



Steven "Ben" Tolley

December 9, 1973 - December 16, 2019

Steven Benjamin Tolley, son of Steve Tolley and Sharon Bjork Tolley, was born December 9th, 1973, in Moses Lake, WA. He was an Eagle Scout and a graduate of University of Washington with a Bachelor of Science degree. His faith was very important to him and at 19, he served a two-year mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in the Manchester New Hampshire Mission.

As a child, Ben was a sweet, adventurous and loving boy. In high school, he excelled athletically playing basketball, baseball and golf which he continued to enjoy throughout his life. He was a hardworking and gifted student, graduating in the top ten of his class and was awarded a Presidential Scholarship.

At UW, Ben majored in Chemistry and was always happily ready to answer science questions for his nieces. After college, Ben studied on his own and took the entrance exam for dental school, scoring high on both components of the test. However, his passion for building and creating ultimately led him to own a construction business in Federal Way. He loved the outdoors and went on many hiking campouts with his brothers. Favorites of theirs were Havasupai Falls in Arizona, the Olympic Peninsula, and rafting the Salmon River in Stanley, ID.

Ben was a sensitive, loving, and caring son, brother, uncle and friend. He made time to visit with, write letters to, and connect over the phone with the ones he loved. He filled his home with photos of his family and he never failed

to send a thoughtful card and gift for a loved one's birthday. As a talented artist, Ben enjoyed painting, especially portraits of the ones he loved. In addition, Ben was an incredibly selfless person. He looked forward to any opportunity there was to help those in need, especially the homeless of the Greater Seattle Area. In honor of his memory, his family encourages you seek out opportunities in your community to help those less fortunate.

Ben passed away on Monday, December 16th at the age of 46. For years he fought valiantly against bipolar schizoaffective disorder, an insidious disease that attacks one's mind and mental outlook. With the love of his family he sought treatment for this illness. Sadly, this disease caused him to take his own life. It is his family's hope that by sharing these personal details, it will help others dealing with mental illness and aid in dispelling the stigma associated with this disease.

Ben is survived by his parents, Steve and Sharon Tolley, older brother Jon (wife: Carrie and children: Rachel, Olivia and Michael); younger sister JoAnna Guzman (husband: Danny and children: Hannah and Daniel); and younger brother Daniel (wife: Megan and children: Maison & Roosevelt).

Services will be held on Monday, December 23rd at 11:00 am at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 1515 S. Division St. Moses Lake, WA. He will be laid to rest at Sunset Memorial Gardens in Warden, WA. This Christmas season, Ben would wish for you to spend time with your loved ones, celebrate our Savior's birth and enjoy enduring friendships-lifelong and beyond.

Cemetery Details

Sunset Memorial Gardens

9934 Road U SE
Warden, WA

Previous Events

Service

DEC **23**. 11:00 AM (PT)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Stake Center
1515 S. Division St.
Moses Lake, WA

Tribute Wall

KG

“ Our heartfelt sympathy to Bens family and the many people whose life he touched, including our family, and whose hearts are praying for some sort of peace for all of you.

Kim Green - January 06, 2020 at 03:28 PM

LH

“ Tolley Family - I am truly sorry for your loss. I didn't know Ben really well, but was at many Tolley gatherings over the years and would often talk with all the kids. I have worked in the mental health field for over 20 years now and truly applaud your willingness to share your story. The stigma associated with behavioral health issues is pervasive and your bravery in sharing Ben's story is a wonderful gift in helping to break down some of these issues. My thoughts are with your family during this terrible time.

Larry Horne

Larry Horne - December 31, 2019 at 07:51 PM

ST

“ Steve, Sherry and all the Tolley Family our thoughts and prayers are with you. Ben is at peace and resting. Thank you for sharing your story and I pray it will help others. We remember meeting Ben as a very young boy and Steve said “oh my he looks like a tiny grown up in that suit! “ God please watch over the Tolley family and help them find peace. Steve & Sandi Tordoff

Sandi Tordoff - December 23, 2019 at 01:39 AM

DS

“ I have been friends with Ben for 22 years now . He was the brother I never truly had . We had many adventures Yellowstone Vegas WA DC and many many more. He is my best friend because I am not ready to say "was" yet. Ben was the man I wanted to be smart, talented but did always dreaded going to a bar with Ben because so many women would come up to me and ask " so who is your friend? Lol I would say well hi my name is Darrell but it didn't matter Ben was just that magnetic . As close as we are we would at times argue like brothers. But this is how Ben made me realize time and time again how much of a great man he is. During one heated debate and it was heated where I walked away and slammed a door , when the door opened I was ready for more battle but Ben says hey want to do something for the homeless today? Took the steam right out our argument and within an hour we were donating jackets and clothes we did not need and even bought some items then handed them out to some folks in Seattle . This is Ben. I only wish I was half the man he is . I know ur gone brother but I'm not ready for that yet maybe never love ya bro

Darrell Seyler - December 22, 2019 at 04:05 PM

ST

Thank you Darrell. If you are ever in our area please stop by and say hi . . . we would love to visit with you.

Steve R Tolley - January 04, 2020 at 02:28 PM

LP

“ It’s been many years since I’ve seen Ben, but my childhood was filled with memories of playing at the Tolley residence. Despite a significant age difference Ben often made time to play basketball or homerun derby with Daniel and I. Every now and then he’d even let us win one. To me, Ben was larger than life, yet he always took time to talk and show genuine interest. Being Ben Tolley’s “buddy” made me like I was 10 feet tall. For an awkward kid that really meant a lot — and I think Ben knew that. In retrospect, his maturity even at a young age was remarkable.

When Ben and Brian Paris sparked the Chiefs basketball team to a run at the the state tournament I recall genuine pride and excitement that was unheard of prior to that time. I even recall girls from my grade going to Ahmann’s Images to try and buy “sample” pictures of Ben that we’re displayed out front. Despite his Abercrombie good looks and athletic notoriety, Ben always remained friendly, humble, caring, easy approachable and respectful guy. If I had a son, I’d teach him to try and be just like Ben.

I truly hope he’s now found the peace he sought. The world is a better place from having him in it. Thank you for being an example Ben, you won’t be forgotten.

Your Old Neighbor,

Lance Pedersen
Huntington Beach, CA

Lance Pedersen - December 21, 2019 at 07:03 PM



“ I served with him in Laconia, New Hampshire. He was always playing jokes on the sisters which kept us laughing. It was a difficult area for me and I was grateful that he was there because he made it fun. He had a warm smile that got him into many doors and brightened lots of rooms. I am so sorry to hear of his death and the struggles he faced. He was always one of my favorites.



Tiffani Jennings - December 21, 2019 at 11:10 AM



“ I was his boss when he was 15 and we were detasseling corn in Connell. All the girls had to wear makeup and hair in place because Ben Tolley was there. He was a hard worker. So sad for all of you. No parent should have to bury a child. It is one of the hardest trials one can have in this life. God will bless you all. Mary Jenks Nickle.

Mary Nickle - December 20, 2019 at 06:46 PM



“ My deepest condolences to the Tolley family on the passing of your son. You have my heartfelt sympathy.

Carolyn Kinkade - December 20, 2019 at 05:46 PM

CW

“ Steve & Sharon. We want to share our deepest condolences for your loss. Our hearts are broken and we wish you and your family the greatest of the Lords blessings. May you know of our thoughts and prayers are with you during this sad time. We love our Moses Lake friends.

Charles & Sharon Waller

Charles Waller - December 20, 2019 at 01:05 PM

S(

“ So sorry to the Tolley family for your loss. God watch over this family 🙏

susie Hall (Reitz) - December 19, 2019 at 09:36 PM

JK

“ Steve, Sharon and all of Ben's family, our hearts are truly broken to hear this news. We first came to know Ben when he played basketball in high school. I loved taking our own son, Ben, to watch the boys play, especially your son and brother who was a great athlete and fierce competitor but ALWAYS a gentleman and respectful of the game, his fellow teammates and those on the other teams. Since then as an adult, Ben continued to be such a positive influence and a leader by his example and personality. No words can ever adequately give comfort for the enormous grief and pain of losing a child or sibling. We can only pray that our God of unlimited love and mercy will wrap each of you in His arms, giving you comfort that seems out of reach. We love you. Jerry & Ronda Kayser

Jerry & Ronda Kayser - December 19, 2019 at 04:49 PM

JS

My heart is breaking for you all. Suicide is such a devastating loss. I commend your bravery in revealing the heartbreak of mental illness and what Ben lived with. Heavenly Father has him in his arms now and his pain and suffering is over. May you find comfort in knowing that. Take care of yourselves, don't blame yourselves and know Ben loves you. . . ❤️

Jodie Sainsbury - December 20, 2019 at 02:32 AM

SH

I am so sorry for your loss. I know the feeling too well as my son in law took his own life as well during the holiday season. Comfort is knowing that they are with our heavenly father and families are forever.

Sue hodes - December 21, 2019 at 01:54 PM

RN

I was Ben's mission president. I loved Ben. Very much. He will be greatly missed.

Robert Norman - December 21, 2019 at 05:29 PM

ST

Thank you all for your comments and concern.

Steve R Tolley - January 04, 2020 at 02:38 PM

CA

“ Ben was one of my first and closest friends growing up. From school to sports he always gave 100%. He always challenged me to be the best person I could be, and for that I am forever thankful. We had a lot of fun times together. Ben you will truly be missed, love you brother...

*Till we meet again,
Craig Anderson*

Craig Anderson - December 19, 2019 at 11:43 AM