



John "Wes" Wesley Cowley

April 23, 1969 - July 26, 2026

July 26, 2026, we lost one of the brightest rays of sunshine to ever grace this earth.

John 'Wes' Cowley, 57, was one of the kindest men you could ever meet. His heart of gold was not something he spoke about—it was something he demonstrated every single day through the way he loved, worked, created, and cared for the people around him. His easygoing spirit, quick smile, and gentle nature made people feel comfortable in his presence. He was steady, patient, and warm. Yet that gentleness stood in beautiful contrast to the strength he carried in his hands and in his work as a member of the Iron Workers Union Local #5 (formerly Local #16) for more than 25 years. He would still be working today as a Field Superintendent and Safety Director for Baltimore Steel if his illness hadn't forced him to retire early. Wes was a dedicated member of Temple Lodge No. 128 where he became a Master Mason in 1994 and served as Worshipful Master in 1999. He continued a family tradition of Freemasonry, following in the footsteps of his father, Andy Cowley, who is a chaplain and longtime member of Temple Lodge.

Wes was a talented welder and a true craftsman. You can find his craftsmanship throughout Maryland and up and down the east coast. He didn't just weld iron; he created beautiful and durable pieces to last a lifetime. Outside of his career, he spent countless hours creating signs for local

businesses and welding projects for friends and neighbors. If you look closely, you can find evidence of Wes everywhere: in the steel he shaped, the things he repaired, and the lasting marks he left behind.

Beneath that quiet and gentle demeanor was a man who loved a good joke (especially if it was dirty), appreciated a great beer, and believed in showing up and working hard every damn day he could. Wes was happiest when he was busy: building something in his shop with the collection of tools and supplies he ‘acquired’ from job sites, working on the house, tending the gardens, or tackling the never-ending “honey-do” list.

But more than anything, Wes was a family man. He loved his children fiercely—they all made him proud—and the love he shared with his wife, Helen, was the foundation of his world. Though they found each other later in life, their love was joyful, intense, and pure. Wes was Helen’s soulmate, and he was fiercely loyal to her. Their relationship was built on laughter, partnership, and the quiet comfort of simply being together. His devotion to his family was not measured in grand gestures, but in the everyday small things he did: every problem he solved, every task he completed, and every moment he chose to give his time and energy to the people he loved. Wes wasn’t expected to take on the role of father, but he embraced it fully, loving Helen’s children as his own from the moment they met.

A novel could be written about Wes Cowley: his work accomplishments, the breadth of knowledge he could share training ironworkers, how to fix—well, anything really, but he would probably laugh and tell us to keep it short and simple.

Wes fought his battle with brain cancer with his whole soul. He faced the hardest days with the same courage, humor, and determination that defined the rest of his life.

Wes is survived by his beautiful wife, Helen Cowley; his children, Deanna Cowley, Amanda Venturino (John Venturino), Chris Mirto (Kevin Duchon) and their son Lysander; and his parents, Andy and Gloria Cowley.

He leaves behind countless friends, coworkers, fellow ironworkers, and mentees whose lives he touched and whose journeys he helped shape. His impact cannot be measured by a list of names—it lives in the people he loved, the things he built, and the memories that will continue long after him.

Wes was a one-of-a-kind son, husband, dad, grandpa, and friend. The world is a little less bright without him in it.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Wednesday, August 26, at Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home in Centreville, Maryland. The Masonic Ceremony will begin promptly at 4:00 p.m., followed immediately by the Celebration of Life service.

Upcoming Events

Memorial Gathering

AUG **26**. 4:00 PM (ET)

Centreville Location
408 South Liberty Street
Centreville, MD 21617
(410) 758-1151
info@fhfuneralhome.com

Tribute Wall

CB

“ *My prayers are with the families and friends that got to know and work with Wes. I worked with him and good guy that will be missed by many.*

Carlos Brooks - August 05 at 05:57 AM

PR

“ *Knew Wes as a fellow ironworker and british motorcycle enthusiast. My condolences to the Cowleys.*

Pat Rogers - August 01 at 11:15 AM

BF

“ *Brenda & Jaime Fornos lit a candle in memory of John "Wes" Wesley Cowley*



Brenda & Jaime Fornos - July 31 at 05:00 PM

PF

“ *Our deepest condolences to Andy, Glorya, Helen, and all of Wes's loved ones left to mourn. Each of you is in our thoughts and prayers.*

Sincerely, Ed and Penny

Penny Finkner - July 30 at 05:01 PM

SA

“ So sorry Helen and family! He was a gracious man, loved when he was Dickens and made popcorn. He was a true gentleman! Our Condolences!



Sharon Goss and Andrew - July 30 at 04:18 PM

LI

“ Blessings, I recall it was sleeting in Annapolis, we were on the bikes. Wes's decided to break down on the Severn River bridge! Pick up, tie downs and hands to get it in the truck appeared! East bound and down we went! Blessings Andy and Gloria and as always 🐸 (Fully Rely on God)

Linda - July 30 at 11:33 AM

LF

“ Lloyd & Lois Farber lit a candle in memory of John "Wes" Wesley Cowley



Lloyd & Lois Farber - July 29 at 05:51 PM

EH

“ Wes and I came in to the ironworkers local 16 in 1999 we drove together for years we had lots of laughs together we went through divorce, child births, and lots of traffic on the bay bridge he was my shrink and I was his, my good buddy Wes (HEADJOB) will never be forgotten im gonna miss his smile and laughs rip my freind you were a true freind to me ,love you brother

Ed Hartle - July 29 at 11:26 AM

KP

“ Keith & Kim Parkerson lit a candle in memory of John "Wes" Wesley Cowley



Keith & Kim Parkerson - July 29 at 08:51 AM

AC

“ ANNMARIE COLE lit a candle in memory of John "Wes" Wesley Cowley



ANNMARIE COLE - July 29 at 08:51 AM

AC

“ Wes always had the biggest smile no matter what. He sat in back of me at Church. He's with our Lord now and not suffering. Praying for peace for his family.

ANNMARIE COLE - July 29 at 08:51 AM

MA

“ Mary Ann lit a candle in memory of John "Wes" Wesley Cowley



Mary Ann - July 29 at 08:50 AM

“ I Miss Ya Already !!!!!!! Till We Ride Again On The " Big Job "!!!! But
....., It Still Hurts !!!!!!! Danny " zeal"""" 🙏🏿👤📱💔🚩🔪

daniel zealberg - July 28 at 03:01 PM

“ I Miss Ya Already !!!!!!! Till We Ride Again On The " Big Job "!!!! But
....., It Still Hurts !!!!!!! Danny " zeal"""" 🙏🏿👤📱💔🚩🔪

daniel zealberg - July 28 at 03:01 PM