjusting bow and stern lines of his 19 foot, Whahoo motor boat making certain it was properly tethered no matter the time of day, night or weather.

These hobbies are not so unusual except if they are accomplished while enduring the hardship of having been forced to perpetually live and walk using crutches. In the late 1970s, Jack was stricken with life threatening bone cancer. Jack became a survivor, never complained, pushed hard, did the most he could and the best he could. He will be greatly missed by family and friends who knew him to be kind, generous, fair minded, fun loving and ever the optimist. He is survived by his wife, Vivian Yap Kontes of Port Elizabeth, NJ; son, John Christopher Kontes of Vineland, NJ; daughter, Christa Lynn Ritzier (Michael) of CMCH, NJ; grandson, Petty Officer Second Class Victor G. Rodriguez of St. Petersburg, Florida; and sister, Valerie Kontes Baron (Robert) of Port Elizabeth, NJ. Relatives and friends will be received on Sunday, December 3, 2023, from 10:00am until 11:00am at DeMarco-Luisi Funeral Home, 2755 S. Lincoln Ave., Vineland, NJ. A memorial service will follow at 11:00am. Interment will be held privately.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to: CU - Maurice, 17 E. Main St., Millville, NJ 08332 (856) 300-5331 or Cumberland Cape Atlantic YMCA, c/o YMCA of Vineland, NJ, 1159 E. Landis Ave., Vineland, NJ 08360 (856) 691-0030.

**Memorial Visitation at Funeral Home**

10:00 am - 11:00 am  
Sunday, December 3, 2023  
DeMarco-Luisi Funeral Home  
2755 S. Lincoln Avenue  
Vineland, New Jersey, United States

**Memorial Service**

11:00 am - 12:00 pm  
Sunday, December 3, 2023

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**CU ON THE RIVER**

[www.CUMauriceRiver.org](http://www.CUMauriceRiver.org)

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