



Craig Michael Strickland

June 2, 1986 - December 27, 2015

Craig Strickland, 29 of Springdale, AR passed while on a hunting trip, doing one of the things he loved most. Craig was born, June 2, 1986 in Fort Smith, AR to Randy Strickland and Joanne Craig. He is survived by his wife Helen Elizabeth Wisner Strickland, of the home, father Randy and step-mother Julie Strickland of Fort Smith, his mother Joanne Craig and step-father Larry Rhodes of Greenwood, his sister Katie Ryburn and husband Jason Ryburn of Little Rock, step-brother Jordan Jones of Fort Smith, and step-sisters Jenna Jones of Fort Smith, Ashley Rhodes Harry of Greenwood, and Shannon Rhodes of Bedford, TX, his paternal grandmother, Elva Lee Strickland of Paducah, KY, and maternal grandparents Bill and Mae Craig of Mt. Vernon, MO. He was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents Vernon and Virginia Strickland and maternal grandmother, Wilma Craig. He is also survived by aunts and uncles Denise Basham, Dianna and Richard Eatherly of Wahsoulgal, Washington, and Susan and Kevin Rickey of Etna, California, numerous cousins, and his loyal hunting dog, Sam and cat Salem.

Craig was a 2004 honor graduate of Alma High School and earned his BA in Marketing from the University of Arkansas. Among Craig's many hobbies that included hunting, golfing, singing, writing music, spending time with friends, family, and fans, his number one love was spending time with his beautiful wife Helen. Craig attended Cross Church in Northwest AR and was passionate about sharing his faith. As a founding member of the nonprofit

organization, Beyond the Game, Craig was able to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to children from the Dominican Republic through his love of baseball.

Craig shared his faith and love of music as a praise and worship leader at numerous churches in Northwest AR and the River Valley. In 2012, Craig became the first star host of The Arkansas CW Channel and also hosted a monthly cooking segment "Cooking with Craig."

Craig's love for performing led to the start of the country rock band, Backroad Anthem. Building relationships was valuable to Craig and it came natural to him. Craig's zeal for life, a smile that would light up a room, and his heart for people, made up his dynamic personality that touched everyone he met.

A memorial service will be held Tuesday, January 12, 2016 at 6:00 pm at Cross Church Pinnacle Hills with Pastor Nick Floyd and Pastor Aaron Matthews officiating. The service can be viewed via webcast at crosschurch.com/watchlive.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made either to:

Beyond the Game at <http://www.beyondthegame.me>

4 State Search and Rescue at <http://4statesearchandrescue.com>

Cross Church at www.crosschurch.com

Helen and Craig's family would like to give special thanks to all of the agencies, individuals, and K9 Units for their efforts in searching for Craig and Chase.

Online condolences may be left at www.siscofuneral.com.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 12. 6:00 PM (CT)

Cross Church Pinnacle Hills
2441 S. Pinnacle Hills Parkway
Rogers, AR 72758

Tribute Wall



“ *Craig Michael Strickland*

January 21, 2023 at 02:29 PM



“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



shianne - September 09, 2016 at 01:20 PM



“ *Jesus wept...*

Many of us have wept for you as well.

Daniel, my son; worked for Craig when he lived in Fayetteville and he enjoyed talking with him each time he was able to.

He would watch several of the concerts Backroad Anthem would do....and I watched one myself. We knew from the beginning, there was just something special about Craig and the guys.

Missed buy not forgotten! We will keep praying for you all....

Daniel McClanahan and mother Cynthia

Cynthia McClanahan - January 14, 2016 at 02:07 PM

AB

“ I did not know Craig! I followed the search from day one! I can honestly say I've never been so emotionally touched by or prayed so hard for someone I've never met! I continue to pray for his sweet family and band members! I know he's rejoicing with our lord! I watched the service tonite! Beautiful tribute to and wonderful man! God bless you all!
Angela Berry-Oklahoma



angela berry - January 13, 2016 at 01:28 AM

JF

“ I did not know Craig until I began praying for him and you during the search in these last weeks. I watched the memorial this evening online, and felt like I had known all of you forever. It was a wonderful tribute to a wonderful man of God. Thank you for making it available to us. Your grace, dignity, and strength throughout this tragedy have truly been a blessing to me and so many - you wear the face of Christ. I will continue prayers for you, Helen, and for Craig's family and friends. Jesus will be your strength when you feel weak, and will carry you through. I look forward to meeting you both on the other side.

*In Christ always, J. Fisher, KY
Isaiah 41:10*

J. Fisher - January 12, 2016 at 07:40 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Craig Michael Strickland.



January 12, 2016 at 04:16 PM

JA

“ I meet Craig Dec 25th 2011 when I went with his Mom (Joanne) to the movies and watch Sherlock Holmes and meet his sister also. I remember him as being sweet. Craig's family will continue to be in my thoughts and prayers.



Jayne - January 12, 2016 at 03:30 PM

DR

“ Helen, you don't know me but my granddaughter, Ashton Sadler, had you as a teacher at Shiloh Christian a couple of years ago. She loved you and was always talking about you. Also Craig's cousin, Whitney, is our daughter in law. I want to say how sorry I am about your loss of Craig. I know he was loved by many and will be greatly missed. It is tough losing someone so special but God gives us strength beyond measure. May you find comfort in our Heavenly Father every day! May God Bless you and comfort you and your family in the days ahead!

Doug and Debbie Ralston

Debbie Ralston - January 12, 2016 at 02:34 PM

HP

“ I was fortunate to meet Craig when him and the guys performed awhile back. He was very kind and he will be dearly missed. Ally heartfelt condolences to his wife, family, friends, and bandmates. God Bless. Heather powell.



Heather powell - January 12, 2016 at 02:10 PM

CD

“ Carolyn Devery lit a candle in memory of Craig Michael Strickland



Carolyn Devery - January 12, 2016 at 11:59 AM

AM

“ Amanda sent a virtual gift in memory of Craig Michael Strickland




Amanda - January 12, 2016 at 11:24 AM

AM

“ So sarry for your lost praying for his love ones



Amanda - January 12, 2016 at 11:19 AM

 Cody Robbins

“ Cody Robbins purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Craig Michael Strickland.



Cody Robbins - January 11, 2016 at 09:39 PM

AF

“ *My prayers and thoughts are with your family. I had the privilege of working with Joanne. Craig is a wonderful young man who is loved by and will be missed by so many. But we know and believe, it is only goodbye for now.*

Angie Fisher - January 11, 2016 at 08:10 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Craig Michael Strickland.*



January 11, 2016 at 08:06 PM

MH

“ *I'm so sorry for your loss and I pray daily that God will continue to give you peace. He is a just and mighty God that uses individuals to show his love when times are tough. Stay fast to your faith and he'll get you through times that you couldn't have imagined ever having the strength to endure. God will never give you more than you can handle.*



Morgan Hull - January 11, 2016 at 07:47 PM

NM

“ To Helen and the Strickland family: Please know your all in my thoughts and prayers at this time. I just recently watched the last music video Backroad Anthem did with Craig and I was very impressed. Life is funny sometimes and it can change in the blink of an eye so always remember to hold the ones you love as close to your heart as possible. Craig seemed like a very easy going laid back type of guy which I imagine showed through in the various ways he presented himself. The letter Craig wrote you on your wedding day touched my heart and it proves the point that he loved you "FROM HERE TO THE MOON AND BACK". The way I see it the sun will shine again for all of you it's just a matter of giving yourself time to recover so you can take in the wonderful feeling of love people are sending you. Take care and god bless.
Nicole Morley(London Ontario Canada)

Nicole Morley - January 11, 2016 at 06:02 PM



“ Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses was purchased for the family of Craig Michael Strickland.



January 11, 2016 at 03:47 PM

CB

“ Clay, Sheela, Michael, & Sammy Bailey purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Craig Michael Strickland.



Clay, Sheela, Michael, & Sammy Bailey - January 11, 2016 at 03:14 PM

JP

“*Joanne and Family. I am so sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this time. Craig was a fine young man who made such a positive impact on so many people.*

Jackie Paxton

Jackie Paxton - January 11, 2016 at 02:17 PM

CB

“*Craig was full of life and interesting to talk to, whether at Steve's pre-game tailgate or on the Buffalo river. He always had a smile on his face, and made people feel welcome. I'm saddened that he left this world after such a stellar start. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Helen, Randy and family.*

Clay, Sheela, Michael and Sammy Bailey

Clay Bailey - January 11, 2016 at 02:07 PM

YF

“*Your hunting friends in IL, Brad and Becca Kassing and Fam. purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Craig Michael Strickland.*



Your hunting friends in IL, Brad and Becca Kassing and Fam. - January 11, 2016 at 01:58 PM

MI

“ Michelle lit a candle in memory of Craig Michael Strickland



Michelle - January 11, 2016 at 11:54 AM

PC

“ Joanne, Katie and family,

I am so so sorry for your loss. Just know my thoughts and prayers have been with you from the beginning. God must have needed an angel when he took Craig from you. I am always there if you need me. Patty Cater

patty cater - January 11, 2016 at 11:00 AM

DA

“ Helen & all the family of Craig,
I have been following your journey and have been praying for all of you non stop. Helen, you have inspired me and have helped me get even closer to God! I too have lost someone, the dearest thing to my heart and you truly have helped me to hold on to God and be reminded that he will NEVER leave me through this unbearable heartache. How blessed you are Helen in having someone in your life, where "saying goodbye to is so darn hard." (goodbye for right now that is...in Heaven you will be together for all eternity)
I will continue to pray for you and all of the families. God bless you everyday my beautiful (inside & out) friend from a far.....



Darlene

Darlene - January 11, 2016 at 10:29 AM

TM

“ Prayers to the family and band members may God be with you through this time of loss... May he give you the strength to use this sad situation to lead others to turn to God before it is too late... Craig's faith and the family's faith was the main gift that seems to have shined through in this sadness...



Tracy McNabb - January 11, 2016 at 06:59 AM

MG

“ My deepest condolences and heartfelt prayers go out to to Helen and Craig's family . May God continue to comfort you during this difficult time.



Michelle Gonzales - January 11, 2016 at 01:46 AM

MM

“ Michelle Miller lit a candle in memory of Craig Michael Strickland



Michelle Miller - January 11, 2016 at 01:01 AM

MM

Sending prayers of comfort to Helen and Craig's family. I am so very sorry for your loss.


Michelle Miller - January 11, 2016 at 01:03 AM

BA

“ *My thoughts and prayers go out to Helen, Craig's family, bandmates & friends. I prayed for all of you while Craig was missing and it broke my heart everyday they didn't find him. Then when the news came that they did find him I was sad but, at the same time I was glad he was found so you had closure. Helen your strength thru this tragedy has been such an inspiration, I pray you continue to have the strength and faith in God to heal your heart. #RIPCRaigStrickland #GodHasAPlan* ❤️



Beth Rowe Yuma, Az - January 10, 2016 at 09:37 PM

 Lisa Sawyer

“ *Lisa Sawyer lit a candle in memory of Craig Michael Strickland*



Lisa Sawyer - January 10, 2016 at 09:24 PM

TP

“ *Craig was the kindest sweetest soul I have ever met. He always made time after every show to stop and say hi, to take pictures and visit with everyone. He always seemed to have so much energy, faith and love for performing on stage and it came across at every concert I went to. He made everyone laugh, smile and he put so much joy in their hearts with his passion for what he did best. I know he is still rocking his music above and looking down on his beautiful wife Helen and his loving parents and his bandmates. I will continue to pray every day for all of you.*

Tonya Pool - January 10, 2016 at 09:06 PM



“ *my thoughts and prayers are with you*

alice (knotts) king, eddie knotts

alice king - January 10, 2016 at 08:52 PM



“ *Bobbie Taylor lit a candle in memory of Craig Michael Strickland*



Bobbie Taylor - January 10, 2016 at 08:50 PM



“ *Margie Strickland lit a candle in memory of Craig Michael Strickland*

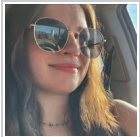


Margie Strickland - January 10, 2016 at 08:20 PM

TF

“ I have been following this story about Craig Strickland and Chase Moreland My heart has ached for each of them. How my family prayed for Craig and Chase safe return and now how we pray for Helen and the Strickland and Moreland families. We don't know any of you but we know that as fellow believers in Christ we are all family in Him. When i saw that Craig's service was going to be online for all to view I thought at first how gracious this family is to allow this very personal heartbreaking time to be public. As I thought about it longer I thought how amazing God is.. How He will use this time to speak to maybe hundreds of thousands of people some who may not know Jesus Christ By using this terribly painful passing of one of His own many others may come to know Christ! He uses all things for the good of those that love Him. Romans 8:28 Craig shone a light so bright it is evident in the pictures we have all enjoyed seeing. That light shines brightly in you too Helen Carry that light now for you both Shine bright and be strong and courageous Do not be afraid for the Lord will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9. You will be with Craig again someday. You all will. What a celebration that day will be ! To God be the Glory !

The Sellers Family - January 10, 2016 at 08:07 PM



“ Craig and I were high school classmates. He always had this amazingly joyful spirit about him! He brought fun with him wherever he went, I Lit a green candle to remember our time at AHS! My prayers are with the Strickland family. So very sorry for your loss,



Katie Vansell - January 10, 2016 at 07:59 PM

Cody
Robbins

“ Craig was an amazing well gifted talented individual and his love for each and every person was outstanding he always had that smile on his face and cheering people up! He's gonna be missed dearly and I send prayers to family friends and wife Helen Elizabeth in this difficult time Tuesday nite we all will be there for the support!!



Cody Robbins - January 10, 2016 at 07:50 PM

TH

“ Prayers and love for the entire family of the wonderful Christian man! May God continue to strengthen each of you during this hard time! Many blessings and live in Christ always!



Teresa Hammond and family

Teresa Hammond - January 10, 2016 at 07:42 PM

KB

“ Mom looking on as Craig and Helen were married



Karen Brazzeal - January 10, 2016 at 07:40 PM

KB

“ Your Mom loved you dearly Craig. I took this photo as you were being married, as she looked on. I can't think of a more magical day.



Karen Brazzeal - January 10, 2016 at 07:39 PM

AS

“ Angel Sullivan lit a candle in memory of Craig Michael Strickland



Angel Sullivan - January 10, 2016 at 06:48 PM

CF

“ Prayers for all family and friends of Craig Strickland!



Cheryl Milam Howell Ford - January 10, 2016 at 04:22 PM

RH

“ Rebecca Hizer lit a candle in memory of Craig Michael Strickland



Rebecca Hizer - January 10, 2016 at 04:13 PM

MA

“ Craig was one of a kind. His warm smile, and bubbly personality was so contagious. I send many prayers to his wife & family. I am amazed how much he has touched people through his wife Helen, and his band mates during this time. He will not be forgotten. ❤️🙏



maria - January 10, 2016 at 02:57 PM

FC

“ Randy,
My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.
Fred

Fred Calvert - January 10, 2016 at 02:45 PM



“ Love and Prayers continue for this Amazing Family who have become so dear to us ths past few weeks. We've Prayed, Cried and seen God's Glory through this whole ordeal. Craig's infectious smile and Beautiful Spirit will live on..Hugs from Tulsa

Johnna Brown - January 10, 2016 at 12:58 PM

MW

“ Never met him before but I'm sorry for your loss prayers heading your way God Bless all of your family and friends.

Melissa Watson - January 10, 2016 at 12:56 PM

BE

“ I have so many great memories of Craig. From playing baseball with Monte, to History Day performances that allowed them a chance to go to Washington DC,, to many days spent in the "duck den" and many more. I am so sorry for your loss Helen, Randy, Joanne and the rest of the family and many friends. Craig will be missed.

Belinda Elam - January 10, 2016 at 12:35 PM

MH

“ Helen,
Our staff has been praying for you...and we will continue! We pray that the God of peace & comfort will,hold you and guide you.
Much love,
Mary Alice Hughes

Mary Alice Hughes - January 10, 2016 at 09:02 AM

BR

*Helen, randy,joanne and katie
I remember Craig with that curly hair in kindergarden till him and casey graduation.. He was always so sweet to everyone. When they was looking for Craig it brought back memories when my son drowned trying to save his girlfriend 8 1/2 years ago. But i prayed day and night that they find him and chase, my prayers are still with you all. Love you guys and god bless*

brenda - January 10, 2016 at 09:59 PM

JM

As we go along through life's journey there are certain people who are stand outs among everyone that come and go in a lifetime. I had never heard of Craig or Back Road Anthem until these tragic events unfolded for the world to see. Helen has been such an inspiration to so many who have experienced similar fates and also to those of us that perhaps will someday have to walk in those footsteps. My 8 year old grandson has Duchene Muscular Dystrophy and one day we will face giving him up to death. Helen and family, your steadfastness in your faith has been an inspiration, and I hope should I face something similar one day, that my faith can be just as strong. I am not saying that I can even begin to understand why this had to be for the world has lost a great light that walked in darkness with the loss of Craig. I will continue to lift your family and the family of Chase Morland up in prayer. I will tell you that Craig's loss is very personal to me because just watching videos of Craig and listening to him and his wonderful personality I feel a tremendous loss. Heaven indeed is so much brighter.

Jerry Moseley - January 12, 2016 at 08:37 AM

SL

Dear Family, God's glorious plan for our lives is so obvious sometimes due to it's length but other times can leave us with so much wonder as to why it had to end so soon and in this way. Craig has left us all with an imprint that will never be erased and will always make us smile when we think of him. All that he has touched and loved were put there to experience His glory through him. Lord, please give strength and comfort to this wonderful family and continue to hold them with Your mercy and grace. Craig's whole life was such a blessing and it will go on in Paradise forever.

Blessings Jack & Sandy Lasey

Sandy Lasey - January 12, 2016 at 01:06 PM

MP

Randy, I am so very sorry for your loss. I have watched Craig and his group sing and really enjoyed them. Then to see of is passing just breaks my heart. What a Great Young Man and a God Loving and Spiritual person. I have watch as so many have TV here in Blytheville of his being lost and so sad to find out that he had passed away. Knowing that he is with his Lord is a blessing but a sadness too. He is singing to all those in Heaven and still in the hearts here on earth. Randy, I had no idea that he was your son. My sister told me of this today. I was one of the ones that watched the Memorial and cried along with you all. I sent this to her and she responded that I knew you. What a strange world we live in. It even makes this more personal. It is like a family member now. You and your family will always be in my thoughts and prayers. Just know that OUR LORD is taking great care of this Awesome Young Man. You all raised one Wonderful and Godly Young man. Something to be very proud of and you raised him to be a Great Christan man that showed it to all that met him. God be with you all. Merton Phillips - Blytheville, AR.

Merton Phillips - January 13, 2016 at 02:39 PM