

## James Virgil "Jim" Smith III

James Virgil Smith, born in Bartlesville, OK, on March 19, 1955 where Jim lived until 1979 when he moved to Norman, OK to attend OU on a NROTC scholarship. Jim went on to receive a Bachelor of Science in Trade and Industrial Education from OSU in July 1999. In 1982 Jim married the great love of his life, Joani Smith, in Oklahoma City. They shared 38 years of marriage together while residing in Frederick, OK. Frederick had been the town that he spent his summers as a child working on the farm with his uncle and ultimately it became the town where he started his family. On April 26th, 1995, Jim and Joani welcomed their pride and joy, Jesse, to their family, making them complete.

Jim's life was not short of achievement. To say that he kept busy would be putting it lightly, but what made his "busy" unique was his driving force to ensure that the community he is leaving behind is better than when he found it.

In 1990, Jim began working with Case IH and was instrumental in bringing the Case IH Pro Harvest Safety Kick Off Meeting to Frederick. In 1991, he followed in his mother's footsteps and began teaching at the Great Plains Technology Center, where he taught all the way up to his last days. It was at that same technology center that he worked with CaseIH for 35 years to bring the ProHarvest Safety Kick Off Meetings to the Great Plains Technology Center in Frederick Oklahoma.

Jim's assistance was invaluable to the ProHarvest Kickoff meeting for the Custom Cutters to achieve success. He would have his students set up the tables and chairs in the auditorium before they left on spring break.

Jim was always the go-to person in determining the best days to schedule the meetings, starting 30 days in advance to ensure that we hit the best time that the wheat was ready, and the custom harvesters would be in the area to ensure maximum attendance to this non-denominational meeting. All custom harvesters were welcome regardless of

what brand of combines that they ran in their fleet. With the new age of cell phones, Jim would make a presentation each day at the Kickoff session on the 911 procedures to contact and secure emergency services if anyone needed assistance.

Over the years the attendance at the ProHarvest Safety Kick Off Meetings continued to rise and so did the number of ProHarvest hats that were given away. Jim would go out of this way to help anyone that needed help with anything while not expecting anything in return

Jim was a reserved deputy with the Tillman County Sheriff Department starting in 2001, was Captain of the reserve deputies, and to round out his career he was awarded Reserve Deputy of the Year in 2013 by the Tillman County Sheriff's Office on behalf of the Oklahoma Sheriff's Association. In 2003, he was appointed a City Councilman. Jim was currently serving as Vice Mayor of Fredrick. On top of all that Jim was a part of, he and his family also farmed 160 acres in Tillman County.

To know Jim was to love him. He had a signature smile that was contagious and no matter who you were, he was able to captivate you with one of his great stories, his arsenal of history facts, or his impeccable cooking skills. He was an avid reader, loved his guns, Labrador, and visiting Disney World. So much so that he, Joani, and Jesse made it be an annual family vacation. It was nearly impossible to walk away from a conversation with him without looking forward to the next one.

If you ever had the opportunity to meet Jim either at Frederick or at one of the U.S. Custom Harvesters Conventions, I'm sure you would agree that Jim's friendly and outgoing personality was contagious! The old saying that some people have never meet a stranger, well that was Jim!

On January 17th, 2021, in Lawton, OK, Jim Virgil Smith, succumbed to a hard-fought battle with COVID-19. Mr. Smith is survived by his adoring wife, Joani Smith, his faithful son, Jesse Smith, his loving sister, his brothers in law, his nieces, nephews, cousins, and life-long friends.