“Passing of an era.

Jim made so many contributions to GPS – the signal, the original monitor stations and the books that propagated his great knowledge to the next generations.

He was always a very positive and creative contributor to the world of position, navigation and timing.

We will miss him, but hold him as a wonderful example of engineering and of Stanford graduates.”

Brad Parkinson
“…During his high school years, the teachers didn’t recognize what a gifted student he was. But, once he was at College of Marin, it didn’t take long for his instructors to realize how smart he was.

Two faculty members, Physics Professor Dr. C.A. Pulskamp and Engineering Professor Carlton Cherry, recognized his potential. They provided curriculum to match and challenge his intelligence, but more importantly they mentored and encouraged him to apply to Stanford University.”

“They said I was the most gifted student they had ever seen, and that they were going to find a way to get me a scholarship to Stanford, and that’s exactly what they did.”

Interview with College of Marin
August 4, 2019
“… Scoring at the 99.99% level in his mathematics entrance exam, Spilker was awarded a scholarship and proceeded to earn his undergraduate degree, Master’s, and PhD in electrical engineering in just five years by the age of 23.”

Website of QE2 Prize
Jim Spilker, without whom satellite navigation as we know it may never have happened.

Jim was a great man, a remarkable engineer, a huge philanthropist, and a great friend to generations in the position, navigation, and timing community.”

Mitch Narins
“Jim can be listed among a half dozen engineers as one of the great pioneers who defined digital communications and navigation in the twentieth century.

... For 25 years I worked for and with Jim. We talked every day and never in all those years did we have any kind of an argument. We did have some technical disagreements which we discussed and debated, but they never turned into an argument.”

Celia and Lenny
“I met Jim when I was GPS Chief Engineer in 2006. I recall his kindness and brilliance. I was in awe of his design of the GPS Course Acquisition (C/A) signal used by billions of people worldwide. To say he was a remarkable man is an understatement. His unsurpassed contributions to GPS and PNT will persist. He was a great man and is sorely missed.”

Mark Crews

“Navigation lost a leader. We will always remember his contribution to navigation.”

Xiaochun Lu

GPS Signal Structure and Performance Characteristics

J. J. SPILKER, Jr.

“Navigation lost a leader. We will always remember his contribution to navigation.”

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“Navigation lost a leader. We will always remember his contribution to navigation.”

Xiaochun Lu
“My job was keeping the program ‘alive’ in the face of fierce opposition and budgetary pressures.

Jim and Brad played a key role in advancing the technology and applications.

All of us are rewarded by seeing the worldwide acceptance of the system today”

Bill Perry – March 20, 1996
“All of us are proud of the awesome contributions you have made over the years to the GPS System, which has had a significant impact on not only our exceptional military capabilities, but our exceptional civil and commercial applications.

GPS has had unbelievable multiplying effect on our economic well being.

We who have been fortunate enough to work together with you stand taller just being at your mentoring side.”

Robert Rosenberg – June 14, 2010
“As an entrepreneur, I wear rose colored glasses.

Anna Marie sometimes, where necessary, changes that tint more in keeping with reality.”

Jim Spilker
“Ever since I knew you and Jim, you have been this amazing companion to him. He is so fortunate to have you in his life.”

Jade Morton
“Few people will have the positive impact on the world that Jim Spilker did in his life well-lived.”

Leo Hollberg
“I have known Jim for two decades. He was such a gracious and a generous person.

Jim had so many qualities - brilliance as an engineer, perseverance as an entrepreneur, dedication as a researcher, and warmth and open heartedness as a colleague.

He loved life and lived it the fullest. In all this, he had a wonderful partner in you. Your love and dedication for Jim is an inspiration to us all.”

Arogyaswami J Paulraj
“...The two of you made a great and remarkable couple.”

John Hennessy
“What can one do when standing in the wake of an exceptional life but to see it as an example to ourselves.”

Paul Montgomery
“Stanford Telecom was a corral for the truly intelligent.

Under Jim's leadership, Stanford Telecommunications (1973-99) was an outstanding example of how to do effective and exceptional team building and attracting and retaining the best and the brightest.”

Tom Sylvester
“... as a newly minted engineer and I was blessed to work with, and learn from, many outstanding people in those early days. At the very top of my list of early mentors was Jim Spilker.

Working with Jim was effectively like earning an advanced degree in communications science while on the job.”

Steve Lagna

“He was the best boss I ever had and I’ll be forever grateful for all he did for me.”

Lee Gamma
“Jim provided a beacon of wizard like intelligence and courageous leadership for the rest of us to follow.

He was a stalwart mentor for me in my tough transition from Professor to Vice President at STel.”

John E. Ohlson
Other Passions
... and Competitions
“The book that Jim co-authored with Brad Parkinson has been a foundational textbook for me, as I have worked on the GPS system for almost 20 years.

Jim has been a very inspirational figure in GPS, Stanford, and Silicon Valley, and your generosity are a treasure for Stanford and its community. “

Ranwa Haddad
“Jim was an extraordinary. His ideas are still alive in everyone's pocket. I'm glad I had the chance to meet him.”

Alberto Stochino
San Gregorio
Under Construction
Jim’s Toys
San Gregorio
Completed
“It is hard for us to accept that Jim is gone. His positive spirit and creativity were essential to the creation of GPS as well as many of the profound applications that GPS enabled.

He set an extremely high standard with everything he touched. I particularly recall his dynamic force in the creation of the two volume AIAA books. More than any of us, he was the force to drive that project.

Further he fostered the careers of many of the younger academics.

Then the two of you made an enormous contribution to Stanford and the education of new generations of engineers.

He will be missed and remembered by everyone who was involved in the initial creation of GPS.”

Brad and Ginny Parkinson
“As a former student and PhD graduate of the Stanford GPS lab, I'm deeply grateful to have had the chance to benefit from Jim's insightful comments and critique during the regular lab meetings.

He was a true titan of the GPS and Stanford communities, but as a student, I always felt he was very approachable.”

Gabriel Wong
“...he was also someone who cared very deeply about the next generation, about education and about finding ways for universities to more effectively tackle the big problems we face today.

He was a champion of interdisciplinary research teams.

He was a very valuable advisor to me when I was dean and always had thoughtful and often unexpected ideas on how to tackle both opportunities and problems.”

Jim Plummer
“I am deeply honored to have known Jim since 2014, when I had the pleasure to have lunch and discuss problems with him.

I was also invited to his house, when I took this fun picture when Jim was showing off his sprinting skill on the beach.

Jim was a fun, kind, and generous person in my memory. “

Yu “Joy” Jiao
“...Professor Jim Spilker's passing is not only a profound loss for the Stanford PNT Center, but also a profound loss for our cooperation. I am truly grateful to his great support to me and my team in the past 10 years, and will always cherish those unforgettable memories of him.”

Mingquan Lu
“We will always value his deep affection for his alma mater and are very proud that your names grace the James and Anna Marie Spilker Engineering and Applied Sciences Building on campus.”

Marc Tessier-Lavigne
“He was a technical giant who was incredibly generous to Stanford. Jim was a wonderful person whose enthusiasm was infectious.”

Persis Drell
“... Jim was a pioneer in signal timing technology for which he has received numerous prestigious awards.

To me, Jim was a personal friend, a family friend, and an unequaled supporter of our department.”

Charbel Farhat
“It is sad to lose our elder friends who guided us out of the goodness of their heart. Therein lies the mark of great people. They do for others without an expectation of a return. They do it because it is at the heart of their nature.”

Logan Scott
“As an engineer his work has touched the lives of billions of people around the globe, and will continue to do so for years to come.

His journey to the very summit of our profession serves as an inspiration, not only for those already embarking on their engineering life, but to young people throughout the world looking for a career which can change lives.

His philanthropy ensures that generations of students will have real opportunity to follow in his footsteps.”

The Lord Browne of Madingley