



## James "Jay" William Thomas Jr.

November 14, 1972 - September 27, 2023

James William Thomas, Jr. (Jay) died on Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at Duke University Hospital surrounded by his family who loved him deeply. He was 50 years old.

Jay was an amazing husband to his wife, Jennifer, and a phenomenal father to their sons, Layton, Rafe, and John Hudson. He was a much beloved son to his parents, James and Linda Thomas, and to his bonus parents, Bill and Bonny Shelton. Jay's bond with his sister, Lisa Jefferson, was unyielding and one of the sweetest relationships to witness. He had the strongest of friendships with his brothers-in-law, Mike Jefferson and Marcus Shelton, with whom he shared a mutual admiration. He had great affection for his sisters-in-law, Jennifer Shelton and Debbie Deane, who returned that affection in kind. Jay was an adored nephew to Brenda Thomas, Carolyn Albright (Mike), Mary Melton (Bob), and Ray Setliff (Tammy). Jay was a proud uncle to Magen Deane, Jennings Deane, Lauren Nester (Jonah), Cole Renninger (Brittany), Dylan Shelton, Knox Shelton, and Vivian Shelton and great uncle to Kinsley Nester, Chanan Nester, Rowan Nester, Aubrey Renninger, and Holton Renninger.

Beyond his family, Jay was a respected, true, and easy friend to all who knew him. From his bike-riding days with friends on Laramie Circle and Pine Tag to fraternity fun with his Sigma Nu brothers to world travels with his family and

friends, Jay left an indelible impression on everyone he met.

Jay grew up working with and learning from his “Pop” at Ace Paint & Body Shop. After graduating from Radford University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Finance and a short career with State Farm and Philip Morris, he returned to his hometown and his roots. He took over ownership and operation of the body shop in 2008. He continued a reputation for quality, excellence, and trustworthiness with his customers. He produced the most beautiful custom restorations of vintage cars and trucks. In his free time, he devoted himself to family. He exemplified the qualities of a great man always applied with a calm, easy-going nature. He was passionate about teaching his boys to hunt, fish, and play pool. Jay endured travel for the love of his wife. There was no place like home for Jay. A short trip up his driveway demonstrated the care and pride that he took for the home of his adored wife and children.

The family is receiving visitors at their home. A celebration of life will be planned at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Jay’s memory to Carlisle School (300 Carlisle Rd. Axton, VA 24054).

# Tribute Wall

LW

“ I am heartbroken for Jay's family and remember his wedding and marriage to Jenn and the births of their precious boys so well! He was a godly young man, husband, and father! Love to his precious family and many prayers for them!

Lou Ellen Wallace - October 07, 2023 at 11:28 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of James "Jay" William Thomas Jr..

October 06, 2023 at 05:48 PM

DH

“ So sorry to hear about the passing of your love one . May God comfort the family during this difficult time. Know my thoughts and prayers are with you all . God bless



Debra Hankind - October 04, 2023 at 09:55 AM

JH

“ So sad. Jay was always kind and fair. Dealt with and trusted him completely when doing work for John Hoover Honda. A true artist and craftsman. My heart breaks for the family. Johnny Hoover

Johnny Richard Hoover - October 02, 2023 at 08:50 PM

TB

“ I remember when we were older children, Jay and Gale Wilmoth playing in the back yard and riding little bikes on the driveway of the houses. We have some great memories of Laramie Circle days.

We know your hearts are sadden. May you rest in the Lord for your strength in the coming days. Our prayers are with you and Jays's wife and children.

Sincerely,  
The Poovey Family  
Teresa, Buddy  
Nancy and Dennis.



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**Teresa A Barber** - October 02, 2023 at 03:03 PM

KR

We grieve with you. We loved and respected Jay so very much. So thankful for ever moment with him. Always so supportive and a joy to be with. Love and prayers.  
Kay Reynolds

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**Kay Reynolds** - October 03, 2023 at 02:56 PM

DB

Jennifer, I am so sorry to hear of the passing of Jay. I know your heart is broken, but each and every day you will see him in your son's eyes as they grow and become fine men like their father. Love and prayers to each of you.

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**Dot Baynes** - October 04, 2023 at 04:36 PM