



## Brett Michael Staponkus

April 19, 1982 - August 3, 2020

Brett Michael Staponkus, 38, passed away unexpectedly on August 3rd.

Brett was born on April 19, 1982 in Atlanta, GA to Sue (nee Glynn) and Gary Staponkus. In 1984 the family moved to Geneva, IL. Brett graduated from Geneva High School in 2000. He completed his Associates Degree in Criminal Justice and a certification in Personal Training. In 2011 he took his adventuring spirit to Golden, CO for a few years before moving to be closer to family in Cary, NC.

Brett was an avid outdoorsman who found his greatest appreciation of beauty and joy while hiking, camping, and adventuring with his beloved dog Lilly. He was a fitness enthusiast who could always be found on the trails running or biking and in the gym. Brett had a genuine soul, a kind heart, and a deep love for his family.

Brett is survived by his father Gary Staponkus of Geneva, IL, brother Eric (Jessica) Staponkus of Cary, NC, niece and nephews Elise, Alex, Elliott Staponkus of Cary, NC, grandmother Betty (nee Williams) Glynn, Uncles Lloyd (Susan) Glynn of Arbor Vitae, WI, Greg (Judith) Staponkus of Elkhorn, WI. He is preceded in death by his mother Sue (Glynn) Staponkus, grandfathers Don Glynn, Alex Staponkus, and grandmother Bernice (Martin) Staponkus.

A celebration of Brett's life will take place 4PM EDT on Tuesday, August 11th at NewHope Church in Durham, NC. The service will be streamed via Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/9441672262>

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be directed to; Lakeland Animal Shelter in Elkhorn, WI or FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

AUG 11. 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Newhope Church  
7619 Fayetteville Rd  
Durham, NC 27713  
<https://www.newhopechurch.org/>

# Tribute Wall

KH

“ *Kevin Hayes*  
*Growing up in Pepper Valley together there are so many fond memories. Brett was so kind to everyone and would always go out of his way to make me feel welcome as one of the younger kids at the older get togethers. my thoughts go out to his family. Miss ya bud*

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**Kevin Hayes** - September 01, 2020 at 11:16 PM

E(

“ *I am very sorry to hear of Bretts passing. My thoughts and prayers are with your family.*

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**Erin Gidley (Pheanis)** - August 16, 2020 at 12:10 PM

JJ

“ *Brett was one of Matt's first friends when we moved to Illinois. He was always friendly and kind. He had such a big heart. We always enjoyed seeing him when he came back to town, especially when he was older and Kristina, Matt and him would share stories of their high school days. He will be greatly missed by us. Sending our condolences. Paul and Janet Jelonek* ❤️

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**Janet Jelonek** - August 11, 2020 at 09:46 PM

KT

“Brett was literally my best friend in the whole world. I am pretty sure I was about 11 years old when we first met. He had a bowl hair cut and wore tie-dyes. Eventually his standard outfit became his blackhawks jersey- every single day. We did everything together. He took me to my first concert (Roger Waters). When we both were still in IL, we went to every single concert together, we called each other "concert buddies". We used to drive around every Sunday to listen to Grateful Dead hour on the radio. He would come over and when he had his Jeep, the brakes squeaked, and our dog, Spartacus would just freak out at that sound- he loved him. Brett would always wrestle with him. All the cars he drove were pretty legendary. The Buick with the subwoofers, really loud bass listening to rap like Westside Connection, etc. The Ford Probe..He went with me to my last concert while living in IL (The Dead) to see me off before I traveled for several months. I came to IL in the midst of my travels and took a break, and he joined me on an unforgettable trip to South Carolina to see our good buddy, Jim. I then went on with my travels, eventually moving to New Orleans- Him and Beth visited me out there and we had a blast for St Patrick's day and hiking around the swamps in Jean Lafitte. He was SO worried about me travelling alone, but he was ALWAYS SO PROUD of all of the decisions I made in life- he was so supportive and caring. I then moved to Golden, CO, and shortly after he followed. He instantly made friends- everybody just always loves him at first impression. I have several friends out here that are heartbroken to hear of his passing. He was a real animal lover and I was there when he adopted his dog, Lily. He asked me to come with to the foster home because he respected my opinion on if she would be a good fit- he didn't need me there, it was love at first sight. He was a big worrier when it came to being a dad to Lily. As I look through my phone it is pretty often where he is asking me advice for something about her. I am so grateful that the last 6 months or so we have been on a group text with our best friends (Brett Cummings & Matt Jelonek). We texted almost every day, and would have group phonecalls...Our conversations are all very goofy and fun. I can't begin to write all the memories... I can see his face and his smile all day long. I have

*items around my home that will forever remind me of him, gifts he gave to me...like the seashells he always brought to me from his vacations. He was a caring, loving, generous, kind soul that always made me laugh. We never ended a conversation without telling eachother we loved eachother. I always knew our connection would never end, and even though he is not here, I will always be connected to him in some way. I love you so much and miss you, my Punkass.*

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**Kristina Tomko** - August 11, 2020 at 03:58 PM



“ *Brett has been my sisters best friend for 20 years now. I will always remember him and his smile fondly. Brett was lively, kind, and had a great energy that surrounded him. He was always around our house growing up and there was never a negative thing that came out of his mouth. Brett will continue to be considered family to me. I'm thankful for the amazing friendship my sister and him shared. It's hard to understand why this happened to such a lovely soul. I know those questions don't have answers. My heart goes out to Brett's father And brother. I am so deeply sorry for your loss. He will be missed greatly.*

*Danielle Tomko*

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**d** - August 11, 2020 at 03:12 PM

BE

“ My heart is heavy with the news of Brett. I have soo many fun and great memories with Brett, his family, and his friends. Still having a hard time grasping the fact you are gone but was blessed to have soo many wonderful adventures traveling around and exploring the outdoors with him that will never be forgotten. I’m soo happy we have always kept in touch and he will always be in my heart. Thoughts and Prayers to everyone during this difficult time.



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**Beth** - August 11, 2020 at 01:45 PM

DC

“ I was so very sorry to hear about the sudden loss of Brett. Even though it has been years since I last saw him I will always remember him as a good friend to my son Brett C. I hope that all of the love and affection that was felt for him will help to sustain you through this most difficult time.

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**Donna Cummings** - August 11, 2020 at 10:57 AM

DF

“ Gary and all the families, so sorry to hear this news. We send our prayers for peace during such a terribly sad time. May the Lord Jesus be your comfort and support. Sincerely, Dan and Renee Feldt, Menomonee Falls, WI

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**Dan Feldt** - August 10, 2020 at 04:26 PM

BR

“ Brett was good guy and Always friendly to everyone he spoke to and always had a positive outlook on things. He was probably the biggest Grateful Dead fan and was always rocking a different jerry bear T-shirt for every day of the week and his hemp necklaces and sandals and was quick to fire up some good herb. That’s the Brett I remember and always will I wish I had the chance to know who you were these days but life had other plans for us. I know it’s been 20 years since we last talked, that day in Chicago we ran into each other by accident and had a beer and caught up for a few then Went about out life. I’m grateful for that day and will always keep it safe In my memories I am so sorry that the lord called you home so early in your life but he/she has their reasons. It is not fair to take someone with so much more life to live. That’s one of life’s cruel jokes and unfortunately we’re all the butt of it! Take comfort in knowing that we will all be reunited one day in the hereafter and will all sit in a big ass circle and pass around the best joint of the best weed we have ever smoked and u best believe Brett will be the one rolling it up! Rest peaceful and sleep well my friend Until the day we meet again. RIP bro

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**brandon reyes** - August 09, 2020 at 07:29 PM

WH

“ Can't believe it. So sorry. Thoughts and prayers with Gary and family. Way too young to go. Was a great neighbor for the few short years we lived next door.



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**Wheelers** - August 08, 2020 at 12:15 AM

WH

“ *Can't believe it. So sorry. Thoughts and prayers with Gary and family. Way too young to go. Was a great neighbor for the few short years we lived next door.*



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**Wheelers** - August 08, 2020 at 12:15 AM

IW

*Always had a smile & would chat to us, loved to talk with him & Lily his dog! A beautiful guy gone way too soon. Thought & prayers with Gary, Eric, Lily and all his family and friends.*

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**Irene Wheeler** - August 08, 2020 at 09:54 AM

JM

“ *Gone to soon! Rest in peace gone but never forgotten.*

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**Jessica mariotti** - August 06, 2020 at 11:06 PM

BC

*Gary.. you have my deepest sympathy, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family... Bill and Lisa Colombo*

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**Bill Colombo** - August 08, 2020 at 08:35 AM

EB

“ *Rest In Peace, Brett. I never saw you be anything but kind, laid back and gentle. With a smile. Gone too soon. Won't forget you. 🙏*



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**Errin B** - August 06, 2020 at 09:52 PM

GT

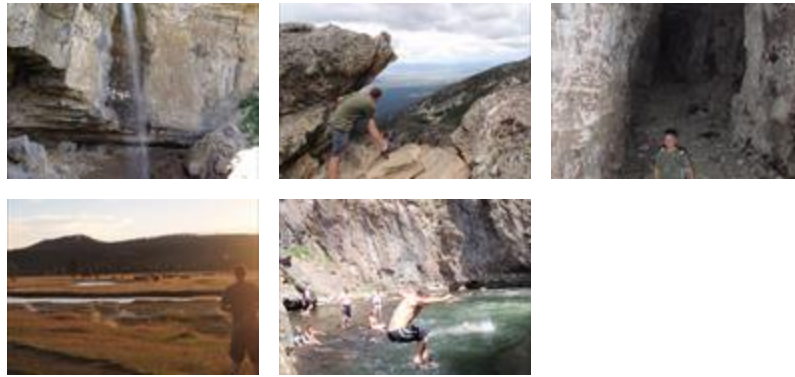
“ *Pretty sure Brett is making laps in Heaven  
R.I.P. but keep running* ”



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**Greg Thompson** - August 06, 2020 at 06:14 PM

 Joe  
Barrett

“ *9 files added to the album 2011-2013 Adventures in the west* ”



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**Joe Barrett** - August 06, 2020 at 04:34 PM

 Joe  
Barrett

“ *Brett IS a legendary soul. Always kind, fun and ready for an  
adventure. We miss you. Peace and love, Brett.* ”



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**Joe Barrett** - August 06, 2020 at 04:04 PM

TB

“ *Brett was one of the 1st people I met when I moved to Geneva we hung out together till about the time he moved to Colorado. He is a good man and he will missed love ya brother.* ”



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**Thomas boffa** - August 06, 2020 at 03:01 PM