



John T. Strand Jr.

November 26, 1983 - December 23, 2025

Family and friends called him Johnny and will always remember his exceedingly sweet nature and gentle, kind, and loving care for others - especially children and the elderly. He died on December 23, 2025.

Johnny was born in Baltimore, Maryland. He was preceded in death by his loving grandparents, A. Wayne Ballard Jr., Jean Louise Ballard, Thomas Strand, and Clara Strand. He is survived by his adored son, Wayne Miller Strand, his devoted parents Victoria Tydings (Ballard Strand) Piper and John Thomas Strand, sisters Elizabeth Victoria (Strand) Daly (John Daly) and Ingrid Rebecca (Strand) Anderson (Coleman Anderson), nieces Eleanor and Lennon Anderson, and aunts, uncles, and cousins.

He graduated from Calvert School and Boys' Latin School of Maryland and studied early childhood education - earning an Associate's Degree at the Community College of Baltimore (CCBC) and continued studies at Towson University. As a life-long learner and reader outside of the classroom - Johnny's curiosity spanned from cars, mechanical repairs, home projects to animals, environment, music and the meaning of life.

With his arrival on November 26, 1983 - Johnny filled the first of many roles he carried out with love across his life: son, grandson, great-grandson, nephew and cousin. He arrived from the delivery room and with his gentle

blue eyes he gazed at each person welcoming him to the family. In turn he became an older brother, a cousin many times over, a friend, an in-law, an uncle, a husband, and ultimately a father. These roles sustained him and he cherished them. Above all else, Johnny truly loved being part of our large family—taking real pride in how we show up for each other.

As the oldest boy in a flock of 16 cousins - Johnny was a leader without ego. He welcomed all cousins to the family games and adventures that filled their childhoods. His cousin Zoë remembers “Johnny was incredibly patient and all-in on our games. Despite being a boy, I felt that he fully respected me as a girl.” It was natural for him to share and coach his cousins. His cousin Josh remembers “playing a racing game on his PlayStation. We were all terrible at it, but he never rushed us. He kept handing over the controller, turn after turn, skipping himself entirely so he could teach us how to play and cheer us on.” Even as he grew up, he always had time for his youngest cousins - never saying no to countless requests to join their games. In their grandparents’ home at 108 he created and shared adventures with his cousins - from creating secret hideouts in the attic, climbing trees and tapping them for sap, perfecting leaps across the fish pond (and sometimes falling in), teaching whittling, picking raspberries, to games of hide and seek, football, and make-believe.

Johnny was a proud and supportive brother, looking out for his younger sisters. Taking them along on a moon-lit ghost crab expedition to teach them how to be fearless of the dark and skilled in catching provided as much fun as trust in him. He championed their successes in school, at work, and as new parents to their children. He provided them a legacy of utmost kindness and patience.

Johnny learned carpentry and technical skills from his father, grandfather Wayne, and uncle David. With his methodical mindset he was a steady

worker. He happily shared his time and skills to help others - from household projects for his Auntie Louise to volunteer construction work for Habitat for Humanity, seasonal maintenance at Calvert School, and helping his uncle rehab and restart a pizza parlor. Johnny was also a mentor. To help younger cousins feel a part of the family crew building a deck, Josh remembers how Johnny “made sure I always knew what to do and how to do it. He taught me patiently and respectfully, helping me learn without ever making me feel small or inexperienced.”

As a disability support counselor through the ARC, he provided life skills coaching and care to support a young adult with Down Syndrome. Most of all, Johnny's mindset revealed itself in his profound gift for caregiving. Cousin-in-law Ira witnessed this gift in the care Johnny provided. Raffy had many caregivers over the years, yet his family speaks with certainty about how the two years he spent with Johnny were, by far, the best. And to this day, Raffy, with the biggest smile, will ask Ira how Johnny is doing—referring to him as “my favorite friend.” As well, Johnny provided classroom support and activity oversight for elementary school students at Calvert School and at a special needs camp at CCBC.

Family was paramount for Johnny. In 2015 Johnny and his former wife Lisa welcomed the arrival of their son Wayne. It was a joy for him to become a father and raise Wayne with much love and respect among a family of expanding cousins. With fatherhood, his caretaking instincts reached entirely new heights. Watching him with Wayne was special. Johnny was so proud of his son when Wayne won 1st prize in sling shot at Boy Scout camp. He was always so patient and kind with young kids and was a natural with his own.

When his Grandma needed more support, his family of three moved into her home to make it possible for her to continue aging in place. His care, concern,

and support were much appreciated by all. This loving support continued across the pandemic and kept them each safe and sound.

Johnny's caring ways and curiosity were the foundation for the great love and compassion he extended to all living creatures, from pet dogs, rabbits, cats, snakes and reptiles to animals in the wild. He took pride in sharing this love and respect of animals with his son Wayne. As treasured companions to his son, Johnny leaves behind Norman, his Tibetan Mastiff, and Apollo, a python. He raised both from early on; that was Johnny - his kindness did not discriminate.

He loved beaches, waterfronts, boating, spending time savoring the outdoors, and going fishing by day or late into the night. The sounds of the water and waves were his perfect soundtrack. Bethany Beach, Assateague, Marblehead, Loch Raven Reservoir - each satisfied his outdoor and fishing passions. Whether managing his pole to reel in a lively sandshark from the Assateague surf with his cousin Wesley or patiently keeping a long wait on his own without a catch, he was always ready to go fishing.

Ira recalls a standout moment that captured Johnny's character. After walking away with visible discomfort from a comedy on TV, he explained—gently—to Ira that he disliked comedy when it functioned as a takedown. He drew a clear distinction between shows where everyone is flawed and struggling versus satire that establishes moral superiority by humiliating others. His instinct was always tethered to empathy.

Johnny battled through difficult private struggles. Though circumstances weren't always easy, Johnny knew his family's love and support were constant. Ira reminds us, "Even when ...in the strongest of the thoughts which plagued him, his underlying concern always came down to how best to protect his family...I, along with all of us, will carry Johnny's unwavering commitment

to kindness with us forever. There is no more righteous legacy than that.”

At family gatherings he was the first to offer a warm hug or a thoughtful gesture. “He gave the best hugs” remembers his Auntie Jessie. His love for his family matched his passion for the wild, and he carried that same tenderness with every animal, every moment, and every person in his life. His uncle Jean-Michel recalls, “In many ways I admired Johnny for he never seemed to need much. A quiet day with his boy, his dog, and the creatures he cared for was everything.” His cousin Wesley speaks for all of our family: “And though the world is sadder now that he is gone, and I'm not as fully whole as I once was with him here, I am thankful that he was in my life.” He will be missed terribly and forever in our hearts.