



## James H. Byars

January 2, 1941 - February 10, 2025

James H. Byars was born January 2, 1941, in Clay County, Arkansas. He was the son of James F. and Lottie Mae (Grogan) Byars. At a young age, his family relocated to St. Louis, Missouri where he attended school for several years before starting his truck driving career.

While on the road, James met Rhonda Gail Harrison, at Monte's Restaurant in St. Louis, Missouri where she waitressed. He would make a frequent appearance before closing time to get a little extra food on his plate and attention from Rhonda. The two fell in love and were united in marriage on October 3, 1987, in Alley Springs, Missouri.

James was a loving husband to Rhonda for thirty-seven years before her passing January 6, 2025. He was the proud father of Timothy, Melinda, Shawn, and Shane. His grandchildren were the apple of his eye, and he treasured spending time with them.

During his working career, James drove for Kocher Trucking, the Drayage Company, and Buford Trucking. He was also a licensed diesel mechanic. After retirement to keep himself busy, he drove as a transport driver with USA Express and the Southeast Missouri Behavioral Health Salem Center.

James enjoyed watching NASCAR races and wrestling matches. If you visited

his home, you would always hear the engines roaring and the police scanner going.

James departed this life February 10, 2025, in Rolla, Missouri, at the age of eighty-four years. He is survived by sons: Timothy Byars of Imperial, MO; Shawn Byars and wife Kim of Salem, MO, and Shane Byars and wife Desiree of Marshfield, MO; grandchildren: Justin Haney, Chad Stemick and wife Laura, Avery Byars, Xander Byars, Liam Byars, Alethea Stemick, Candace Stemick, and Dawn Buckner; as well as a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives, and dear friends.

Preceding him in death were his loving wife: Rhonda Byars; daughter: Melinda Stemick; parents: James and Lottie Byars; and siblings: Dudley Byars, Gentry Byars, Lillie Mae Herman, Shirley Fay Spitzmiller, and Roger Webb.

His love for his family and friends will never be forgotten. James will be forever missed by those who loved him most.

Funeral Services for James H. Byars were held Saturday, February 15, 2025, in the Wilson Mortuary Salem Chapel with Pastor Chris Hendrix officiating. Serving as Pallbearers were Joe Firestine, Jeff Brooks, Avery Byars, Chad Stemick, Shane Byars, Justin Haney, Shawn Byars, and Jason McElfresh. Honorary Pallbearers were Xander Byars, Liam Byars, and Dennis Harrison. Burial was in the Byars Family Cemetery, Montauk, Missouri. Arrangements were under the direction of Wilson Mortuary of Salem, Missouri.

Online Condolences may be left at [www.wilsonmortuary.com](http://www.wilsonmortuary.com)

# Cemetery Details

**Byars Family Cemetery**

## Previous Events

### Visitation

FEB **15**. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Wilson Mortuary - Salem  
1000 West Scenic Rivers Blvd.  
Post Office Box 45  
Salem, MO 65560  
(573) 729-5555  
<https://www.wilsonmortuary.com/>

### Funeral Service

FEB **15**. 1:00 PM (CT)

Wilson Mortuary - Salem  
1000 West Scenic Rivers Blvd.  
Post Office Box 45  
Salem, MO 65560  
(573) 729-5555  
<https://www.wilsonmortuary.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album *Videos Album*



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**Wilson Mortuary** - February 20, 2025 at 12:31 PM



“ 22 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



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**Wilson Mortuary** - February 15, 2025 at 09:43 AM