

JAMES M. GRIMES
February 22, 1963 ~ August 26, 1996

It's all about the dash, let me proudly introduce you to our Son, Brother, and Uncle "Jimmy." James was born Feb. 21, 1963 at Woonsocket Hospital, Woonsocket, RI. James was welcomed into the world by his parents John & Ellen Grimes and his 4 siblings. Yes, James was #5 for John and Ellen (3 more were yet to be born).

James attended Cumberland Grange for Kindergarten, Ashton School for primary school, North Cumberland Middle School, then Cumberland High School, graduating in the class of 1981. As a youngster, James was involved in CCD at the St. John Vanney Church where he was Baptized, made his 1st Communion, and Confirmation. When James was young he was also an Alter Boy at the church. James was involved with the boy scouts, and competed in the Pinewood Derby.

The Grimes family spent many summers up at Sher-Le-Mon Swim Club where James fast became a star. James was the coach's favorite and could be counted on for first place finishes in many, many swim team events. In James' younger years he played and did very well at Cumberland Little League Baseball. It was clear that even at a young age, James excelled in sports. Whatever sport he tried he did 100%.

As James was growing up, he kept right at the sport, always involved. He even played on an Ice Hockey League at Mount St. Charles Academy. All of these sports activities, yet pulling A's and (maybe a B) in school.

During Middle School he was on the Baseball Team, as well as being active in student government. As James headed into his high school years, he played more baseball, football, hockey and of course spent 4 years on the swim team. James was chosen as one of The All State Swim Members. James was very well rounded, was still excelling in school, the girls were crazy over him and he was very much in his element and loving it!

James loved most dearly his Parents. He was very proud of the family and held us up to high regard and worked hard to maintain a good name. James was by all definitions a "townie". He had a love for his town that kept him from discovering other opportunities (ME State Police). He was offered positions in other jurisdictions but ultimately didn't want to leave Cumberland and his family. For Jimmy, that's what it was all about.

While James was growing up he always liked to watch "cop shows". He always wanted to be a cop. His ultimate dream job was to get on the force in town. He succeeded! Along the way he also became a MAJOR Springsteen fan, Red Sox fan, Boston Celtics, Boston Bruins, & Patriots fan.

James had such a great memory that I can remember one day as a little girl watching him and his friend Billy Gilbert playing some sport trivia game in the parlor, (and if I was 8 yrs old he would have been 9) I was watching these two and James and Billy were from memory shooting batting averages back and forth at each other. Team rankings and statistics. I couldn't imagine

that my brother knew all that too.....Man was I impressed! What a terrific brother I had! James was always there for you if you needed help. For me he was one of the ones who always pushed me, made me join the swim team. I couldn't goof off at practice because he would call me "turkey" and start making the gobble-gobble noise VERY LOUDLY in the pool area! Talk about embarrassing! He wouldn't let me quit. Oh no, that was not an option. Once I was signed on, that was it I was considered "a swimmer". I didn't realize that meant winter, spring, summer and fall for 10+ years! And you know what I wouldn't trade it for a minute, I am so glad he was there for me. I wish he was still here. We all miss him so he was such a delightful & important part of our family.

After Jimmy's funeral, at the celebration of his life, I was holding Jimmy's Police hat and one of my nephews who was probably 9 at the time, came up to me and said "Auntie Annie I wish Uncle Jimmy's head was still under that hat". It isn't right that Jimmy was taken away from us. We needed him then and we still need him now. Jimmy's homicide has taken our world as we know it and literally shaken it upside down. Since then our family has endured the loss of another brother, Walter on June 3, 1998. These are tragedies no parent should have to endure. Our folks have lost 5 of their 9 children. All but one of us has gone through divorce, yet our parents remain together. In fact they had their 50th wedding anniversary in 2005. All of this loss has caused significant trauma and taken its toll on our folks.

Yes, Jimmy was certainly the "spark" of our family. Everything he did, he did 110%. Being the youngest of the 8, I had a lot of people to look up to and a lot of people that expected the best of me. Jimmy was always the # 1 person watching for that to happen..always on my case if I faltered. (And yes, I can't count how many times that was, but he was always there to help pick me up.) He, at times, could be very loud and when you are a lot smaller than he, it's very intimidating. My mother would always tell me, "It's because he loves you very much Marianne". It took me 26 years to figure that out. I did get to tell him that at a party he had at his apartment ONE MONTH before his life was taken. What I would say about Jimmy is, besides missing and thinking about him EVERY day of my life, that if you were Jimmy's friend, you were always his friend (even if you did screw up) and most times you were probably laughing. Jimmy always had an abundance of friends and each one was special to him. Jimmy had the best sense of humor. Like my sister, I think the most important thing in Jimmy's life were our parents. He loved both of them more than any job he could have ever had. He would come over to the house on his break while at CPD (and sometimes not on his break, but because he was hungry) drop his keys on the kitchen shelf (then we knew he was staying for a lil bit) and either my Mom or me would make him something to eat. Sometimes it would drive me crazy because I was in the middle of doing something...but not my Mom. She looked forward to the visits. (I swear to this day, Jimmy was her favorite) :) The high expectations that my brother had for us, he was trying to fulfill for my Dad. He was always trying to do his best to impress Dad.

I wish my children would have gotten the chance to know their Uncle Jimmy. They didn't and they never will. They only see tears when his name is brought up or hear these words spoken softly, so they don't grow up to be untrusting adults.."unfair, taken from us, murdered, never caught, private investigator, very sad, Gramma is like that because...". We all have to be careful what is said around the children. If my children grow up to be 1/2 of what my brother James was,

they will have succeeded and I will be extremely proud of them. My son, from the day he was born, looks exactly like Jimmy. My parents a lot of the time call him Jimmy. It's very sad and very hard to explain to him. He will never know or understand what an honor it is for them to call him "Jimmy."

As far as my parents go, they are still together, yes, 50+ years married, but my mother doesn't even know it. They both have Alzheimer's and my mother doesn't speak or walk anymore. Jimmy's murder was the end for her...she has completely shut herself down....none of our lives will ever be the same. My Dad tries. He tries for my Mom and for the rest of his children and for his grandchildren. He always tries to make the best of situations but even this one was too big for him. The life in his eyes went down to a flicker on August 26th, 1996. It's never been back on.

It's hard to see Jimmy's friends sometimes. They have all moved on...had families of their own. None of them talk to our family much anymore. When we do see them, it's awkward. no one knows what to say so most times nothing is said at all. THAT makes things even worse and causes hard feelings. Sometimes you wonder, "I wonder if they even still think of Jimmy." A natural thought to have when you are a family member of a murder victim.

What we need now is closure for the rest of us and maybe, MAYBE, we could at least tell my parents that my brother's killer was finally apprehended, so they could live out the rest of their lives with some sort of peace, if that's at all possible. JUSTICE finally served. I know if things were different and it was one of Jimmy's friends in St. Patrick's Cemetery, he wouldn't stop until the killer was caught. He wouldn't have let it get brushed under the rug.

And for my brother James: I got your message on that last day, thank you. Thank you for making me who I am today. You saved my life at one point. Now, I'm working to save your honor. I love you dearly, every day of my life and no one can ever take that away.