



Howard "Sonny" Lee Johns

July 29, 1947 - July 9, 2025

Howard Lee "Sonny" Johns of Salem, Missouri, passed away peacefully at his home on Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at the age of 77.

Born on July 29, 1947, in Salem, Missouri, Sonny was the son of the late Walter and Leona Pearl Laird Johns. He was known far and wide as one of the kindest souls you could ever meet. Sonny never met a stranger, and if he couldn't remember your name, he had a nickname ready—always personal, always given with warmth.

Known around town as "Mr. Fixit," Sonny had a natural gift for repairing anything others thought beyond hope. An auto mechanic by trade, he especially enjoyed tinkering with things everyone else said couldn't be fixed—and more often than not, he got them running again. He took great pride in his work, not just as a job, but as a way to help others and solve problems with his hands and heart. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and the simple satisfaction of a job well done. He was one of the last true gentlemen—he loved the ladies, and the ladies loved him. He had a heart as big as the outdoors he loved and would literally give the shirt off his back to someone in need. He taught his children many things, but most importantly, he taught them to be fearless.

Sonny had a twinkle in his eye and a way with people—especially with the

ladies, who adored his charm. His generosity extended even to his faithful four-legged companion, Buster, who was spoiled beyond reason. Whether it was table scraps or treats, Sonny insisted on giving Buster whatever he wanted, diets be damned.

He was a devoted father, grandfather, brother, uncle, and friend. His love for his family was as steadfast as his values, and he leaves behind a legacy of kindness, resilience, and humor.

Sonny is survived by his children: Joeann Fox and husband David of Fairfield, IL; Theresa Wilson and husband Eric of Harrisburg, IL; Connie Ervin and husband Pete of Harrisburg, IL; Angel Robinson of Salem, MO; and Kenny Robinson of Salem, MO.

He also leaves behind his cherished grandchildren: David Fox, Keri Karnes, Courtney Wilson, Tiffany Barnhill, Alyssa Beal, Candice Fann, Brittney Clayton, and Austin Fann; along with a host of nieces, nephews, extended family, and many friends.

Surviving siblings include: Jim Johns of Georgia; Gary Johns and wife Donita of Salem, MO; twin sister, Sandra LaPointe, of Salem, MO, Joyce Johns of Salem, MO. He is also survived by his son-in-law, Dale Fann of Lenox, MO.

In addition to his parents, Sonny was preceded in death by his daughter, Sherry Fann; his brothers Billy, Corkey, Ricky, and Keith Johns; and his sisters Judy, Beverly, Maxine, and Ruby Johns.

Funeral services for Sonny Johns will be held on Tuesday, July 15, 2025 at

11:00 AM at the Salem Chapel of the James & Gahr Mortuary. Visitation for family and friends will be held at the Chapel on Monday, July 14, 2025 from 5-7PM.

Sonny Johns will be remembered for his generosity, his humor, his fearless spirit, and the deep love he had for his family and friends. He was truly one of a kind—and he will be deeply missed.

Cemetery Details

Dry Fork Cemetery

Salem, MO

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 14. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

James & Gahr Mortuary - Salem
103 West Center
Salem, MO 65560
(573) 729-3117
jgsalemmo@hotmail.com
<https://www.jamesgahrmortuary.com/>

Service

JUL 15. 11:00 AM (CT)

James & Gahr Mortuary - Salem
103 West Center
Salem, MO 65560
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jgsalemmo@hotmail.com
<https://www.jamesgahrmortuary.com/>

Tribute Wall

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“ *Uncle Sonny was one of a kind. I have a lot of memories of him. He was always horsing around. His 4 girls were his life. He was full of life and enjoyed family get together with family. He always gave his mom heck and goofing around. R.I.P. Uncle Sonny. Love your niece Elizabeth.* ”

Elizabeth Decker - July 12, 2025 at 09:20 PM

JE

Uncle Sonny had a zest for life and was always smiling!! I sure am going to miss him...

Jessi - July 13, 2025 at 01:13 PM