



Sgt. Class James Priestap

November 23, 1967 - November 23, 2006

HARDWOOD - Sgt. First Class James Priestap, 39, of Hardwood, went to be with Jesus in heaven on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 23, 2006.

He was born on June 2, 1967, in Royal Oak, lower Michigan.

James was a resident of the Foster City area since 1970 and graduated from North Dickinson High School in 1985. He attended Ferris State and NMU. He was a substitute teacher at several schools. He joined the U.S. Navy and was a rescue swimmer and a fireman in damage control maintenance. He received special honors for his heroic efforts for removing an individual from a blazing fire. Jim also served as a specialist in chemical and biological warfare.

Young boys and girls have dreams of becoming a policeman, fireman, pilot, diver, welder, sailor or soldier. Jim Priestap was each one of these and more. His career included work as a deputy in Sarasota, Fla., a police officer at the Iron Mountain Veteran's Administration Medical Center, and a deputy for the Dickinson County Sheriff's Department. He also served to support Hurricane Katrina victims. Jim also enjoyed hunting.

He married Constance Harder on June 11, 1994, in Felch.

He is survived by his wife, Constance; his son, Brody and his daughter,

Franchesca; his guardian son, Josh Headford; his parents, Roy and Denise Forstrom of Foster City and James and Patrice Robinson of North Carolina; his grandmother, Helen Mattson of Felch; his brothers, Allen (Renee) Forstrom of Felch, Troy (Joanne) Forstrom of Lunenburg, Mass. and Rich Robinson of Florida; his sisters, Lisa (Mark) Balicki of Iron Mountain and Janet (Rodney) Anderson of Norway; his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Douglas and Emmy Lou Harder of Felch; Connie's seven sisters, Kelly (Jim) Challancin of Felch, Kim (Chris) Colavecchi of Iron Mountain, Candie (Kevin) Colavecchi (Connie's twin sister) of Iron Mountain, Katie (Abe) Lewis of Iron Mountain, Karen (Brad) Ellis of Iron Mountain, Cassie Harder and (fiance, Peter Rittenhouse) of Iron Mountain, and Corrie (Dean) Ellis of Orlando, Fla., many aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Visitation will be held on Sunday from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Kingsford Armory.

There will also be a visitation on Monday, from 11 a.m. to 12 noon at the Kingsford Armory. Funeral services will be held on Monday at 12 noon at the Kingsford Armory. Pastor Terry Priestap, James' uncle, will officiate with Pastor Carl Hammer.

Burial, with full military honors, will be in the Foster City Cemetery.

Honorary pallbearers will be Jim Challancin, Jon Wagner, Allen Forstrom, Troy Forstrom, Rodney Anderson, Mark Balicki, Rich Robinson, Josh Headford, Mike Mooney, Tony Cousineau, Peter Rittenhouse, Abe Lewis, Chris Colavecchi, Kevin Colavecchi, Brad Ellis, Dean Ellis, Paul Holton, Matt Pacino, Steve Romatz, Dennis Romatz, Dennis Goovert, James Mather, and Robert Rosales.

Flowers will be accepted or memorials may be made to the Sgt. James

Priestap Memorial Trust Fund at either First National Bank and Trust of Iron Mountain at 231 S. Stephenson Ave. Iron Mountain, MI 49801 or the Range Bank of Kingsford at 345 Carpenter Ave. Kingsford, Michigan, 49802.

Condolences may be expressed to the family of Sgt. First Class James Priestap online at www.ernashfuneralhomes.com.

The family has entrusted the Erickson-Rochon and Nash Funeral Home of Iron Mountain with the funeral arrangements.

Tribute Wall

BB

“*Wow I just recently readied that you where gone. After living over sea in japan for 19 years the states was very distance to me. I remember the fun times together in chem warfare working and joking help each other make it thru our first tour. It so hard to believe you are gone. Countless time you pop in my mine and would go searching for you on the internet. I still have the pic of you posing in uniform like some GQ model. Bro you are the best Navy brother a man could have deeply and forever miss*

brian godsey - ellicott, MD - navy brother - January 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM

GA

“*You will never be forgotten SFC Priestap.*

<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=oa.10150437448803264>

Greg Peterson - Negaunee, MI - Thankful American - December 17, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MT

“*My condolences to all his family. Jim was in my platoon at one point at the 46th. He was an amazing soldier and person. I remember telling him that he could be running that unit no problem, as he had so many natural leadership abilities. People like Jim make everything easier for everyone else. I pray his family is doing well, and that they can know that he will NEVER be forgotten by so many.*

Michael Gendreau - Kingsford, MI - National Guard service together - September 15, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ *Connie, It wasnt until I ran into you at Subway a couple of weeks ago then saw an article in the Daily news that I put all of the pieces together. I am so completely sorry for your loss. I hope as time has passed you have begun to heal. God Bless.*

Sarah

Sarah (Rogers) McCord - May 30, 2007 at 12:00 AM

PP

“ *I worked with Jim and Patrice at Kingston High School in 1974-75. I'm very, very sorry to hear of your loss. Please remember that we are proud and grateful for the great sacrifice your family has given us.*

Peggy Bluemer Pavlik - December 28, 2006 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ *Connie and family- My deepest sympathy goes out to you and your family during this time of loss! May God bless you with strength, courage, and peace to get you through this difficult time. You are all in my thoughts and prayers.....LOVE ALWAYS, Jackie*

Jackie Sundholm - December 10, 2006 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ *We wish to extend our deepest sympathy to the family of James Priestap on your great loss. Jim?s courage and devotion to duty are truly to be honored, and his sacrifice in defense of our country must never be forgotten. Our own son, Joseph Blake, was killed in action in Afghanistan in August, 2006. We share your grief and sorrow at this time, and our prayers are with you.*

Doug & Joann Blake - December 07, 2006 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ Dear Connie,
My thoughts and prayers are with you, your children and your entire family. I can't find words sincere enough to express how very sorry I am for your loss. I didn't know your husband, I do know you and some of your sisters along with Rodney and Janet and I just had to let you know this very sad time is being shared with our family and we have you in our prayers. Again, my deepest sympathy to you.
God Bless.

Sincerely,

Missy (Dierkens) Spade and Family

Missy Spade - December 06, 2006 at 12:00 AM

KF

“ I am so sorry to hear of the tragedy that your family is having to experience. I also want to extend my thanks for your husband's sacrifice for our country. Please know that you and your family will forever be in our prayers and thoughts. May God Bless you all!!!

Kelly Laurila & Family - December 05, 2006 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ Connie and the Priestap family. I was shocked and saddened to hear of Jim's death. A great man was taken from us far too soon. I think back to all the nights carpooling to work with Jim in Sarasota and how much fun he was to be around. I can't remember ever seeing him in a bad mood. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers. Your tears now are tears of sadness and pain but when you are reunited with Jim one day they will be tears of joy.
Rest easy Jim you earned it. Jim Shields

Jim Shields - December 05, 2006 at 12:00 AM

RN

“ Connie and the rest of the Priestap family...

I knew Jim when I was the President of the NMU Rugby Club of which he was also a strong and loyal member...as well as a great player. He was as good a friend as he was an athlete and a leader, which is really saying something. All of the NMU Rugby alumni are saddened by your loss and we express our sincere condolences. I think you will be hearing from some of them directly so I will end with this personal note...I will miss Jim and I will always remember him as a great friend and a hero.

Rick Niedt - December 05, 2006 at 12:00 AM

FF

“ your husband was a hero and he fought for me and my family well and meny other may god be with you and your family

from the maynard family - December 05, 2006 at 12:00 AM

BM

“ Connie and Family- When I heard of your loss, my heart sank. Although Jim was only an acquaintance of mine, I know of many people who truly respected him. I know there are no words that I can say to make this experience less difficult for you, but I am sincerely very sorry for your loss. I hope and pray that your amazing family, faith in God, and support of everyone around you will help you get through this tragic time. You're in my thoughts and prayers-
Betsy Miller

Betsy Miller - December 05, 2006 at 12:00 AM

JK

“*Connie and family, you do not know me, however, I worked with Jim at the Sarasota Sheriff's Office. I am so sorry to hear about you and your family's loss! Jim was a great man and an inspiration to be around. although I have never met you, I have heard alot about you through Jim, I do know Jim was extremely proud of his family and shared that with his friends and co-workers. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. Be strong knowing Jim is in a better place. Sincerely, John Kranz*

John Kranz - December 05, 2006 at 12:00 AM

DH

“ Dear Connie, Brody & Francheska,
We were very sad to hear of Jim's death. Although we have never met, we have been thinking of you and praying for you since we heard the news.

We remember Jim from our time in Foster City, serving the Covenant Church. Jim & his sister Lisa were part of the confirmation class of 1983. It was a large class (my first confirmation class as a pastor), but a fun group. Jim was pretty quiet & reserved in class, but on his face, I would often see that smile of his and the twinkle in his eye. The classwork was pretty demanding & it wasn't real easy for Jim, but that didn't stop him from working hard and giving it his best.

Right now, it is very hard to know what to say. Words feel so inadequate in the face of your loss. We will offer the words of a song by Michael Kelly Blanchard, called "To a Broken God". It's a prayer to God from someone else who was hurting:

"Didn't see You there, didn't know You were weeping, too. I think of tears as a human wound; Though of course You care, You have shown You were human, too. They say You cried at Lazarus' tomb.

"I was unaware how it is with a broken God,
I thought of You as above my pain; Lost in despair, so it is with a broken heart,

I never dreamed You could feel the same. ...

"Some say You're not there, just a myth for a lazy life, an artifact from an ancient scroll.

But I have known You near in the gift of a weary sigh, Lord of the lost and the lonesome soul.

"I was unaware how it is with a broken God,
I never dreamed You could feel the same."

With all our love & prayers for you and your family, Dave & Mary Hagen

David & Mary Hagen - December 04, 2006 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ To the Priestap Family: we did not know your Jim but our son, Jim, has told us that they carpooled to work together here in Sarasota and that he was one of the nicest people he had ever known and a good man. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

Lynn and Jim Shields - December 04, 2006 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ Dear Connie and Family, All I want to say, is how TRULY SORRY Kevin and I are for the loss of your Husband Jim, your Best Friend Jim, and your Lover Jim! Like the words from the song said at the services, "My Best Friend", is such a perfect song! I just want you to know that we will always be there for you and your family! God love you, watch over and guide you and yours! You will always be in our prayers! With love always, Kevin and Missy

Missy Sundholm - December 04, 2006 at 12:00 AM

JE

“ Dear Connie & family. Words fail to extend our heartfelt wishes for you at this terrible time.
Altho Jim made the ultimate sacrifice for his country and us, and proved himself a great hero, does not mean he is gone, he will live on in the hearts of all who knew and loved him and also to all of us who will cherish his memory forever.
May God bless all of you. Our thoughts and prayers are with you always.
Our heartfelt sympathy to you.
John & Deanna Ebertsch

John & Deanna Ebertsch - December 04, 2006 at 12:00 AM

KM

“ Dear Jesus, please give me words...Dear sweet Connie and you beautiful Children, I am so sorry, I am so, so sorry that your Daddy cannot be here to hold you though this time. I do not believe that I have been so blessed as to meet you Connie, or your wonderful babes, but I have had the pleasure of meeting your sister Kelly. My heart cries for you, and I know as I am sure You do also, that your Sweet Husband is dancing on streets of Gold at this very moment! Words fail me, please be blessed, be held and may you all feel the very arms of Jesus as He carries you on, until you will be face to face once again with your beloved. In Him, Kim

Kim Massicotte - December 04, 2006 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ Dearest Connie and family, There are no words or expression of thoughts to define what you are going through. But, know this, you and Jim are loved by all you have come in contact with and always will be. Your never ending endeavors to make others happy and safe will ALWAYS be remembered and cherished, this will carry through your children. You have given the greatest sacrifice for our country. God Bless you all. Love, Susan

Susan & Rudy Mashak - December 04, 2006 at 12:00 AM

JA

“ Dear Priestap Family,
We don't know you. We learned of James' death in Gov. Granholm's press release. We found your local newspaper through a Google search so we could put a face to his name. Please accept our humble condolences. We have prayed that God would bless you, fill up the hole left in your hearts, and ultimately receive Glory through all of you. We're glad that James knew the Lord.
With Love, The Adams Family, Dearborn, Mi.

John M. Adams - December 04, 2006 at 12:00 AM

SL

“ Dear Connie: Our family was devastated by the news of your terrible loss. Friends don't always live next door but even though miles away you and your wonderful and strong family are in our thoughts and prayers. God Bless you all. We love you.
Sandy and Lew (Jeff his family and Rick Laade)

Sandy Laade & Lew - December 03, 2006 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ Connie and family, please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers. I know there are no words that can bring comfort during this time of sorrow. The only comfort we have is knowing that someday we will be reunited in Heaven. God bless you all!

Melanie Standifer - December 03, 2006 at 12:00 AM

WA

“ Our family sends condolences to Jims family during this hard time, I knew Jim for sometime having the honor to serve with him as my squad leader and platoon SGT. Jim was one great person to be around and to serve with. His always go and upbeat attitude of all that he did I will always remember. God Bless
April and Whitney Lessor

Whitney and April - December 03, 2006 at 12:00 AM

SD

“ Dear Connie, Brody, and Franchesca and family -

Since the day I heard about your precious husband and daddy, I have had you on my mind and most importantly in my prayers MANY, MANY times throughout each and every day.

I wish there was something that I could say or do to make things easier for you all. Please know that there are MANY people lifting you all up in our prayers and sending our love to you all.

I have a card I will be sending...I would have been at the armory tonight to give you my support and love, but my youngest son is very ill at this time.

Please just know that my love and prayers will continue to be sent your way throughout the months to come. May you find comfort in knowing that your precious husband and daddy Jim is with our Heavenly Father watching over you! Remember Brody and Franchesca, you are an extension of your daddy...he is so very proud of you and will always be with you!

God Bless!

With my love and prayers -

Shari Doucette

Shari Doucette - December 03, 2006 at 12:00 AM

TQ

“ To Connie & Family: We are very sorry to hear of your loss . Our heart goes out to you and your family. We did not personally know Jim ,but we know he is a true American Hero. May GOD bless you through this difficult time.

Tom & Kelly Quick - December 03, 2006 at 12:00 AM

WG

“ To our old friends, Denise Goovert Priestap Forstrom and Jim Priestap Robinson...and of course to your loving partners, Roy and Patrice as well,

We are so saddened to hear of the loss of your fine, strong, beautiful son, Jim. Our hearts reach out to you over the miles and years that lie between us. Words cannot express our feelings for you and yours at this difficult time.

Denise and Jim, We remember well the little boy, Jimmy and his sweet sister, Lisa all those years ago in lower Michigan when we were youngsters ourselves...and on the amazing journey as we helped you move to the U.P. so long ago. You were the friends with children; we still had none. Denise, you were the good friend in college who helped Wayne so much as you both strived to survive student teaching in Dearborn. Jim you became a friend through our friendship with Denise in similar, difficult times after you returned from another war in another far off place.

Please know our thoughts are with you at this incredibly sad time in your lives. Our thoughts too go out to Jim's young wife and two children. We've never met.

Please know your friends remember you and we send our love.

Wayne and Yvonne Greene in Slaton, Texas

Wayne & Yvonne Greene - December 02, 2006 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ Our condolences go out to you and your children. My husband & son are in the National Guard and they serve with honor as your husband did. Even though I did not know you husband he sounded like a great guy. Our thoughts and prayers go out to you and your entire family. I pray we get out of Iraq soon, so we don't lose anymore soldiers. May you look back on all your good memories and happy times to help you through the rough days ahead.

Sincerely

*CSM Michael Floriano 107th Eng. &
Debbie Floriano*

CSM Mike Floriano/Debbie Floriano - December 02, 2006 at 12:00 AM

TM

“ I am so sorry to hear about your loss. I know that no words that anybody can say will ever take the pain away. My fiance is Tony Bourassa and he is over in Iraq where your husband was. He talks about what I great guy and a great leader he was. He will always be a hero. My deepest sympathy to you and your family. I will keep you all in my prayers.

Tracy McKnight - December 02, 2006 at 12:00 AM

KD

“ Jim,

I was shocked when my father (Dick Dabb) called me at 0630 the Monday after and told me what happened. He and all the guys at the V.A. are still in shock. And so am I. I stopped by to see you last year at the V.A., but you were off. I talked to Clawson about old times and thought how little we change. I am deeply saddened by your tragic and untimely death, but confident that you are in a better place. May GOD be with your family and keep them strong. I talked to one of the 46th guys in Iraq on Tuesday and he said they are all in shock, but driving on with the mission. Being a cop, I have lost four good friends the last five years...and it has been difficult learning of what happened to you. Just know that you will always live on in our memories and I hope to see you again!!!

Your friend,

*Dep. Kurt Dabb Pima County (Tucson, Az) Sheriff's Department
Formerly SSG Kurt Dabb of the 46th MP Co.*

Kurt Dabb - December 02, 2006 at 12:00 AM

ML

“*Connie, Franchesca, Brody, Josh, & Jims entire family;
I know not how to express what I feel at this time, All I do know is that it is with heartfelt sorrow, that I say Thank You, and I pray that some day we will all understand why things like this have to happen to the Good People. You have suffered a great loss, and no matter how much we wish it, nothing will ever undo your pain (no matter how we try we will never really, truly feel the pain you and yours are enduring right now). However please know that we (I) will be here for you and yours always, no matter what. If there is anything, ANYTHING that I can do Please let me know. I (we) will never be able to express how grateful we are for people as selfish-less as Jim, he has been and always will be in my eyes a truley great loving, & compassionate person. Of the few times I have personaly spoken with Jim in the past few years I must say that he truley loved each and every one of you, when he spoke of his wife, children and family he had an unexplainabe twinkel in his eye, he was so proud of all of you. I will pray that none of you forget that.
With heartfelt sympathy. May the give of love & prayers from those who care help to ease your pain*

Marcie Jean Lucas - December 02, 2006 at 12:00 AM

BC

“ *Connie, Frankie, Brody & Josh:*

My condolences to you and your extended family. Sfc. Priestap as I knew him always had a smile on his face! I did not have the pleasure of working with him on a daily basis. However, the times we crossed paths he was always friendly. I had ran into him at the talk the last time we spoke and he had mentioned that you would be having an addition to your family. Josh he was very excited and talked about how Connie was getting ready to fix up his room and what not. He talked about having a teenager in the house and that he was looking forward to working on the farm with you Josh!

One night at surf and turf night I remember him saying to me " I feel guilty eating this good, you know how much you'd pay for this back home". I just laughed.

My first encounter with him on the shotgun range, at Camp Grayling, he was eager to help seeing how I struggled with holding the shotgun up and cocking it back!

I got a chance to get a picture of him before we did our 10mile run. I remember saying he was sore for days. I have that picture if you'd like a copy.

He will be missed! God Bless you and comfort you.

Sincerely,

Belinda Coronado

Belinda Coronado - December 02, 2006 at 12:00 AM

H(

“ *Dearest Connie,*

It is so hard to type this message; I wish I could be there in person to help you through your sorrow. My family and I are so saddened by your loss and wanted you to know that you and your family are in our prayers. We want to thank Jim for his dedication to protecting god?s family. All our love and strength, in god we trust.

Heather O'Connor

Heather O'Connor (Anderson) - December 02, 2006 at 12:00 AM

AP

“ Oh Honey Girl, This is such a sad sad thing to have to happen. I know you are going through so much right now and I know that the Lord is with you and the prayers of all your brothers and sisters in Christ are comforting you and the kids. Just know that if there were any way possible for us to be there we would. We just want to put our arms around you and let you feel the love we have for you. We are so very sorry for you and the kids. Jim shall be remembered forever, he was a good and faithful servant of the Lord, no greater is that than he laid down his life for us. Love You Auntie and Uncle Buddy and kids

Aunt Dawn, Uncle Buddy, Corey and Mad'e Jean Peacock - December 01, 2006 at 12:00 AM

TW

“ Connie & Family... You may not know who I am, my brother is Paul Holton, I just wanted to send my condolences to your and your family. I know Jim and Paul were great friends and he talked about him all the time. God bless you and I hope the support of your family and friends helps you get through this sad time.

Tracie Watts - December 01, 2006 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ Connie and family, our hearts go out to you. Jim was always willing to go that extra mile. Mark had asked him to speak at the Veterans Day ceremony in 2005 at the VA and I remember the three of us sitting in Mark's office and Jim saying "I am not much on making speeches, I am just going to express what is on my mind. I am a bit nervous." His "speech" was excellent. The veterans and guests enjoyed it very much. He is such a hero to us all and I know that we will never forget him even though we knew him for only a short time. Thank you for your sacrifice. Our deepest sympathy...Mark and Robbyn

Mark and Robbyn Frazee - December 01, 2006 at 12:00 AM

GG

“ *I wish to express my deepest sympathy at this most difficult time. My thoughts and prayers are with you and all of your family. May your deep faith in god give you strength.*

Gwen Lidbeck Goffard - December 01, 2006 at 12:00 AM

JD

“ *Dear Connie and Family,
We did not have the pleasure of knowing Jim but our son Joe is a member of his National Guard Unit and and spoke very highly of him. He called us today on the way to Iron Mountain to tell us about all the signs of support and prayers he saw along the way, we were moved to tears.
James is truly an American Hero- May God give you strength. You are in our thoughts and prayers.*

Jerry and Linda Duchon - December 01, 2006 at 12:00 AM

BP

“ *Connie:
My sincerest condolences on the loss of your husband and best friend. I wish we could be there for the services...but please know that I am there in spirit and have been thinking about you all week. Please know that all of our "down state" cousins have been emailing me, asking for contact information. They have been praying for you at church, at home, and even at work. My best friends at work, who have never met you or Jim, but many of whom have sons, daughters, and siblings overseas, have asked me to extend their sympathy. I will hope to see you and the kids when I come home for Christmas Eve.*

*All my love,
Cousin Betsy*

Betsy Sundholm & Derek Pogirski - December 01, 2006 at 12:00 AM

DJ

“ I'm so sorry for our loss. Jim was the best friend I had when I was in the Guard. I've been focusing on the many memories I have of our time with Jim, and I hope you will be able to do the same. Remember that the reason Jim's passing is such a tremendous loss to all of us is because he was such a tremendous gift to us in his life. Connie, I don't know if you remember me, but regardless, anything you need, you can call on me. I know Jim would have done the same for my family.

Doug Johnson - December 01, 2006 at 12:00 AM

LF

“ Connie and Family,
We're very sorry to hear of your loss. Our hearts go out to you each. May God comfort you all during the difficult time. You all are in our prayers.
With our heartfelt sympathy,
THE LEE FAMILY

Louise (Oman)& Dwight Lee Family - November 30, 2006 at 12:00 AM

TW

“ Connie and family - we were so saddened to learn of your loss. I cannot express our sorrow for you and the kids. You have been and will continue to be in our prayers. . .

Blessings - Tom & Theresa Westman

Tom & Theresa Westman - November 30, 2006 at 12:00 AM

SG

“*Connie & family, I am so very sorry to hear of your loss. I had never had the pleasure of meeting Jim, but from what I hear he was truly a remarkable person. You and your family are in all of my prayers. God bless you throughout this difficult time, and always.*

Susan (Burns) Grondin - November 30, 2006 at 12:00 AM

BE

“*I am so sorry to hear about your loss. I know that you dont know me, but I have a boyfriend downrange, and my father has spent time there as well. This is a constant fear that all military spouses live with, and im more sorry than I can say that you've had to deal with it. Know that he is with God now, and any support that the military community can offer you will be given. Take care*

Betty - November 30, 2006 at 12:00 AM

AB

“*Connie and Family:
My thoughts and prayers are with you. I know God is watching over you and the kids and Jim is a guardian angel for all of the men and women he left that day in the desert. I will always remember him as a dad, husband, and an American hero. My family and I hope the best for you and yours.*

Aimee Beauchamp - November 29, 2006 at 12:00 AM

TB

“*Connie, Tim and I are so sorry to have heard about the tragic loss of your husband. Our thoughts and prayers go out to you, your children, your parents and Jims as well. We pray gods warm loving arms surround you and your loved ones during this difficult time. Much love to you. Tim and Kris*

Tim and Kris Bennett - November 29, 2006 at 12:00 AM

KE

“ To Connie and your entire family, what can I say. Jim was the nicest person I have ever met. Each day you couldnt add up the number of good deeds he did for other people while going without for himself. He was a constant caregiver to everyone he knew. At work he was vigilant and watched out for everyone he worked with. He was a special friend to me. He would tell the funniest stories, like the time he came to work just after his brand new stove fell off the back of his truck and bounced down the middle of US 41, or the time we were at work and he was innocently making popcorn and set the whole microwave on fire, he took it and threw it outside in a snow bank, needless to say the whole VA smelled for a few days....he laughed it all off. He cared enough to spend weeks at my house fixing it up when no one else I knew did, he even had his brother law sucked in to helping out, they both did a tremendous job. Oh I know the Lord is with your family, for there isnt one finer I know. My deepest regrets, condolences and prayers are with you now and forever. There has never been any family that has touched me like you all have, may the Lord bless you and hold you tight in his arms. All my love Kelly.

Kelly Eldridge - November 29, 2006 at 12:00 AM

SH

“ May God give strength to Connie and the children and the whole family.
Jim was one of a kind. I knew Jim as a great athlete back in the mid eighties....we played Rugby for NMU. I always said that if you didn't like Jim----you didn't like people.
Thank goodness Connie and the children will be surrounded by loving, supportive family during this tragic, difficult time.....

Steve Harris - November 29, 2006 at 12:00 AM

AC

“ *Connie and Family, We are so sorry to hear of your loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. We never met Jim but have read wonderful things about him and wish we could have know him. Again, deepest sympathy from the whole Coyle family.*

Allen & Maxine Coyle - November 29, 2006 at 12:00 AM

CB

“ *Connie,*

My whole family and I are so sorry to hear about your loss. You have always been in our thoughts and prayers but especially now. I know in this time of need, God and your wonderful family will be your strength. Again, deepest sympathy.

Chad Bruno

Chad Bruno - November 29, 2006 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ *I will never forget the days with Jim in Japan when we served together on the aircraft carrier.....I can never forget the time he was handed a fork from the back of the room floor when he ordered soup from the local Japanees restraurant....he was so polite and asked for somthing easier to eat it with and they handed him some chopsticks.....he was so polite he just said "thank you" and just drank the soup. I will miss him dearly. I wish Connie and the kids my deapast sympathy.....Semper Fidelis--Corperal Marc Hoskins, USMC 89-93*

Marc Hoskins - November 29, 2006 at 12:00 AM

EA

“ *There are no words to express my heartfelt sorrow for your loss. I am broken just thinking of what you are going through right now. May God give you the strength to make it through and the courage to trust Him. We are praying for you and your family constantly.*
Sgt. Wesley and Emily Amerson

Emily Amerson - November 28, 2006 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ *Connie and Family,*
I am so sorry to hear of your loss. My heart goes out to you and the kids. Somehow may God give you the strength and comfort in the coming days.
Only God knows why this happened.
I am unable to be there for the funeral. Please know I am thinking of you and praying for you and your family
Joyce Hoskins

Connie and Family - November 28, 2006 at 12:00 AM

GE

“ *My prayers are with you*

gen - November 28, 2006 at 12:00 AM