



Rickey Owen Sowards

May 11, 1964 - March 26, 2026

Rickey Owen Sowards, 61, of Pound, Virginia, passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, March 26, 2026, at Pikeville Medical Center following a sudden illness with his Wife and Daughter by his side.

Rickey was born in Jenkins, Kentucky, the son of the late Doyle B. and Cordelia R. Sowards. After living in North Carolina briefly he returned to Pound Virginia where he started his own family.

Rickey lived his life with a deep passion for so many things. From playing the guitars and drums, listening to rock and roll, taking a ride down the mountain on his dirt bike and popping some wheelies, to being outside in his favorite time of year, mushroom season.

As a young man, he proudly played in the Pound High School marching band, an experience that sparked a lifelong love for music of all genres—especially rock and roll. He found great joy in playing his guitars and drums and listening to hard rock on the radio.

Rickey was well known for his work as a skilled tile man, always taking pride in his craftsmanship and giving his best to every home and project he touched. He had one of the biggest hearts around, extending kindness not only to people but also to animals and nature. He dearly loved his dogs and

had a soft spot for any creature in need. Rickey loved being outside, whether it was riding his dirt bike and popping wheelies, or taking a hike in the mountains hunting for Mushrooms and Arrow Heads. Some of his favorite memories were on his dirt bike with his nephew Jason and son Corbin. When he was riding all his worries went away.

You could always find him outside or in the mountains somewhere on a pretty day.

His love for his family and his dogs was undeniable, and he cared for them with the same nurturing spirit he carried throughout his life. Rickey was a devoted Husband and father, doing for his family brought him so much joy. He was so excited to become a papaw and welcome his granddaughter into the world.

He will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved him. Though he is gone, his life and the memories he created will live on forever.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brothers, Danny and David Sowards; father-in-law, Joe Cantrell; brother-in-law, Tim Cantrell; and special friends, Michael Pritchard and Nicky Bolling.

Left to cherish his memory and carry on his legacy are his wife, Melissa Sowards; daughters, Kady Sowards (Aftan Fleming) and Amber Shackelford (Sam); aunt, Phyllis Slone; brothers, Burley Sowards and Lenville (Lois) Sowards; sister, Tammy (Gus) Addington; nieces and nephews, Beth, Jason (Erica), Terry (Jamie), Jacob, Jessica, David Wayne, Monica, Becky, Pam, Wendy, Josh, and Tiffany; and cousin, David (Amy) Hilton.

Rickey loved Melissa's family like his very own; helping to influence their lives all while taking every chance to snuggle the babies that came along with

them. Also left to cherish his memory are his brother-in-law, Anthony (Vivian) Cantrell and son Justin; sister-in-law, Jeanette Cantrell and son Evan; sister-in-law, Michelle Cantrell and sons, Jamie and J.R.; nieces, Brandy Moon and Jessie Akers; and nephew, Josh Taylor.

Rickey was not only a husband and father, he was a friend to so many. His closest friends were never far away - Steven (Beaver) Dingus, Richard (Wedge) Hodges, Jimmy Mullins, Mike Robinson, David Whitt, and Vince (VT) Boggs. Along with several other close family members and friends, we all know Rickey was loved by many.

The family is planning a celebration of life on Saturday, April 4th at 1:30 at the flag rock pavilion A&B, please come join them as they honor Ricky's life.

Tribute Wall

DM

“ *Delores Murray lit a candle in memory of Rickey Owen Sowards*



Delores murray - April 03 at 06:18 PM

JB

“ *I knew every one of the Sowards brothers & thought the world of them all.
Prayers of comfort for the entire family.*

Joe Baker - April 02 at 08:17 PM

WS

Remember that little boy and all the times visiting g in pound and up here in Pennsylvania. So sorry for the loss of a beautiful cousin. RIP

Wanda Sizemore Simon - April 04 at 08:28 AM

DB

“ *Rickey was a very special person. If you knew Rickey, you know he loved nature, animals and more than anything, his wife and daughters (and the new grandbaby on the way). Rickey lived life to his own tune, easy and calm. He was a good friend to Tim and myself. He always shared his nature's bounty with us every spring. My memory of Rickey will always be him waiting for Melissa after a trip, anxious for her to get home and waiting for her with Stevie on his lap every time. I know Rickey is with the Lord now and they are walking in the heavenly woods together sharing stories. Prayers of comfort, strength and healing in the days ahead for Melissa and Kady. 🙏*

Dottie Blanken - April 01 at 10:11 AM

SR

“ *Melissa,*

I am so sorry for your loss. I know this is such a difficult time for you and the girls. You are all in my thoughts and prayers. I love you all.

Sherry Ring

Sherry Ring - March 31 at 10:42 AM