



## James Austin

December 6, 1942 - February 28, 2019

James Donald Austin, 76, of Rock Island, passed into rest on February 28, 2019, 13 months after a debilitating stroke. The third of four close knit boys. James was born on December 6, 1942, near Hector, AR, to Charlie and Clessie (Sanders) Austin. From picking cotton in Arkansas to cherries and other fruit in California to Washington and back again, the family moved often throughout his childhood. Starting in Smyrna, AR, where his Papa John L. Sanders was his first teacher (as well as Charlie's first teacher), he had attended 12 schools before finishing 5th grade.

In 1954, the family moved to Malaga, WA and he had resided in Central Washington ever since. On January 31, 1962, along with his brother Johnnie, James joined the United States Army for three years where he was stationed at Fort Bragg, NC. He served as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division and was a member of their rifle team. He married Glenna Creach on September 5 1963 and their daughter Cathy was born on September 5, 1963. After leaving the Army he joined his family back in Wenatchee and began working at ALCOA in 1965 where he remained until his retirement in 1997. Daughter Michelle was born on January 22, 1967 to he and Joanne Ramey.

In September 1971 he and Linda May Poore welcomed their first son, James Allen, and 3 months later they purchased the first half of what would become his prized orchard in Rock Island. They married on May 17, 1974, and on that

orchard, they would raise their 2 sons after Jason Edward was born on May 26, 1975. As an Orchardist he focused on cherries, but apples and apricots came and went over time. He was a proud and fantastic farmer, consistently producing some of the largest cherries in the Wenatchee Valley until his retirement as an Orchardist in 2015.

Hunting was his passion, starting on Colockum in the late 1950's, which he would later introduce to his kids and grandkids, and extending to Colorado and New Mexico later in life with his hunting buddy Jeff Moser. He was great at that, too, and enjoyed telling the stories about the ones that got away just as much as the ones that didn't. At one point he sure loved to ask, 'Did I tell you about my moose tag?'

Nothing filled his heart more than the love he had for his family, especially his children, grandchildren & great grandchildren, and the joy & happiness he shared with them all. They cherish the time they had with him and will keep his memory alive by sharing his love and stories.

James is survived by his wife of 3 months, Linda Britt of Rock Island: five children, Vince Benjamin of Kapaa, HI, Cathy Stein of Yakima, Michelle (Daryl) Jones of Wenatchee, James Allen (Sharon) Austin of Seattle, WA, Jason (Laurie) Austin of East Wenatchee, WA; 15 grandchildren; many great-grandchildren; his brothers: Jake (Janet) Austin of East Wenatchee, and Jerry Austin of Rock Island; as well as several nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, several aunts and uncles and cousins in Arkansas and Oklahoma; and many, many friends.

He was preceded in death by his grandson JD Austin; his father Charlie; his mother Clessie; step-daughter Rachelle Reidlinger of Lubbock, TX; and his brother & best friend, Johnnie. Funeral services will be held at Jones and Jones-Betts Funeral Home on Friday, March 8 at 1 pm with a eulogy given by

his nephew Richard Austin of Yakima. That will be followed by graveside services. at 2:30 pm at Evergreen Memorial Park in East Wenatchee, and a celebration of his life and love afterwards at The Rock in Rock Island.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life Service

MAR 8. 1:00 PM (PT)

Jones & Jones ~ Betts Funeral Home  
302 9thStreet  
Wenatchee, WA 98801  
(509) 662-1561  
dante@jonesjonesbetts.com

# Tribute Wall



“ 17 files added to the album Life Tributes

*I u love  
you  
forever my  
darling”*



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**Jones & Jones~Betts Funeral Home** - March 07, 2019 at 05:57 PM

FF

*I meet him as a child with my parents. I remember his smile. I think I was 7 years old and I still remember his face. My father really enjoyed working with him ..*

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**Flora Fernandez** - April 12, 2023 at 11:14 PM

SU

“ *My sincere condolences to you. I will always remember his love for my Dad, Johnnie. May the two of them now get to relive childhood shenanigans together once again. Hugs. Suzanne (Suzie Q, aka: Dude)*

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**Suzanne** - March 07, 2019 at 12:45 PM



“ We will always have memories of the way James loved his family and anyone who had the pleasure of coming into his life. He treated us like family the moment his son, James, introduced us to his dad about 15 years ago.

We will always remember his big heart, warm and strong hugs and the amazing love he had for his family. It was an honor to know him and he will be missed.

Ted and Vicki Edwards and family.

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**Vicki Edwards** - March 05, 2019 at 10:56 PM