



Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel

June 24, 2000 - July 5, 2023

Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel, 23, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and formerly of Wapakoneta, Ohio, came into this world, imbued with energy and destined to help anyone in need, on June 24, 2000, in Lima, Ohio, to Mike and Tammy (Sutton) Gegel; he was born ready for a Pepsi, mac and cheese, King's Hawaiian Rolls, Oreos, and brownies. Austin departed this earthly life on July 5 while on vacation at one of his favorite places on earth, Camp Arcadia in Arcadia, Michigan, surrounded by his girlfriend Emily, and his family. This world has lost a beautiful soul and a loving boyfriend, son, brother, nephew, grandson, and friend.

Austin deeply loved nature and being outside – almost as much as he loved Emily. He enjoyed collecting bugs, catching snakes, and all animals. Austin had such a tender heart that he would gently escort the largest of spiders out of the house rather than killing it. A wolf at a sanctuary once accepted Austin into its pack by wrapping its jaws around Austin's throat three times. Austin knew exactly what the wolf was doing, and found it incredibly exciting.

If something needed to be done, Austin would find a way to do it, like turning the TV on by poking his finger inside the TV after the power button had fallen in (not necessarily a good idea), or fixing anything with a screwdriver. Austin was always best friends with his siblings, and never the much younger brother "pest" that got into everything.

Austin enjoyed playing Pokémon with anyone he could, reading Manga, and watching anime. Austin and Emily were also enjoying learning to cook together.

Austin was brave and unafraid, watching the doctor stitch his finger at age eight after cutting it on a can lid. While in college, Austin climbed a tree to get to a certain kind of snake, accidentally bumping the snake off the branch and seeing it land around his professor's neck, and he walked on "Top of the World" in NYC.

Austin graduated with honors from Wapakoneta High School in 2019, where he was a proud member of the track team, running hurdles, relays, and other events; participated in WHS choral programs and musicals; became a VFW Voice of Democracy award recipient; and, being very passionate about Greek, Roman, and Norse mythology, earned a bronze medal on the Medusa Mythology Exam. For ten years, Austin was a dance student at the Dance Centré in Wapak, studying lyrical, jazz, and tap. Austin had also been a member of the St. John's 4-Hers, was in several Encore Theatre productions in Lima, and had worked at the KOA Campground in Wapak.

While attending Eastern Michigan University, Austin worked as a resident advisor, drove for DoorDash and Lyft, and worked for the Northville Parks and Recreation Department in the summer. Austin graduated cum laude from EMU in December of 2022 with a Bachelor of Science in biology and a minor in zoology, hoping to be the next Jack Hanna. He then began working for the Creature Conservancy in Ann Arbor and the Northville Parks and Recreation Department.

Austin is survived by his college sweetheart and the love of his life, Emily Smith, of Toledo, Ohio; parents, Mike and Tammy Gegel of Wapakoneta; sister, Tori (Cretora) Gegel of Kettering, Ohio; sister and brother-in-law, Salon and Edward Gegel-Long of Decatur, Alabama; brother and sister-in-law, Cedric Gegel and Sarah Fryman of Bayonne, NJ; paternal grandmother, Eunice Gegel, of Baldwin, IL; and many uncles, aunts, cousins, and friends galore!

Austin was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, Chuck and Glenna Sutton, and a paternal grandfather, Kenneth Gegel.

Austin was a wild, weird, and wonderful soul!

Funeral services will be 3:00 p.m., Sun. July 16, 2023, at the Eley Funeral Home & Crematory, St. Rt. 501, Wapakoneta, with Pastor Grant Eckhart officiating. The family will receive friends 3-8 p.m., Sat. July 15, and 1-3 p.m., Sun. at the funeral home. Memorial contributions may be made to the EMU Department of Biology, Columbus Zoo, and Toledo Zoo Conservation (donations designated to Wild Toledo and butterfly habitats). Condolences may be expressed at www.eleyfuneralhomeandcrematory.com. The service will be live-streamed on the Eley Funeral Home & Crematory Facebook page.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 15. 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Eley Funeral Home & Crematory
1102 Lincoln Hwy
Wapakoneta, OH 45895
(419) 738-7676
eleyfuneralhome@gmail.com
<https://www.eleyfuneralhomeandcrematory.com/>

Visitation

JUL 16. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Eley Funeral Home & Crematory
1102 Lincoln Ave.
Wapakoneta, OH 45895
eleyfuneralhome@gmail.com
<http://www.eleyfuneralhomeandcrematory.com>

Service

JUL 16. 3:00 PM (ET)

Eley Funeral Home & Crematory
1102 Lincoln Ave.
Wapakoneta, OH 45895
eleyfuneralhome@gmail.com
<http://www.eleyfuneralhomeandcrematory.com>

Tribute Wall

LI

“ I didn't know Austin... but one thing I do know is how much his father loves him... I had a brief interaction with Mike and could tell right away from the conversation we had how much his son means to him.. may Gods strength, love, and peace continue to fill and cover him and his loved ones.

lite - April 10 at 11:17 PM

DA

“ My name is Damien, I had the pleasure of meeting Austin for two of my summer classes. He was a literal beam of sunshine and made everyone so happy no matter how early in the morning it was. Afterwards, he would always say hi to me because we both lived in Cornell. Just the happiest guy I've ever met. I am so so sorry for your loss.

damien - August 20, 2023 at 12:46 PM

TG

Thank you for sharing!

Tammy Gegel - October 12, 2023 at 08:03 AM

JM

“ Our thoughts are with the Gegel family & all of Austins friends & the many people & animals lives he touched. We've made a donation to the Toledo Zoo butterfly habitats in Austins name.

Jamie Maynard - July 23, 2023 at 08:24 AM

DE

“ Dear Cedric, Sarah, Emily and family,
Please accept our sincere condolences of the passing of Austin. His name will be lifted up in prayer at Zion Lutheran Church, Spring City. We're so sorry for your loss. Zion Worship and Music Committee, Lori, Peg & Don, Beverly, Tony, Brian, Heather & Kirsten.

Dick Eley - July 16, 2023 at 01:35 PM

LH

“ My deepest sympathy and condolences to the entire Gegel family. Love is itself a legacy. Your family radiated a love to all. I hope that love gives you strength in the days ahead. I am holding you in my heart and my peaceful thoughts. All my love, Linda Haycock

Linda Haycock - July 16, 2023 at 01:06 PM

AF

“ Alice F. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.

Alice F. - July 15, 2023 at 11:38 PM

TC

“ The Worship and Music Committee, The Zion Lutheran Church planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.

The Worship and Music Committee, The Zion Lutheran Church - July 15, 2023 at 11:33 PM

BP

“ I never met Austin, so it might seem odd that I'm commenting - it's odd to me as well since I've never done this on a stranger's memorial page. However, I HAVE met his sweet, funny, delightful sister Tori on several occasions. As such, I offer sincere condolences to Tori, Austin's parents and other siblings, his girlfriend, and countless loved ones on the loss of someone who sounds like an incredible, unique soul. The poignancy of his obituary touched me deeply, and the humorous memories made me smile, but most of all, it made me think, "Wow, I wish I had known this man." I am left with the impression that though the length of his life was far too brief, the magnitude to which he lived it was immense. There are so few such shining stars on this earth; losing one of them leaves the world a little less bright. It's obvious that Austin left an indelible mark on everyone whose lives were graced, enriched, blessed, and divinely favored by his presence. I wish you all solace, peace, and healing to your heavy hearts.

Belinda M. Paschal - July 15, 2023 at 02:53 PM

PH

“ Our deepest sympathy to your family. Peggy, Kol and J. C. Hunter

Peggy Hunter - July 15, 2023 at 08:56 AM

NJ

“ Nicki J. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.

Nicki J. - July 14, 2023 at 02:45 PM

JC

“ I am sorry to all the gegel family. I met Austin through show choir as our daughter Haley was in and the same grade. One year we took Austin to the Allen County Fair. And I fell down and he was just Beside himself that he didn't catch me. What an amazing young man. Jennifer and Travis Campbell

Jennifer Campbell - July 14, 2023 at 01:20 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.



July 13, 2023 at 08:59 PM

WD

“ Dear Mike and Tammy, we started teaching at Wapakoneta together back in 1987 and my wife, Ann, and I saw your love grow and your family grew over the years. Our hearts are full of sorrow for you and your lovely family, I pray God gives your the strength and comfort to get through these terrible days and bring you comfort that Austin is in Heaven with our Loving Lord. Bill Dellinger

William Dellinger - July 13, 2023 at 08:49 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.

July 12, 2023 at 03:53 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.



July 12, 2023 at 03:53 PM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with the Gegel family and Emily during this difficult time. " the life of the one we love is never lost its influence goes on through all the lives it ever touched " Christopher Halloway.

Wiesenmayer Family

Shirley Wiesenmayer - July 12, 2023 at 09:03 AM



“ Michelle L. purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.



Michelle L. - July 11, 2023 at 05:02 PM



“ Pat, Beverly. Stephen, Brandon, Angel planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.

Pat, Beverly. Stephen, Brandon, Angel - July 11, 2023 at 03:09 PM

PA

“ Pat, Beverly. Stephen, Brandon, Angel purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.



Pat, Beverly. Stephen, Brandon, Angel - July 11, 2023 at 03:09 PM

MA

“ I am so sorry to hear of your loss. The loving tribute written about Austin is a testimony to his character and spirit. He accomplished much, and touched many in his all-to-brief time. May his joy of nature and life continue among those who knew him. Please accept our prayers for him and your family.

Michael Angell - July 11, 2023 at 10:07 AM



“ Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.



July 10, 2023 at 09:59 PM

BS

“ I am so sorry to hear about Austin, keeping you all in my thoughts and prayers.

Barb Srisongkham - July 10, 2023 at 07:14 PM

CF

“ Sorry to hear the news on Austin's passing may God hold you all in his loving arms . Keeping the family in thoughts an prayers

Casey an Lisa Allison family - July 10, 2023 at 04:38 PM



“ Love's Journey was purchased for the family of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.



July 10, 2023 at 02:58 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.

July 10, 2023 at 02:58 PM

CF

“ Our deepest sympathies Tammy, Mike, and family! Austin was such a vibrant young man! We have fond memories of him coming to ask for Mini Melts Ice Cream at the ShowChoir Contest! We are across the country or we would definitely be there to give you hugs! Roger & Cindy Ferguson
❤️🙏



Cynthia Ferguson - July 10, 2023 at 01:22 PM

TG

Thank you!
Austin sure loved to come see you guys!

Tammy Gegel - September 04, 2023 at 01:43 PM

DD

“ *Dave-Deb, Liz-Jayne, Dan-Casey purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.*



Dave-Deb, Liz-Jayne, Dan-Casey - July 10, 2023 at 12:39 PM

BK

“ *Brent K. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.*

Brent K. - July 10, 2023 at 12:31 PM

TR

“ *The Juarez Family & Betty Root purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.*



The Juarez Family & Betty Root - July 10, 2023 at 12:15 PM



“ We met at college. I was in a few biology courses with Austin, we worked at the same housing complex and we worked on a project about michigan butterflies together for a few months. I’m generally a shy person, but talking to Austin was easy- you quickly felt like you’d known eachother for years. I was really grateful to have met such a welcoming person like Austin. We laughed a lot together, and Austin was eager to engage in the many nerdy biology conversations I couldn’t have with many others. Austin, I am grateful for the kindness you showed me and the time we spent together, I am sorry we couldn’t have had more. I hope you are resting peacefully. I also hope Austin’s family and loved ones find peace and healing.

Ray Tabor - July 10, 2023 at 11:23 AM

TG

Thank you Ray. Austin spoke of you a few times. He appreciated your conversations too!

Tammy Gegel - September 04, 2023 at 01:45 PM

CT

“ I was Austin’s 2nd grade teacher. He was such a kind, happy soul as a child that apparently continued into his adult life. Every time I saw Austin he had a smile on his face. My heart breaks for all of his family and friends. He will be missed in this world.
Mrs Chris Talowsky

Chris Talowsky - July 10, 2023 at 12:47 AM

TG

Thank you for sharing your memories of Austin. Yes he is missed by many.

Tammy Gegel - August 22, 2023 at 11:41 AM



“ Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.



July 09, 2023 at 10:11 PM



“ My heart is with the Gegel family in this difficult time. Hoping for peace and healing. - Angeline



Angeline - July 09, 2023 at 09:16 PM



Thank you. Every bit helps.

Tammy Gegel - August 22, 2023 at 11:42 AM



“ I'm Ashley Sacha (mom) she was Austin best friend at EMU and after he graduated still remained good friends. Our family sends our condolences and sympathy to Austin girlfriend Emily and Austin parents and family. We will miss hearing stories about Austin or all the help he did for our daughter Ashley. May he rest in eternal peace. From Elizabeth and Chris Timmer and my mom Judy Sacha



Elizabeth Timmer - July 09, 2023 at 04:46 PM

TG

Thank you for your kind words. You have made this journey a bit easier.

Tammy Gegel - August 22, 2023 at 11:43 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Austin Kenneth Charles Gegel.

July 09, 2023 at 04:22 PM

KL

“ Karen L. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Austin Gegel.

Karen L. - July 09, 2023 at 09:56 AM