



Jay Owens

November 27, 1932 - February 8, 2026

Jay Robert Owens, 11/27/32 - 2/8/26

Jay Robert Owens, born in Santa Fe, NM to JW and Florence Owens, passed away peacefully in his Fort Collins home on February 08, 2026 surrounded by his family. He was 93.

Jay will be remembered by many for his kindness and for making lasting friendships wherever he went.

Living in Chicago and the surrounding area in the early 60s and again from 1970 until 2022, Jay regularly participated in the city's cultural and political scenes. For decades, he was a member of Fourth Presbyterian Church and a beloved sailing instructor at Sail Chicago. Since the early 1990s, Jay and his wife Penny Applegate organized with Deborah's Place, the largest provider of permanent supportive housing in Chicago exclusively for women experiencing homelessness.

A great lover of music, Jay was also a devoted presence at the Lyric Opera and Chicago Symphony. In the 1960s and 70s, he attended iconic performances in Chicago such as by Duke Ellington, Coco Taylor, Ramsey Lewis and others. He participated in a wide variety of Chicago's political discussion groups including the Open University of the Left. An avid

photographer, he captured wildlife scenes in Africa and hundreds of hummingbird scenes in the southwest United States but also documented Chicago rallies against the US invasion of Iraq in the early 2000s.

Jay began working with computer technology in the Army in the 1950s, after a tour in Europe under the Marshall Plan, and built on that expertise across his more than thirty-year career with Chicago based Arthur Anderson & Co. He received an M.B.A. from the University of Denver. He advocated for environmental and wildlife protections, notably assisting researchers from Oregon University Institute of Marine Biology in trips to monitor and track whales and other sea creatures. He advocated for human rights through many organizations and marches. His love for his family and friends enriched their lives immeasurably.

He is survived by his wife of 37 years, Penny Jo Applegate, sister Elaine, children Judith, James and Kate, 8 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son Jay Douglas.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Deborah's Place: <https://www.deborahsplace.org/donate-2/>

Inclusive Funeral Care, 773-318-1305 or www.InclusiveFuneralCare.com.