



## David Trent Smith

March 28, 1958 - December 17, 2025

David Trent Smith -a teacher to thousands, a coach to so many, and a friend to all- died December 17, 2025 at his home in Mooresville, North Carolina surround by his loving wife and two devoted children. He was 67.

Born March 28th 1958 in Cleveland, Ohio to John J Smith and Anet Nadasdi, Trent was a free spirit and an independent adventurer from the start. From his early days exploring and terrorizing his neighborhood, by bicycle (With brother Ken at his side), to marrying the love of his life Gina K McGill and heading west to Colorado. Trent loved meeting people, making new friends, embracing new experiences, and soaking up all the world had to offer. He was happiest fishing in the Outer Banks of North Carolina, running Marathons, playing/coaching baseball & cross country, talking history, and listening to good music over a cold beer. His place of peace, and heaven on earth, was a place where family, fishing, and the serenity of a water side retreat all came together.

Educated at Manchester High School, Miami University, Akron University, and Old Dominion University, Trent was not only a very wise man but one who was thoughtful and compassionate. His career in teaching and coaching spanned the country. He and Gina started their adventure moving west to Colorado, soon after marriage, in 1981. From there they moved to Plainville KS where they coached, taught, and had son Cole before heading east to Portsmouth

Va. Virginia welcomed Trent and Gina with their daughter Serena. Here Trent taught and coached at both Craddock and Norcom High Schools. The family then relocated to Kannapolis, North Carolina before finally settling in Mooresville, North Carolina. The bulk of Trent's career was at Central Cabarrus High School, where he coached Cross Country and JV Baseball, before concluding at Mount Pleasant High School. Throughout his travels and professional journey Trent, or just simply "Coach", provided not only education and mentorship to his students and athletes, but at times the fatherly love and advice for so many that did not have it at home. His greatest joy was seeing his students and athletes succeed, achieve their aspirations, and excel in their lives.

He will be remembered for his sense of humor and inappropriate jokes, wildly entertaining stories, dedication to his family, love of his players and students, and most certainly a Legendary Fu Manchu.

In his final year of life his love and heart showed the greatest. His actions and words, when life was in doubt, remained constant and true. He worried and cared about others, proclaimed the importance of family and time together, embraced what life had left to offer, and led from the front with dignity and grace. His final months were a high note to a very rich and beautiful song, his final melody was that of sage advice, warm embraces, loving words, and a resolute strength...in the end a summary and reminder of what he was all along.

His memory will be cherished and kept alive by his adoring wife Gina K Smith; children Cole Smith and Serena Ridenhour; his 5 grandchildren, brother Ken Smith, and sister Karen Plicka.

The family wishes to thank all the Medical Staff and Hospice Nurses for their kind work, friends and neighbors for all they did to support Trent and Gina in

their most trying times, and all the visits and prayers of support and love that were extended.

We would like to invite all that would like to attend Trent's Celebration of Life, January 3rd, 2026 from 2-5pm at the Vista at Walnut Hill. There will be a brief service at 2pm followed by a reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres and beverages.

Cavin-Cook Funeral Home & Crematory, Mooresville, is serving the Smith family. Condolences may be made to the family at [www.cavin-cook.com](http://www.cavin-cook.com).

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

JAN 3. 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM (ET)

Vista At Walnut Hill  
1090 Mount Rd  
Cleveland, NC 27013

## Reception

JAN 3. 2:30 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Vista At Walnut Hill  
1090 Mount Rd  
Cleveland, NC 27013

# Tribute Wall

MB

“ Coach Smith was my cross country coach at CCHS. We didn't have a true course, so we did all our practicing on the road until they made a rule in the county that we couldn't do that anymore. He then used his tractor to cut a path through the woods on school property. Many practices he would coach us yelling from the tractor. It was a huge job to get all those trees and underbrush down. He was determined to get that course ready and host a home meet.

The day finally came and my mom was one of the helpers at the finish line of that first meet. There was a misunderstanding and she recorded all the times but she didn't separate the boys from the girls. That meant, at the end, no one had their time...and had to tell the other coaches their runners didn't have recorded times.

He was livid but he didn't take it out on her. I'm sure that must have been so frustrating after all that work. He was always so lighthearted and fun to be around. He was a great coach and I'm so sad to learn of his passing, but so thankful to hear about his faith.

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**Meredith Broadway** - January 03 at 11:24 AM

SR

“ Trent,

*It was truly an honor getting to know you and your family. You had a profound impact on me through our many meaningful conversations about history, life, what it means to be a man, a father, and a husband. I am deeply grateful for the time my family and I were able to spend with you and yours, and for the wisdom you shared so freely, lessons from your own life, both the ones to pursue and the ones to avoid.*

*I will forever cherish our time together at the water's edge, sharing great music and waiting for our fishing lines to get tight (even if it was usually a ray). Tiffany, McKenzie, and I always looked forward to your visits to Mobjack. You and your family became part of our family, and you always will be.*

*I will miss the text messages with YouTube links to incredible songs, the requests for fishing reports, and the simple check-ins to see how my family was doing. I'll miss the fire pit conversations and listening to your amazing stories about the many places you lived and the countless kids you taught and coached in baseball.*

*Most of all, I loved hearing you talk about Cole. Your pride in him was unmistakable, you would light up, smiling ear to ear every single time.*

*Thank you for letting me be part of your circle. I will miss you, buddy. You did good. May you rest in peace and keep that watchful eye over your family.  
Love you, BIG GUY.*

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**Scott Redford** - January 02 at 10:21 AM

MJ

“ Trent was a great family man and great coach. I played Baseball for him and ran Cross Country. Used to go over the house and run and have great conversations about life. He was a fun person to be around. He definitely made an impact in my life. I thank God for putting Trent in my life and for the memories that he left us. Keeping the family in my prayers. Loved here and in Heaven!

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**Michael Jones** - December 29, 2025 at 11:43 PM

JH

“ Johnnie Harrell, Cradock High School Portsmouth, VA. Former Basketball and Baseball player.

*Dear Coach, I'm writing this with a heavy heart but great gratitude, as your mentorship profoundly shaped me; you taught discipline, to believe in myself and your belief pushed me to grow beyond what I thought possible, making me a better athlete and person, and I'll forever carry you in my thoughts and thank you for everything you invested in me.*

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**Johnnie Harrell** - December 29, 2025 at 06:02 PM

KB

“ Dear Gina, Ken, Karen and family,

*Trent was such a wonderful friend to my brother Mark. He always entered our house with boundless energy and a sense of fun would twinkle in his eyes as he discussed the day's events and sometimes antics with my brother and parents.*

*May memories of happy times sustain you now. You are in the prayers and thoughts of our family.*

*My deepest sympathy,*

*Kathy Cummins Bearer*

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**Kathy Cummins Bearer** - December 29, 2025 at 08:49 AM

TF

“ *The Carolina Elite Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of David Trent Smith.*



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**The Carolina Elite Family** - December 23, 2025 at 09:48 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of David Trent Smith.*



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December 22, 2025 at 04:19 PM



“ Taylor G. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David Trent Smith.

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**Taylor G.** - December 22, 2025 at 04:19 PM