



## Mark Laver Hays

September 19, 2016

Mark Laver Hays, 39, of Hickory Flat, died September 19, 2016, at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Memphis. Visitation will be held Wednesday (September 21) from 5 to 7 p.m. at Coleman Funeral Home, 601 Commerce Parkway in Oxford. Funeral services will be held Thursday (September 22) at 2 p.m. at Yellow Leaf Baptist Church near Oxford, with burial to follow at Yellow Leaf Cemetery.

Born in Long Beach, California, Mark had lived much of his life in Oxford and was a truck driver for Memphis-based JIT-EX. He was a member of Calvary Baptist Church of Oxford and an outdoor enthusiast who especially loved fishing.

Mark was diagnosed at age 5 with Autoimmune Polyglandular Syndrome, which was life-threatening but treatable. Four weeks before his death he contracted Hemophagocytic Lymphohistiocytosis (HLH). Despite living less than four decades, he defied the odds, passing by 18 years the medical opinions that he would probably not live past age 21.

“November 20 would have been a year that we’ve been married,” said his wife, Brandy Jean Stanford Hays, whom he met while they both worked at Walmart in Oxford.

“He was always happy, and his goal was to make everyone smile,” she said.

“One of his happiest times was when we went on vacation and he got to explore the cave at Raccoon Mountain in Alabama. He was so happy when he put on that little helmet with the light.”

As a little boy, one of Mark's favorite things to do was to watch live wrestling in Memphis, and as he matured he developed a deep interest in movies.

"He could have been a professional movie critic," said his brother Eric. "He was quite a comic, too."

Gene Hays recalled that his youngest son thoroughly enjoyed being in plays during his years at Oxford High School.

"He was in 'South Pacific,' 'Oklahoma!,' and 'Li'l Abner,'" Gene Hays said. In the last of those productions, Mark very convincingly portrayed the statue of Gen. Jubilation T. Cornpone, fooling the audience until he took a bow while being carried from the stage.

Ron Hays said another of his youngest brother's gifts was how readily small children took to him.

"Mark was always Santa Claus for the whole family," added their grandmother, Beverly Hays.

A favorite memory for Mark's mother, Barbara Hays, stemmed from when the family still lived in California and took a vacation trip to Las Vegas.

"He was up in the kids' section at Circus Circus playing games," she recalled. "He came walking down with this huge, huge teddy bear. I asked, 'How in the world are you going to get that home?' It took up the whole back seat in the van."

In addition to his wife, parents, brothers and grandmother, Mark is survived by nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to a [www.gofundme.com](http://www.gofundme.com) account titled "Mark Hays - A Rare Gem" or to LeBonheur Children's Hospital, 848 Adams Avenue, Memphis, TN 38103 or at [www.lebonheur.org](http://www.lebonheur.org)

Online condolences may be left on the Tribute Wall at [www.colemanfuneralhome](http://www.colemanfuneralhome)

# Cemetery Details

## Yellow Leaf Cemetery

50 CR 435  
Oxford, MS 38655

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP **21**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Coleman Funeral Home of Oxford  
601 Commerce Parkway  
Oxford, MS 38655  
(662) 234-3900  
info@colemanfuneralhome.com  
<https://www.colemanfuneralhome.com/>

## Service

SEP **22**. 2:00 PM (CT)

Yellow Leaf Baptist Church  
50 CR 435  
Oxford, MS 38655

# Tribute Wall

JE

“ *It is always so distressing to hear of the death of someone so young. Yet, it is comforting to know that our God never intended humans to experience such pain. How we look forward to His promise at Isaiah 25:8 to swallow up death forever and wipe away tears from all faces. Until that time, may the words of Psalms 147:3 which states, "He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds", assure you of God's love and tender care for you at this time.*

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**Jennifer** - November 02, 2016 at 12:43 PM

GH

“ *Thank you all. Mark was a very special person much beveled by his entire family and friends.*

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**Gene & Barbara Hays** - October 05, 2016 at 08:50 PM

RS

“ *Offering sincere condolences to the family and friends. May you allow the future promises of our Heavenly Father to comfort you, strengthen your faith and give you hope. (Rev. 21:4,5)*

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**RS** - September 22, 2016 at 04:29 PM

GH

*Thank you from his parents.*

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**Gene and Barbara Hays** - October 05, 2016 at 08:53 PM

ML

“ *Share a memory of Mark Laver Hays or send condolences to the family.*



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**Marcy Laster** - September 21, 2016 at 06:30 PM

ML

*I worked with Mark at the hospital when he was a security guard. He was one of the kindest, most helpful persons I have ever met. Heaven has gained a precious angel!*

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**Marcy Laster** - September 21, 2016 at 06:37 PM

GH

*Thank you from his parents.*

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**Gene and Barbara Hays** - October 05, 2016 at 08:53 PM

SS

“ *I was Mark's English and drama teacher at Oxford High School and I remember him very well as someone who was always smiling and joking around, very friendly, and a true gentleman. It was a joy to work with him on the school musicals, and I particularly liked what he did in "Lil' Abner"! He was a great character actor in all of his roles, and he never knew how much I appreciated his work in those shows--he didn't consider it work, but just something that he loved to do. I no longer live in Oxford, so I won't be able to attend his service, but I just wanted to share this memory of Mark. I was heart-broken to hear of Mark's passing, but I know that he left a mark on this world in a very good and positive way.*

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**Susan Smith** - September 20, 2016 at 09:08 PM

GH

*Thank you from his parents.*

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**Gene and Barbara Hays** - October 05, 2016 at 08:54 PM