



Brian James St. Marie

1972 - 2016      Chicopee, MA

Brian James St. Marie, 43, a resident of Chicopee, MA, died unexpectedly on January 15, 2016 in Los Angeles, CA, where he'd travelled the month prior in an attempt to find peace after a long struggle with mental illness. He leaves behind a grieving family who loved him through hard times, laughed with him in good ones, and who will always recall him as a goodhearted man with an idealistic streak who longed to make a difference in the world.

Born in Springfield, MA on December 18, 1972, and raised in Easthampton, MA, Brian was the beloved son of Terry and Ann (Sheridan) St. Marie, and the younger brother of Christina St. Marie and Sean St. Marie. Because they were born within just two years and four months of each other, one of Ann's sisters referred to the three St. Marie children as the "Irish triplets," and the trio was close-knit not just in age, but in affection. Family gatherings nearly always turned to reminiscences of the mischief they got into, the sweet things they did for one another, and the many ways they weren't just siblings, but friends.

Brian followed his sister and brother to Holyoke Catholic High School, where he played baseball and soccer and had numerous friends. He graduated with his diploma in 1990, and it was there that he met his wife, Laurie (Tessier) St. Marie. Brian and Laurie were married on April 13, 1996. It was a day they often remembered, and which embodied the love, friendship, and mutual respect that endured through trials unimaginable to most. After he spent some time studying at UMASS-Amherst, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, where completed Electronic Technician training at the Great Lakes Training Command, and then he continued his electronics training through the Navy in Biloxi, MS.

During this time, Brian and Laurie welcomed their daughter, Bradyn Germaine St. Marie, into the world. On the day she was born, Brian sat on the front steps of the hospital with his brother, Sean, and said with a mixture of joy, wonder, and gravity, "My life is never going to be the same." And it wasn't. Being a father was the single most important and cherished part of Brian's life. When Bradyn was still a toddler, Brian was stationed with the Navy in Naples, Italy, and the young family moved there together. While in Italy, Brian and Laurie's son, Liam Charles St. Marie, was born. Brian was a hands-on, playful dad to his children, and he delighted in documenting their lives on video and in photographs. He and Laurie made a tradition of re-watching these family videos on their children's birthdays in an attempt to count their blessings

and marvel at the milestones they achieved. He took pride in their accomplishments, joy in their individuality, and he placed his greatest hopes in their futures. In the last, difficult year of his life, he took profound joy in the birth of his brother Sean's son, Jesse, and he often remarked on how Jesse reminded him of when his children were babies.

In the year 2000, Brian was discharged from the Navy as an Electronics Technician 2nd Class, (E5), after earning the National Defense Service Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon (3), the Armed Forces Service Medal, the NATO Medal, and the Navy Achievement Medal. He and his family then settled in Chicopee, right next-door to Laurie's parents, Hank and Carol Tessier. While he worked at various jobs over the years, Brian's main focus, and his greatest source of strength as he battled mental illness, was his family. He coached children's soccer teams year after year, and he took pleasure in spending time at the camp he and Laurie owned in Wells, ME. An avid Red Sox and Patriots fan, he and Laurie enjoyed hosting family and friends to watch football each Sunday. Brian also had a passion for music, which he shared with his brother and friends, and he took solace and inspiration from the songs of artists like Bob Dylan and Neil Young. He was also amazingly talented and artistic in his own right—he could build anything, fix anything, and he completed countless home-improvement projects. In recent years he dreamed of combining these attributes to create a woodworking business, which he told family he wanted to call “Unbroken.”

Above all, Brian was a compassionate person whose greatest pain seemed to arise from a sense of disillusionment with what he regarded as the meanness of the world. Perhaps because of how important his home was to him, he was confounded by the plight of the homeless and despaired over the suffering of the hungry. When family asked him what he might like for his birthday or Christmas, he'd invariably respond, “Buy me a goat,” meaning that he wanted donations in his name to the non-profit organization, Heifer International. In lieu of flowers, please buy Brian a goat with a gift to [Heifer International](#), or honor Brian's devotion to helping the homeless by supporting [Western Mass Housing First Network](#), or help erase the stigma associated with mental illness with a contribution to [Bring Change to Mind](#).

Brian's survivors include: his parents, Terry and Ann St. Marie of Easthampton, MA and Vero Beach, FL; his wife Laurie (Tessier) St. Marie of Chicopee, MA and their children Bradyn Germaine St. Marie (22), and Liam Charles St. Marie (17); his sister Christina St. Marie of Easthampton, MA; his brother Sean St. Marie (Megan) of Amherst, MA; and many aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

A celebration of Brian's life will be held on Tuesday January 26th from 4-7pm at Tylunas Funeral Home, 159 Broadway, Chicopee Falls, MA 01020. The funeral will be at the convenience of the family.

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