



## James Allen Graves

November 22, 1952 - December 16, 2020

James Allen (Jim) Graves, Jr. 68, of Tishomingo, died on December 16, 2020 at OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City. Jim was born on November 22, 1952 in Dallas TX. He was predeceased by his loving wife, Barbara Graves in May 2018, his parents Jim and Betty Graves and sister Cynthia (Cindy) Graves. Surviving family members include his sister, Kyra Ayres of Corsicana, TX, two nephews and two nieces and their families. Also left to mourn are his late wife's sister, Eva Jo Crow of Colorado, Barbara's grandson Justin Sutherland and other members of the Sutherland family. His two fur babies, Annie and Sammy also survive. One of Jim's favorite things to do was load up the dogs and drive up and down the Oklahoma red dirt roads in his car, jamming his favorite country music while keeping time on the dashboard with his other hand.

Jim lived his entire life in Texas and Oklahoma. After graduation from DeSoto High School in north Texas and a four-year tour in the Air Force (1971-1975), he began singing and playing his guitar in clubs in the Dallas area. He eventually ventured further to sing in Oklahoma at various clubs and often sang at Veteran's Day and Memorial Day events in and around Tishomingo. He also was asked to sing an original song at the Oklahoma State Capitol in 2019. Jim never did learn to read music, but could sing and play any song anyone ever requested. He was a delightful entertainer and was always happy to play and sing whenever asked.

While Jim will be deeply missed, let us not mourn his passing but be grateful he filled our lives with song, jokes, laughter and most of all, love.

No services are currently scheduled at this time.

# Tribute Wall



“ *James Allen Graves*

---

October 05, 2023 at 07:47 PM



“ Ever since Jim was a kid, he wanted to be an entertainer; growing up playing Cowboys and Indians with his two sisters (Kyra Ayes and Cynthia Graves) in Desoto and Littlefield Texas. He was 12 years old living in Kansas City when his parents, Betty and James Sr. gave him his first guitar as a Christmas present, which we later found out he had been sneaking it out from under their bed a couple days ahead of time to practice on it. Jim loved to play sports in high school and was great at it. He played receiver for the Desoto Eagles and the Littlefield Wildcat, with his plays making the newspaper multiple times. Jim did that all while practicing his guitar until his fingers would bleed. In 1971 he was drafted in the United State Airforce, where little did he know he would start his claim to fame. Jim was in communications, where he had to run a switchboard for long periods of times. He started sneaking in his guitar and playing it there while no one was looking. Jim ended up traveling everywhere, doing multiple shows in the Airforce and making a name for himself. He was honorably discharged in 1976. He quickly took to trying to become a full-time entertainer; meeting a slew of famous singers and even sharing the stage with 3 year old Shirly Temple; which is a hard act to follow. Jim’s music career lasted a long time after and you can read about in a book he wrote called, “Flashed, Splashed and Trashed”. He met Barbara Hallmark threw his lifelong best friend John Baker at a softball game. They married and lived an eventful life in Sherman, Texas together. In Sherman, Texas he met his grandson Justin Sutherland and then finally they moved back to Barbara’s home town of Tishomingo, Oklahoma where they lived with their furry children and worked on there land doing some benefits with his guitar and making westerns with friends. Barbara was diagnosed with cancer and passed in 2018, Jim felt lost without her but passed his time with working. He was a transportation driver and he loved doing so because got to meet people and made lifelong friends. He was a man who you never saw without a smile even towards the end of his days. Jim passed away at OU medical Center on December 16, 2020 after a rapid form of brain cancer.

He joins in Heaven his wife, Barbara Graves; parents, Betty and

*James Graves; sister, Cynthia; step son, Michael Allen Sutherland; puppies, Cody, Laci, Soky and wild cat, Stormy.*

*He leaves behind his sister, Kyra Ayres; sister-in-law, Eva Jo Hallmark; step sons, Jimmy and Billy Sutherland; grandson, Justin Sutherland; great grandchildren, Ethen, Aliyah and Jay Sutherland; nieces and nephews, Brian, Pamela and Stephanie Veltman, John Gains and children; his two dogs, Annie and Sammy. We will all miss his so much.*



---

**Justin Sutherland** - January 04, 2021 at 11:09 PM



“ *Jim was my first cousin on my mom’s side. I remember him as an outstanding musician and entertainer. He always made me feel special and loved. He will be missed by many!*

*Carla Hudson  
Spokane, WA*

---

**Carla McCleskey Hudson** - December 23, 2020 at 03:45 PM

DL

“ My family and I met James when he was playing "cowboy" out at Sipokni West. I later got to know him a little more when he was taking care of his wife Barbara when she was going through cancer. From there, we kept in touch here and there in passing and when he would sing at the Memorial and Veteran's services. He would often come by Lafitte's Pharmacy while driving the JAMM Bus just to say hello. In all the times I've had conversations with him, he never once let a bad word come out of his mouth. He was always friendly, humorous and gentlemanly! He was truly a good hearted man. I will miss him dearly and Tishomingo will never be quite the same! The only thing I take comfort in is that I know he has been reunited with his sweet Barbara and rejoicing with Jesus!!

Donna Lindsey - December 18, 2020 at 10:49 PM



Jim was one of my dearest friends in the world... someone I could always count on for a smile and who provided all kinds of support to me and my family after the deaths of my parents. He also was kind enough to record a song I wrote - not a particularly good song, because I'm not really a song writer, but somehow Jim managed to make it good anyway. I'll miss him more than I can say.

John Small - December 22, 2020 at 10:13 AM

JC

Jim was a good person who was always willing to go out of his way to help you. He will always have a special place in my heart due to the wonderful care he provided to his wife, Barbara, who was my sister. He and my husband, Don, who passed in 2015, loved to leisurely drive all the back roads listening to music, talking and drinking a beer. He will be missed and remembered.

Jodi Crow - January 05, 2021 at 12:01 AM