

WARREN JACKSON RIVES, JR.

When I think about Warren, I think about that brash, everlasting smile, I think about someone who was everybody's best friend, a true big brother and a devoted father.

When I think of Warren as a good friend, I think of someone who was there when I needed him. I think of someone who liked me for what I am, not who I am. I think of someone who was fun to be with and knew how to have a good time. I think of someone that was sincere and I could trust. I think of someone I could lean on. I think of someone who was always there to bail his friends out. I think of someone that each of his friends felt they were his best friend and they were. I think of someone that I could tell things to that I couldn't tell my parents or anyone else. When I think of a good friend, I think of Warren Rives.

When I think of Warren as a brother, I think of someone who always thought he knew more than I did. I think of charisma. I think of blue eyes and good looks. I think of brut strength. I think of a bully. I think of the one who lead the way and made most of the mistakes before me and for me. I think of my first drink, and our G.T.O.. I think of hunting and skiing. I think of how to live life to the fullest. I think of cars and speed. I think of fishing. I think of Chapel Hill, basketball and Jubilee. Most of all, I think of my best friend who was always there to lean on and to help make things right, to tell me everything is going to work out even when I knew it was, but just needed someone to say so. I think of someone who loved me and knew I loved him. I think of someone who was everything that a big brother was suppose to be.

When I think of Warren as a father, I think of someone who knew how to get down on the floor or roll in the grass and play with his kids. I think of a strong, fair disciplinarian. I think of a Suburban full of kids. I think of soccer games, dance recitals, camping trips. I think of babies asleep on his chest. I think of what a real dad should be as illustrated by this note found hanging on his wall written by Jackson several years ago when he was in the second or third grade. (Printed on following page.)

When I think about what Warren would say right now, I think he would be pissed off because life wasn't suppose to end this way. I think he would be telling me to "chill out" and that everything is going to be alright somehow. I think somehow I know it will because even though he is gone, I know that he is still here looking over my shoulder helping me make sure I finish what we started.

But most of all, I think about that brash everlasting smile.

by Jefferson H. Rives