

JASON PAUL PAYNE

August 2, 1982 - August 23, 2007



Jason Paul Payne was born in Bakersfield, California on August 2, 1982. Jason passed away in a drowning accident on August 23, 2007 near Lake Tahoe while with friends off-roading. Jason graduated from Garces High School with the class of 2000. He also attended Bakersfield College with a focus on industrial technology. Jason was an avid off-roader and master technician. He excelled as a machinist, welder and electrician. He was most recently employed close to three years at Croad Electric. Patti and Martin Croad considered Jason as the son they never had; and likewise, he felt an extremely close bond with them. He had a powerful entrepreneurial spirit. Jason started his first company, "Sound Technologies," at the age of thirteen, building custom stereos and doing alarm installations. By fifteen, Jason had moved on to home theater systems and wiring custom homes for future proof wiring.

Jason loved four wheeling. He was constantly working on vehicle fabrication and design, as well as engaging and moderating on internet forums devoted to four wheeling. Jason was the webmaster and administrator for two major web sites in the world of off-roading, as well as his own sites, <http://www.industrialoffroad.com> and <http://www.desolatecanyon.com>. Jason's most recent adventures included a video production company, Desolate Canyon Productions, as Jason was blazing new trails, producing dynamic videos of off-road vehicles rock climbing in challenging terrain. Jason was highly sought after for his engineering brilliance and expertise in off-road suspension design and fabrication. Jason was included numerous times in magazines like *4 Wheel*, *Off-Road* and *Four-Wheeler*. Jason was extremely well regarded by the off-road community. He was quiet, yet proficient in all that he endeavored and succeeded in doing. Jason would help anyone anytime help was needed. He was always there for others.

He was "just our Jason," as his maternal grandmother, Treva Crouch reflected. That is true of Jason's immediate family, but for Jason's extended off-road family, he had a profound impact, reaching a vast network of individuals around the North American continent, through his build threads and his e-communication, which were carefully followed by the off-road community on different forums. Thousands of people who have never met

in person feel a bond and brotherhood on these boards with one another that is extraordinarily close. Jason's brother, Ken, wrote, "I came onto the boards...[and] found a group of "dirt guys" that have some of the biggest hearts in the WORLD!" Some of the posts on the internet include thoughts such as this: "a very sad day in the lives of thousands of people that he has touched" not only of our little slice of the world suffered a loss, the whole world has suffered a loss," "one of the finest examples of humankind and god-given fabrication talent that I've ever met," "what an amazing human being that has left our presence! He was one of the most loving, helpful, fun, admirable, and brilliant person Chris and I have ever known" "He will be greatly missed but God got himself one of the best fabricators on the planet...just wish we could have kept him longer" "I remember the first time I saw him wheel in real life it was awesome, kind of like meeting your favorite band as a kid" "I didn't know Jason personally but always idolized his skill and watching some of the stuff he did is what encouraged me to enroll in a welding and fabrication class for me to finish out my high school" "Man it's crazy to see how many people he touched in his short life. We can all hope that through our lives we can gain at least 1/4 of the respect that Jason had" "The lesson that I'd hope Jason left us was the person that he was. He had an ungodly work ethic. He opened up his treasure chest of immense knowledge to all comers without expecting anything in return and lastly he would give you the shirt off of his back" "For those of us that got to spend time around Jason...We knew we were in the presence of a great person" "what he accomplished in the six years I knew him I will need a lifetime to catch up" "He definitely thought outside the box. This has hit me with a heavy heart" "definitely wise beyond his years" and, "we will all cherish every day we have left on this planet b/c of this." "Thank you to Jason's family. By sharing your son and brother, the world has become a better place. He left us with fond memories and fabrications. We Love him." A friend of Jason's mom said, "I believe there are angels here on earth and Jason was one of those." A friend of Jason's dad said, "He was a godly man sent here to perform a Godly mission and God felt he had completed his mission and it was time for him to come home."

Jason shared his dry sense of humor on the net and in person which delighted his friends and family. He was also an extremely devoted and committed young man. Jason was very patriotic. He loved our country and supported our military's men and women who serve our country. Jason also had an intense love of the earth, and was always stressing to his off-roading peers, in his own words, "to leave it the way you found it." He inspired those around him to look towards the future with promise. He always had some project he was going to embark on that everyone knew he'd be able to accomplish. Jason was a rare individual who stood as a guiding star to other to aspire to accomplish as he did. He lived life fully and with gusto. Jason's dad, said that "His mom and I have absolutely no regrets as far as his time here on earth. It was almost as if Jason knew he had a short time on this earth, and he packed everything he could in to the time he had here." Jason is very loved by his family and friends and the off-roading community, and will be greatly missed.

Jason was preceded in death by his paternal grandfather, Kenneth B. Payne. Jason is survived by his parents, Debbie and Kenneth Payne II of Bakersfield; his brother, Ken Payne, and his wife Helene and their two children, Jordan and Charlie of Bakersfield; his sister and her husband, Tammy and Dean DeMinico of Vacaville, CA; his maternal grandmother, Treva Crouch; his maternal grandfather Paul Crouch; his Aunt and her husband; Carrie and John Davis, and their daughter, Victoria, and his paternal grandmother, Luella Payne. Jason is also survived by his entire off-roading extended family. A memorial web site, <http://www.jasonpaynememorial.com> has been created for communication. A remembrance gathering will be held on Saturday, September 1st from 1 to 5pm at 9617 Lake Pyramid Court, Bakersfield, CA 93312. In lieu of flowers, donations can be sent to the Jason Payne Memorial Fund at Kern Schools Federal Credit Union, Account #7259360 which will in turn be donated to the benefit of the off-road community which was so close to Jason's heart. Most of all, Jason's mom, has asked for those who want to know what they can do in Jason's honor, they can "pay it forward," by performing an act of kindness and in doing so let others know that they are loved.

A note from Jason's Mom-

Jason was the first and foremost my son – but more than that he was my best friend. I could talk to him about anything and everything, we had no secrets. We did have our little arguments and disagreements but we both knew that we really loved each other and we couldn't stay mad at each other for any length of time. Jason was an old soul in a young man's body. He was wise beyond his years. He had a kind spirit and was always there to help anybody at anytime. He taught me a lot about being patient and tolerant. I'm really at peace about where Jason is now because I know God would not or could not turn him away. I Love You Jason, Mom