



James Francis Kelly , AQRA PRESIDENT 1998 and again 2016, 2018 , went to be with the Lord on Thursday afternoon, January 26, 2023. He was born on October 4, 1960 to James Joseph Kelly and Marilou Morrell-Kelly in Park Ridge, Illinois. James was a loving father, brother, uncle, friend, and horseman.

James graduated from St. Charles High School, where he played varsity baseball & was a member of FFA. He later moved to Tucson, Arizona, where he attended his alma-mater- The University of Arizona for their Racetrack Industry Program. James spent many years at the famous ranch nestled in the Catalina Foothills. It was here several memories & life-long friends were made.

James had a successful career in the Quarter horse racing industry that spanned over several decades. He was known for his "quality over quantity" program. After countless wins, track records & hall of fame worthy horses, such as Lawyersgunsandmoney & Cool Papa Bell, James was elected to the Arizona Quarter Horse Racing Hall of Fame himself in 2011. The pinnacle of James' success was a gelding named Mars Blackman, the 1995 AQHA World Champion gelding.

James is survived by his daughters Melissa, Elena, Geneva and son Cayden, who along with the girls husbands are here to honor their father and are co-sponsoring the buckles today.