



John Darren Smart

November 5, 1964 - January 30, 2026

John Darren Smart, 61, of North Richland Hills, entered the loving arms of our Heavenly Father on January 30, 2026. A devoted brother, husband, father, granddad, and uncle, Darren was a man whose life was rooted in love, loyalty, and quiet strength

Born on November 5, 1964, in Dallas, Texas, to Noble Carleton Smart Jr. and Nelva Ann Jumper Smart, Darren spent his early childhood in Irving, Texas alongside his older brother and sister, Jeffery Scot and Kimberly Ann. John-known as "Darren" to those closest to him-attended MacArthur High School. During his formative years, he was active in sports, enjoyed playing guitar, and cultivated the hobbies that would become lifelong passions.

Introduced to fishing at a young age by their father, Darren, his brother, and his sister embraced the pastime wholeheartedly. For Darren, fishing became more than a hobby-it was a source of peace, joy, and connection. Throughout his life, he eagerly shared that passion with his grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and his closest friends who were always willing to join him on the water.

Darren was a proud and devoted father to his children, Chase Matthew and Sarah Ann. Much of his heart was dedicated to caring for his son, Chase, who was born with Gaucher disease (pronounced go-SHAY), a rare genetic

disorder. Darren's compassion and strength were evident in the care he provided until Chase's passing in 1992-a profound loss he carried with enduring love.

Beyond fishing, Darren found great joy in perfecting his homemade beef jerky, a craft that earned him the affectionate title of "the jerky man" for many years. Known for his kindness and willingness to help anyone in need, Darren was a man of God, who lived a life defined by service, humility, and generosity.

In 2021, Darren married Cynthia, with whom he built a warm and welcoming home in North Richland Hills. Together, they cherished time spent with their blended family-hosting gatherings, traveling to visit loved ones, and simply enjoying the comfort of each other's companionship. Darren was deeply proud of his daughter, Sarah, and her children, admiring their resilience, accomplishments, and the love they brought into his life. He also held immense pride for his nephew Dewyane, his family, and the values they shared.

Darren is reunited with his parents and his beloved son, Chase Matthew who preceded him in death

He is survived by his loving wife, Cynthia Brooks-Smart; his brother, Scot Smart, and wife Nicci; his sister, Kimberly Smart; his daughter, Sarah Anne Smart; and his grandchildren, Xavier Chase, Maya Annabell, Daniel Matthew, and Andre Darnell. He is also survived by his niece, Jessica Muniz, and nephew, Dewyane Smart, and wife Brooke, along with their children-Jackson, Braylee, McKinley, and Garrison.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Darren's name to the National Gaucher Foundation or the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Services will be held to celebrate his life on Saturday, February 21st, 2026, at 2:00pm at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints located at 4401 NE Loop 820 North Richland Hills Tx 76180.

His memory will forever be a blessing to all who loved him.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

FEB 21. 2:00 PM (CT)

Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
4401 NE Loop 820
North Richland Hills, TX 76180

Tribute Wall

TS

“ Darren was a GREAT person. He was also a wonderful Grandad. Darren was always willing to help anybody out with any situation they might be facing, never asked questions just always did it. He could also cook a steak like no other, always so delicious 😊

Darren , thank you for being such a true friend & always so kind to all of us. You will truly be missed beyond words. Thank you for all the memories. Give Lindy big hugs💜

We Love you very much 💜

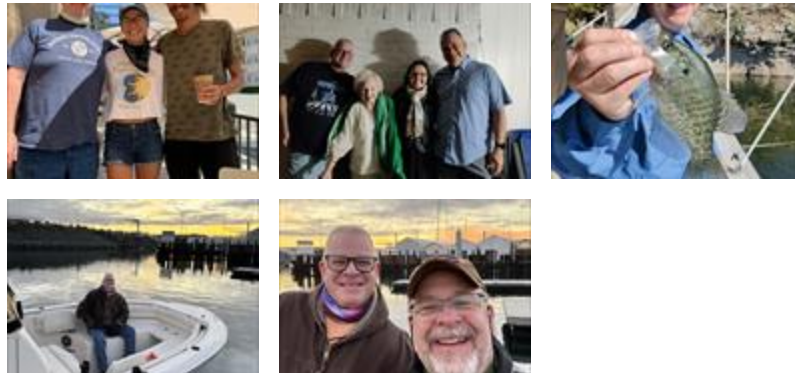
Lee & Tracey Swafford



Tracey Swafford - February 21 at 10:47 AM

JJ

“ 6 files added to the tribute wall



John Dennis Smart Jr - February 21 at 12:50 AM

KS

“ Worked with him for many years. Such a gentle spirit. Always with a smile and often with great jerky. He will be remembered with love.



Kandy Smith - February 20 at 10:04 PM

JJ

“ *I'll always remember Darren's smile. Love and miss you Darren.* ”



John Densus Smart Jr - February 20 at 08:33 PM

GC

“ *I just want to express my condolences and deepest sympathies to the Smart family and friends; especially Cindy. My pray you will feel Heaven's peace and comfort.* ”

Grant Cooper - February 20 at 07:53 PM

CC

“ Darren always came to sit in our section at the office at lunch time. He was an honorary employee of our team, though it wasn't what he did day to day. I got to know him through his lovely wife. He was so kind and gentle. He was always a delight to talk to. He had stories for days about fishing. He nailed it when it came to cooking meats!!!



I'm so grateful to have gotten to attend his wedding to Cindy. It was so much fun and truly a party celebrating love and happiness. I hold that memory very fondly because it was a blast for everyone who attended.

My last memory of Darren was at a fish fry that I was invited to. Everyone brought something and Darren fried up the fish he caught. Darren had gotten into the pool and was helping to teach the baby (Charlee) how to swim. We were invited to swim, but I didn't. Instead, I sat on the side of the pool with my legs in the water chatting with Darren. Looking back, I wish I would have swam.

Darren very much had a light about him. I'm going to miss not ever getting to see or feel that light again.

Candice Cayce - February 16 at 03:48 PM

TB

“ When we all had lunch together, he was so welcoming to everyone! I mean truly, that many people, things CAN seem awkward but not with him there. The hugs and laughter was just absolutely contagious!

Taylor Brooks - February 13 at 11:01 AM

DO

“ *Stunned and sad to hear of the passing of Darren Smart who is one of the kindest and nicest guys I've ever met. I met him through our work but his friendship evolved outside our employment. One example of his giving nature that immediately comes to mind is when a huge tree crashed through our fence and I had posted about this huge task I was facing and Darren reached out and showed up with a chain saw and not only helped but went above and beyond clearing the backyard. I tried to offer him money but he steadfastly refused and kept saying that's what friends are for. He was the literal example of the phrase would give you the shirt off his back kind of person. The world will miss him and his kind spirit we seem to have lost on so many levels. RIP buddy....I envision you sitting in a boat casting your line across a heavenly lake.*

Douglas Ortiz - February 13 at 09:11 AM



“ I encourage everyone to please share photos, or memories. They bring me joy and comfort. This is how the loss of Darren has me feeling. Losing Darren has changed me in ways I’m still trying to understand. He wasn’t just my husband—he was my best friend, my confidant, my safe place. I miss his hugs, his smile, and his laugh that could fill up a room. I miss the simple comfort of knowing he was lying beside me at night. Even the small, everyday things—like the timeless question of “What’s for dinner?” and the back-and-forth of “You decide,” “No, you decide”—feel so heavy now. Because left up to him, dinner would always be pizza or peanut butter and jelly. He treated me like a queen, even on days when I didn’t feel like I deserved it. He loved me with a depth and steadiness that made me feel truly cherished. The place he filled in my heart—his place—can never be filled by anyone else.

His loss isn’t just an absence... it’s a silence in all the places where his laughter used to be. It’s a space beside me that feels too big. It’s missing the man who knew me better than anyone, who loved me through everything, and who made life brighter just by being in it. I’m grateful for every moment we had, but I carry the ache of missing him every day. And even through the grief, I hold onto the love he gave so freely—the love that will always stay with me.

Cindy Brooks - February 11 at 06:31 PM

CC

I'm sending you love, Cindy. I haven't got words. I have tight hugs and a lot of tears.

Candice Cayce - February 16 at 03:36 PM



“ One of my fishing adventures with my husband. If you ever went fishing with Darren—even once—you came back with a story. And as Darren’s wife, I should say this clearly: I am not a fish eater, nor do I fish. I’m not a fan of the smell, the feel, or any of it. But I loved my husband so much that I indulged him. As long as he handled all the “yukky work,” I would hold a pole. He baited the hook, he took the fish off—I never touched a thing.

One of Darren’s absolute favorite places was Possum Kingdom Lake, fishing from his nephew’s dock. It was quiet, peaceful, and the night sky looked like it had been hung just for us. We spent so many evenings there together—him teaching me how to hold the pole, what to feel for, patiently encouraging me with every little tug on the line.

One evening, I kept catching what seemed like the same tiny four-inch catfish over and over. Darren kept throwing it back, shaking his head and laughing. Meanwhile, he got into an intense battle with a large bass—really working for it—and then the line snapped. He was frustrated, but only for a moment, because right then I got another bite. And of course... it was that same little catfish.

This time, when Darren went to toss it back, something unbelievable happened. As he threw it toward the water, that same bass jumped up, and that catfish landed right in its mouth. We just stared at each other and said at the same time, “No way!”

But it wasn’t over. That bass then flung the catfish up onto the dock, where it flopped around before sliding right back into the lake.

Darren shook his head and said, “No one is ever going to believe this fish story.” I told him, “I saw it—and I still don’t believe it.”

We laughed so hard that night. To this day, we only wish Dewayne had cameras on the dock so we could have had the whole thing on film.

Cindy Brooks - February 11 at 06:25 PM



“ *Darren, oh brother, Earth has lost a truly wonderful soul. You were always welcoming, loving, and such a sweet friend.*



Your love for Cindy and all the blended grandbabies was a beautiful sight to behold. But let's not forget your legendary fish fry, which undoubtedly brought the best memories good food, laughter, and fireworks. You never missed a beat, and I want to express my deepest gratitude for my birthday wishes on January 26th. Your thoughtfulness was always evident.

Rest in peace, Darren, my sweet brother and friend. Cindy, we love you dearly, and our condolences go out to your mama. Kindest thoughts during this difficult time from Yessie and Brandon Sullivan

Yessenia Sullivan - February 11 at 05:13 PM



thank you so much Yessie and Brandon. Love you guys

Cindy Brooks - February 11 at 06:21 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of John Darren Smart.*

February 11 at 04:38 PM



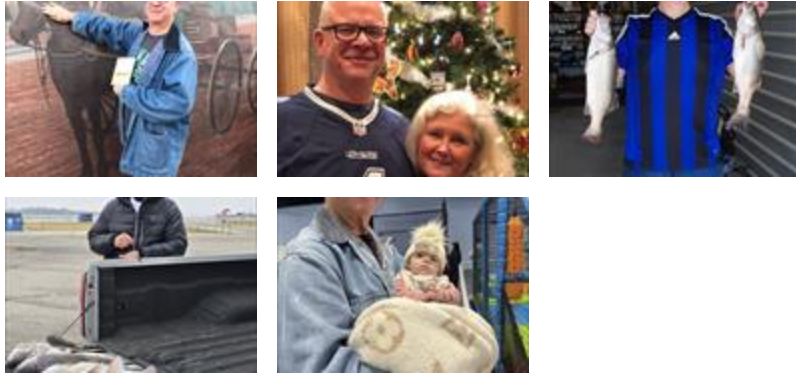
“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of John Darren Smart.*



February 11 at 04:38 PM

AS

“ 14 files added to the album Darren Smart



Aimee Safford - February 09 at 07:22 PM



Aww the deep sea fishing with the grandkids! I think I still have the red fish in the freezer! or some of it anyways.

Cindy Brooks - February 11 at 06:23 PM