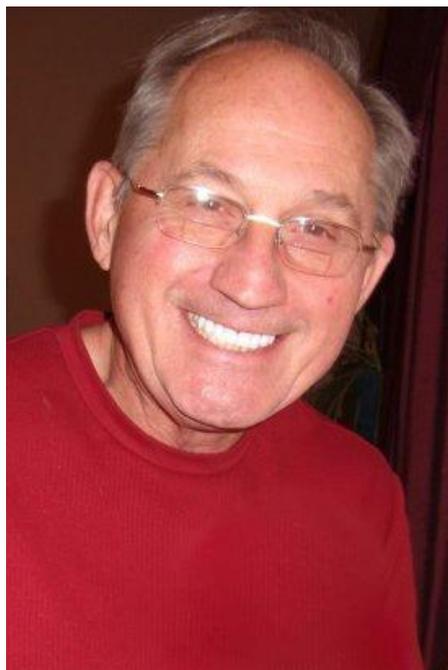


## Jim Cichoracki bio interviewed by David Bledsoe



Jim was born on April 23, 1942 in Hamtramck, MI where he lived through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. He lived in Detroit, MI from 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade before moving to Clinton Township, MI where he graduated from Clintondale High School in 1959 with 39 fellow graduates. He studied accounting for one year while attending Mott Community College in Flint, MI. His favorite school subjects were Algebra & Geometry. Jim tried to join the US Navy but having a problem with his feet, he didn't quite make it.

For after school and summer jobs, Jim helped the milk man deliver milk door to door on weekends. Remember those days? Later on he began a newspaper delivery route before moving on to working in a supermarket. His favorite after school job was with his neighbor's plumbing business where he enjoyed working with his hands. After high school Jim had had hoped for full time employment with his

neighbor but there simply wasn't enough business to justify the position.

While in high school, Jim played guard and tackle on the football team. He says "I think we even won a game on occasion". He's a huge Tennessee Titans fan and even though the Detroit Lions are a bit of a disappointment, being one of the faithful, he's still pulling for the former "home team".

Jim worked as the produce department assistant manager for A&P Food Stores from 1959 – 1963. He worked for General Motors industrial engineering department from 1963 – 1980. When he was laid off from GM, he drove a Hostess Bakery truck from 1980 – 1987. After reading the label on the back of the snack cakes, he finally figured out why he had to keep purchasing larger pant sizes. From 1987 – 1989 Jim alternated between GM layoffs & other temporary jobs and managed to squeeze in a few credits studying accounting. Jim moved to Spring Hill, TN's GM Saturn Plant in 1989 and worked there until retiring in 2007. As a machine operator Jim always tried to get his parts as close to perfect as humanly possible. He says "If my part's specifications had 6 microns tolerance, I tried to get it within 3 microns." Yes, he is a perfectionist, but it goes deeper than that. Jim believes that Christians should always be a positive role model by doing their very best.

Jim has three sons and one daughter from a previous marriage. He says "They're all workaholics ... just like their dad." His children are 36 – 46 years of age and live in California, Florida, Nebraska and Finland. Jim met his present wife, Diane in 1991 while each of them was taking country dance lessons in Franklin, TN. In 1997, they finally tied

the knot and have lived in Spring Hill, TN ever since. They don't go real often but Jim and Diane take in a special treat occasionally by attending the Symphony and TPAC.

Since retirement, Jim has served the American Red Cross as a disaster action team member. When a family's home is destroyed by fire or a storm, he and fellow team members take care of firefighters by supplying drinks and snacks and assist victims with their immediate needs. They offer to provide food, clothing and lodging for three nights if needed. Jim says "I keep a teddy bear in my truck at ALL times. Kids need something to hug and this small gift offers comfort and security to a child that words simply can't describe." "We find families at the most stressful point in their lives." Yet Jim finds this service to be extremely rewarding and would encourage everyone to support the American Red Cross. He also volunteers with "The Well", a community food pantry. Jim joined the Spring Hill Planning Commission as a member several months ago and plans to seek an alderman position in next April's Spring Hill city election.

A favorite entertainment of Jim's would be ... entertaining. He enjoys acting with the theater through the Spring Hill Arts Center where he also helps with stage set up. He has enjoyed participating in multiple plays such as playing five (yes five) different parts in "A Christmas Story". In "Oliver", he played the undertaker, Mr Sowerberry. In "The Homecoming", he played the part of Grandpa Walton. In this play, he was very grateful to one of the kids who stepped in with a little help when grandpa couldn't get one of his lines to come out. Thankfully, the director nor the audience ever noticed.

Building a garage on his house would qualify Jim as more than just a handyman. So when he visited the Green Council's Habitat Home Demonstration in Spring Hill this fall, our Resource Development Director, Kathi Johnson signed him up to be a Habitat Crew Leader. Jim has volunteered on just about every build day since then. It would be impossible for Habitat to fulfill its mission without financial support. Jim has been a faithful contributor to HFHI for nearly twenty years. He is very excited to finally be a part of "leading the charge" through service as a Habitat for Humanity of Williamson County Crew Leader. Jim says **"It's great to see all the volunteers, most of which are not construction professionals by trade, come together with the homeowners to get the job done. The system works really well."**