

# JAMES M. HARPER, JR.

"JAY"



A loving and devoted father, partner, and friend, passed away at the age of 50 in Pittsburgh, PA on July 28, 2023. Born on July 27, 1973, in Chicago, Illinois, Jay was known for his handy nature, his infectious humor, and his ceaseless love for his family.

Jay leaves behind a legacy of love and laughter, survived by his cherished partner of 15 years, Kim Ayers; and his four beautiful daughters, Kayla, Erica, Hayley, and Alexis. His

love extended to his step-mother, Gale Harper, and his step-father, Michael Kaal. Jay was the proud brother of Julie Hankus and Karrie VanderWoude; and step-brother to Gina Allen. His extended family, including Valerie (Dan) Veltri, Jeff (Kristin) Ayers, and Dave Garcia, will miss him dearly, as will his many nieces and nephews, Marco, Ashley, Alyssa, Adeline, Anthony, Kaitie, Kevin, Carly, Mackenzie, Mya, Robert, Jay and Jake. Jay's faithful canine companion, Thunder, also survives him.

Jay was preceded in death by his son, Anthony Harper, his mother Diane Kaal, his father James Harper Sr., his grandparents, Anthony and Noreen Virgona, and Earl and Mary Harper, and his step-sister, Tina Jones.

Jay's life was characterized by a deep commitment to his family and a passion for outdoor activities. He was an active member of several bowling leagues in the West Mifflin area, a testament to his love for the sport. Jay also found joy in camping, hiking, and fishing, often embarking on these adventures with his family. He cherished the memories made at car shows, carnivals, monster truck shows, and trips to the zoo. Despite his love for the outdoors and community events, Jay's favorite moments were often the simplest, such as relaxing at home with his daughters, watching movie and TV marathons.

Jay was a selfless man, always prepared to lend a hand to anyone in need. He was a beacon of support and friendship within his community, and his absence will be deeply felt by the many friends he has left behind. Known for his handy nature, Jay was always ready to fix a broken item or lend his expertise to a project. His humor was a source of joy and laughter for his loved ones, and his memory will continue to bring smiles to their faces.

In remembering Jay, we celebrate a man who was not only loving, handy, and funny, but who also embodied kindness and generosity. His spirit will continue to live on through the countless lives he touched and the beautiful memories he created. His legacy serves as a reminder of the importance of family, friendship, and laughter. James "Jay" M. Harper, Jr. will be deeply missed, but his memory will forever be cherished by those lucky enough to have known him.

Family and friends will be welcomed for visitation on Tuesday, August 1, 2023 from 2:00pm-4:00pm and 6:00pm-8:00pm, and Wednesday August, 2, 2023 from 10:00am-3:00pm, following final visitation a Funeral Service will be held in the funeral home chapel at 3:00pm

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to [www.gofundme.com/f/jays-cancer-fight](http://www.gofundme.com/f/jays-cancer-fight), created by Jay's "bowling buddies" to benefit his family. Condolences can be shared at [www.jeffersonmemorial.com](http://www.jeffersonmemorial.com)

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