



## Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt

January 2, 2019

Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt, 27, of Little Rock died Wednesday, January 2, 2019. Born December 14, 1991, to Steven Wayne VanPelt and Brandi Douglas Collins in Little Rock, he graduated from Catholic High School for Boys in 2010. T.J. had a long struggle with addiction. He died of a drug overdose after a period of sobriety.

The numerous deaths from heroin and fentanyl in recent years have touched so many families and taken so many bright stars from this world. T.J. was one of those bright stars. He was a compassionate, kind, funny, smart young man. He had a beautiful smile and was loved by so many. Addiction took him from his family too soon and robbed this world of the life he had to offer. His family hopes that by telling his story we may in some way help other addicts find recovery and other families know they are not alone. TJ suffered from the disease of addiction, but he was so much more than that and addiction did not define him or his life.

T.J. loved his little brother, animals, Arkansas' great outdoors - deer hunting in particular, and the Arkansas Razorbacks. His passion for sports came from his father. T.J. enjoyed playing all sports, especially football, which he played from fifth grade through high school. He enjoyed many trips with his family to Arkansas' rivers and woods, especially the Buffalo River and a special place with special people on the South Fork of the Spring River that was near and dear to his heart. T.J. loved to travel and loved history and geography, always studying the maps whenever he traveled to a new place. He was a kind and giving boy to younger kids and his heart swelled with joy and pride to finally become a big brother when he was 16 years old. T.J. only wished he had become a brother to Matthew sooner. T.J.'s friendly smile and ability to connect with others served him very well in his recently found occupation as a salesman at Bale Chevrolet and Subaru of Little Rock.

He is survived by his mother Brandi Douglas Collins and his stepfather, John Collins; brother, Matthew Collins; grandmother, Martha Kirk VanPelt; uncles, Al VanPelt, Kirk VanPelt (Kelly), Scott VanPelt (Lisa); numerous cousins and extended family as well as a

host of friends and loved ones. He was preceded in death by his beloved father, Steven Wayne VanPelt; grandfather, Albert Earl VanPelt, Sr., grandmother, Lisa Webb Murphy; grandfather, William Richard Douglas, Sr. and uncle, William Richard Douglas, Jr.

Funeral services will be held at St Michael's Episcopal Church in Little Rock, Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. with visitation at 10:00 a.m.

Memorials can be made to the Wolfe Street Foundation or the Buffalo River Foundation.

Arrangements by Little Rock Funeral Home, 8801 Knoedl Ct., (501)224-2200. To sign the online guestbook visit [www.littlerockfuneralhome.com](http://www.littlerockfuneralhome.com)

# Events

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**JAN**   **Visitation**            10:00AM - 11:00AM

**8**

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St. Michael's Episcopal Church  
12415 Cantrell Rd., Little Rock, AR, US, 72223

**JAN**   **Service**                    11:00AM

**8**

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St. Michael's Episcopal Church  
12415 Cantrell Rd., Little Rock, AR, US, 72223

# Comments

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“ Brandi, Steve, John and T.J. have all been apart of my life for many years. I love each one of them with all of my heart. Most of my memories with TJ are when he was born through his toddler years. I know he gave his mom a hard time while he was still in her stomach. Brandi was so swollen in her 9th month she would sit with her hands in the air constantly trying to get the swelling down. Cured me real quick of wanting to go through that!!! And that beautiful curly hair he had!!! We had so much fun camping all the time.. Steve and TJ are so much alike and WOW how they look like eachother... TJ was so sweet at his dad's funeral and totally shocked me when he knew who I was. I just wish I would've reached out to him to help him. I have been down a similar road and u can overcome drug addiction. His mom and I both have and that is quite an accomplishment. Brandi is one of the strongest women I know she has been through so much in her lifetime and has overcome tragedy more than once.. TJ I know you are in heaven with your daddy now and I hope you can rest in peace. You will truly be missed by many!!! Love, Angie Ingalls-Gilliam. P.S. Kiss Lisa (your gma) for me as well....

Angela L Gilliam - January 08 at 01:49 PM

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“ Jason L Gilliam lit a candle in memory of Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt



Jason L Gilliam - January 08 at 01:26 PM

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“ Angela L Gilliam lit a candle in memory of Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt



Angela L Gilliam - January 08 at 01:25 PM

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“ So sorry for your families loss.

**Carrie Holyfield** - January 07 at 07:45 PM

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“ Delightful Dieffenbachia was purchased for the family of Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt.



January 07 at 02:56 PM

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“ Mark F. Hampton and Marietta Alphin purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt.



**Mark F. Hampton and Marietta Alphin** - January 07 at 10:54 AM

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“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt.



January 06 at 03:55 PM

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“ Sentimental Dreams was purchased for the family of Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt.



January 06 at 01:22 PM

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“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt.



January 06 at 11:11 AM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt.



January 06 at 01:47 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**Chris Reed** - January 05 at 10:15 PM

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“ Brandi and family, I will hold you close in my thoughts, prayers and heart.

**terry barket** - January 05 at 09:37 PM



“ Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Thomas Joseph "T.J." VanPelt.



January 05 at 09:28 PM

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“ I remember TJ from when he played football with my son at Catholic. He had a quick, easy smile and demeanor. I also remember seeing him when he worked at Cajun's. He remembered me and my husband from seeing us at CHS and we chatted for a bit. I'm so sorry to hear of the struggles he had due to this terrible epidemic. I'm praying that God brings comfort and peace to your family.  
DeeDee Morehead

**DeeDee Morehead** - January 05 at 06:39 PM

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“ Our deepest condolences Brandi, John and Matthew. We're keeping you in our prayers during one of the most difficult times we can imagine  
Carol and Bill Wrape

**Carol and Bill Wrape** - January 05 at 10:54 AM

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“ I wish I had met him earlier. He was very funny young man that always had me laughing during the tough times we shared together. My prayers to his parents and little brother. I love him and will miss him deeply

**Dan Hostetter** - January 04 at 08:54 PM

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“ When I was looking around for a newer car I stopped at Subaru and had the good fortune of meeting TJ .....He was just the nicest and most polite young man. My heart aches for your loss. Memories of TJ will keep him close to you in spirit , thought and always in your heart today and forever. With deepest sympathy for your loss. Sandra McFalls



“ My wife & I did not know Thomas , but we regret the sorrow you feel. We’ve grieved the loss of sons who were just a little younger than him, and I’m sure it doesn’t feel like it now, but we can tell you that as time passes you will be able to remember more of the good times and dwell less on your loss. We found that each person grieves in a different way and at different times, so we encourage each of you to allow for those differences in your families.

We are of the Christian faith and we dealt with our pain based on our belief that God is still sovereign even when we don’t understand tragedy. May you find comfort as you walk through this “valley of the shadow of death” and may friends share their good memories Thomas with you.

Ron Morris - January 04 at 09:40 AM