



# Eugene Wayne Smith

MAY 24, 1950 - JAN 30, 2025



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Cremation Services  
of East Alabama

# Table of Contents

<b>Obituary</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Events</b> .....	Page 5
<b>Tribute Wall</b> .....	Page 6



# Eugene Wayne Smith

MAY 24, 1950 - JAN 30, 2025

**E**ugene "Gene" Wayne Smith, 74, passed from mortality on Thursday, January 30, 2025, at Meadowview Nursing Center in Pell City, Alabama. A beloved husband, father, and grandfather, Gene's ready smile and sense of humor will be greatly missed.

Gene was born in Spokane, Washington, on May 24, 1950, to Melden Joseph Smith and Ella Anderson Smith. He served a mission in the Pacific Northwest for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1970-1972. He enlisted in the United States Army in 1972, where he was trained in still photography. That training became both his life's work and his passion.

His last assignment in the Army, after a tour of duty in Seoul, Korea, was at Fort McClellan in Anniston, Alabama. At church, he met Frankie Lynn Vandiver. They were married in the St. George, Utah Temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on June 19, 1976. They settled in Las Vegas, Nevada, near Gene's family home. He worked at EG&G (later Bechtel Nevada) as an aerial photographer for 21 years. He had many adventures as a work-related member of the Nuclear Emergency Search Team (NEST) for the United States Government. The family moved to Alabama in 1997, and Gene spent the rest of his career as a portrait photographer with a few businesses before taking a job with Olan Mills, located inside K-Mart in Pell City. He was well known for his genuine smile and for his incredible gift of working with children. After more than 20 years at Olan Mills, the studio closed in 2012, but Gene continued his own photography business for several years afterward.

Gene is survived by his wife of 48 years, Frankie Smith; his four children (their spouses) and eight grandchildren - Steven Joseph Smith (Alicia), Hannah, Ruby, and Katy; Daniel Wayne Smith; Sarah Lynn Minor (Valerie); Paul Eugene Smith (Becky), Brian, Luke, Autumn, Mark, and Caroline. His siblings and their spouses include Glen Smith's wife, Gail; Keith Smith (Jan); Sharon Kiger (Dave); Donal Smith (Joyce); and Kathleen Shipley (Tony), along with nieces and nephews. Gene was preceded in death by his parents, Melden and Ella Smith, and two brothers, Glen Smith and Dale Smith, as well as his oldest grandson, Benjamin Alexander Smith (Steven).



## Obituary

**Eugene Wayne Smith**

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Gene had a love for life and for all people that was unparalleled. His smile had an effortless way of making everyone feel better, even if they were total strangers. His love of all things Monopoly and his colorful cartoon ties (usually Disney themed) were always topics of discussion.

He was known for making chirping sounds without moving his mouth. Everyone in the room would look for a bird; it was so realistic. He loved corny jokes, much to the dismay of his children. Of course, those same children have carried on the tradition.

While living in a suburban neighborhood in Las Vegas, Gene decided to save some money on groceries by raising chickens in the backyard. Since the area was zoned for horses, chickens were also allowed. Sadly, the neighbors complained about the noise, so the roosters had to go...except for that one that couldn't crow. It turned out the roosters couldn't tell the difference between the morning sun and the never-ending glow of the Las Vegas lights, so they crowed all night long.

After the move to Alabama, Gene wanted to start a garden—an almost impossible endeavor in the desert sand of Las Vegas. He built a cinder block container and started a compost pile, collecting all the organic kitchen scraps every day, occasionally tossing in earthworms to enrich the soil. He ended up with the best compost pile in St. Clair County—but he never got around to actually planting a garden. Friends and family teased him unmercifully about that non-project.

Gene was a kind, fun-loving man who never aspired to gain praise in his life. He was content to be the man in the background, doing everything he could to make everyone else's job easier. He once said, "Let others have the spotlight. I will be behind the scenes, picking up the slack. Most of the time, they won't even know I'm there." He was content to be the comic relief, the clean-up guy, the babysitter, the listener, the quiet disciple. He was so handy around the house. He could fix just about anything with duct tape and his Craftsman tools. He was loved and respected by all who knew him, and he will be greatly missed.

Join family and friends for a Celebration of Life for Eugene Wayne Smith on March 1, 2025, at the Leeds Ward Building of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 8546 Rockhampton Street, Leeds, AL 35094. Visitation will begin at 10:00 AM, followed by the service at noon, which will also be broadcast for those unable to attend in person.

Service will be broadcast at 12:00 PM on March 1, 2025 at:

<https://zoom.us/j/94602919117?pwd=mxEEfbk3LgDHxL43s5Ylphal6Qagm5.1>



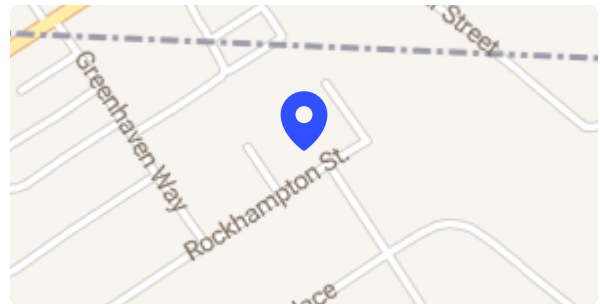
### Celebration of Life Visitation

📅 **Saturday**, March 1, 2025

🕒 10:00 AM CT

📍 **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Leeds Ward Building**

8546 Rockhampton Street, Leeds AL 35094



### Celebration of Life Service

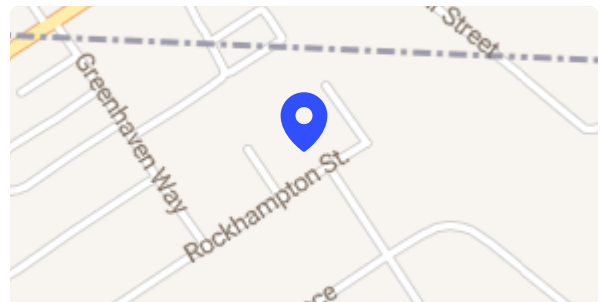
📅 **Saturday**, March 1, 2025

🕒 12:00 PM CT

📍 **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Leeds Ward Building**

8546 Rockhampton Street, Leeds AL 35094

- Services will be broadcasted via ZOOM at 12 PM on March 1, 2025 for those who are unable to attend in person; Just click on the link below.  
<https://zoom.us/j/94602919117?pwd=mxEEfbk3LgDHxL43s5Y1pha16Qagm5.1>





## Tribute Wall

**Eugene Wayne Smith**

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**Anonymous** sent an Enchanted Cottage to the Smith family.

February 26 at 1:23 PM



**Criss N Wilson** lit a candle in honor of Eugene.

Eugene was unknown to my wife and me, but I'm fortunate to work with his youngest son, Paul, who is a testament to the environment he grew up in. I would have liked to know Eugene, but in a manner of speaking, I do through his son Paul. In this time of grief, my wife and I are praying for Paul, Becky, the kids, and the entire Smith clan. Paul, rest in the peace of knowing your father has joined our Lord and Savior. We all look forward to the day of resurrection and the life of the world everlasting in this dimension or the next!

February 6 at 11:56 AM





# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Eugene by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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