

Murdered local detective remembered as family vows to find killer

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A police detective is killed, and the culprit never found. Now, his family is once again raising money to advance the cold case and try and find the person who killed James Grimes.

Family, friends and former coworkers all gathered at the Filibuster in Cumberland Saturday night to help fund the continuing investigation into the death of the man they knew as Jimmy. It's been more than a decade since his death, but family members remain committed to the cause.

"There's just no retreating, and no surrendering," said Mary Ellen Grimes, the victim's sister, "until we get this situation settled. It's what he deserves. It's what my parents deserve. We all deserve some kind of relief.

Detective Corporal James Grimes worked security details, college campus security and worked as a reserve officer for Cumberland before he went full-time. His career in law enforcement spanned only nine years -- from graduating police academy in Maine in 1987, until he was found dead in a Providence parking lot in 1996. He was sitting in the driver's seat of a rented car. The medical examiner's office never released the exact cause of the detective's death, but did rule it a homicide.

The family recently hired Thomas Shamshak, a private investigator. Last August, Shamshak spearheaded a news conference that called for anyone with any information to please come forward. New technology, he said, could be used to find new information among the old evidence. Now, he has a meeting set with Providence Police for next week, "to talk about the update in the status of the investigation," he says. "It's my understanding from preliminary talks with them that there's been some recent investigative work applied to this case."

The idea for Saturday's fundraiser came from a family friend, Bonnie Large. She says people who knew Jimmy wanted to do something to help.

"We got together a bunch of old friends, new friends, friends of the family, we've got some of Jimmy's high school friends here... to help support the cause," said Bonnie, as people moved among busy tables. "I know everybody really wants to get this solved.... People have been wanting to help, and I thought this was a good way to do it."

Grimes's other sister, Marianne Ezovski, says they hope to keep the case fresh in the minds of the public. "People can get together and remember my brother and remember that his case is still unsolved... As his family members want him to have, and want ourselves to have, some closure, you know... so he can rest in peace."

Part of the money raised will be used to fund a reward for information that leads to the person or persons responsible for the death of Detective Jimmy Grimes.

It's the second fundraiser held in his memory in the past six months. Last November, the family talked to Eyewitness News about Jimmy's memory during a benefit at Pawtucket's Blackstone Club.

If you have any information about the death of Det. Cpl. James Grimes, you're asked to contact Thomas Shamshak at 800-422-0944, or email info@detjamesgrimes.com. The website www.detjamesgrimes.com also has more information about Grimes's life and where to send donations to further the investigation.