



**James Justice**

## *IKM graduate, Guard soldier Justice killed in Afghanistan*

**MANILLA** -- A Manilla native and graduate of IKM High School died last weekend, killed by enemy small arms fire during combat operations in Afghanistan.

The Iowa National Guard reported that Staff Sgt. James A. Justice, 32, Grimes, died Saturday, April 23 in Kapisa Province, Afghanistan at approximately 10 a.m.. Also wounded in the attack was Spc. Zachary Durham, 21, Des Moines. Both soldiers were

assigned to Troop A, 1st Squadron, 113th Calvary, Camp Dodge, Johnston.

The attack happened during rescue operations of a U.S. Army OH-58 helicopter crew who were injured when their aircraft made a hard landing in Alah Say District, Kapisa Province, Afghanistan. Justice and Durham responded to the scene as members of a Quick Reaction Force ("QRF") and came under fire from enemy forces at the crash site.

Justice died at the scene and Durham was evacuated to Craig Joint Theater Hospital, Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan for medical treatment. The cause of the helicopter crash is unknown at this time and under investigation.

Justice was born June 30, 1978 in Manning and graduated from Irwin-Kirkman-Manilla High School in 1997. He enlisted as an Infantryman in Company C, 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry, Iowa Army National Guard in September 1998 at Denison, and completed Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training at Ft. Benning, Ga. in May 1999.

He previously deployed to Operation Desert Spring (Kuwait) in 2001, the Multinational Force Observer peacekeeping mission (Sinai Peninsula, Egypt) in 2003-2004, and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005-2006. Prior to his mobilization, he was employed full-time by the Iowa National Guard at Camp Dodge, Johnston.

Justice was part of the approximately 2,800 members of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division deployed to Afghanistan. These Iowa Soldiers reported to their mobilization station at Camp Shelby, Miss. in July 2010 for additional training and preparation before departing for the Afghanistan theater of operations. The unit arrived in Afghanistan in November 2010, where the soldiers provide full-spectrum operations in a combat theater, including lethal and non-lethal capabilities, support to Afghan National Army and Police units, and assistance to humanitarian relief initiatives.

### **Survivors**

He is survived by his wife, Amanda Jo, and daughter, Caydence Lillian, of Grimes; his father and mother, Larry and Lillian Justice, brother Kenny Justice, sisters Denise Christensen and Christy (Kevin) Lingle, nieces Stephanie (Justin) Ahrenholtz, Jessica Lingle, Katie Lingle and Becca Lingle, all of Manilla; nephew Doug (Sarah) Ridgley and great-nieces, Emiry and Elli Ridgley, all of Omaha; his dog, Kinnick; and a myriad of friends and family. Justice was preceded

in death by his maternal grandparents, Maynard and Nora Gunnlaugsson; paternal grandparents Kenneth and Katie Justice; and his best buddy, his dog Kado.

The family of Staff Sgt. James A. Justice issued the following statement:

*"James Alan Justice meant many things to every person he encountered. He was the funny best friend named "Juice" that could be counted on when needing to be cheered up; the uncle who always knew just what to say and when to hand out hugs; the son who was his parents' pride and joy; the father who loved his little girl more than anything in the world and couldn't wait to have more children; and the husband who loved to put a smile on his wife's face. One thing James was to everyone was the ultimate soldier. He loved the military and he looked forward to every deployment. While we were stunned and extremely saddened to learn of his tragic death, we all take solace knowing that James died doing what he loved best: serving his country beside the men and women he revered and trusted.*

*"Through his four tours of duty, James had many accomplishments but above all, he made life-long friendships. The outpouring of support and prayers*

during this time from friends, fellow Soldiers and strangers alike has been astonishing, but proved what we all knew: that James was a one-of-a-kind guy and deeply loved by all who had the opportunity to know him and serve with him. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Iowa National Guard for the opportunities they have provided to James over the past 13 years. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge all of his fellow Iowa National Guard Soldiers both at home and serving overseas. May God be with you always.

"We are sure that you can understand and will honor our request for family privacy at this time, as we are focused on working with military officials to return James' body home for military service and burial. We thank you for your thoughts, prayers and kindness at this extremely difficult time. We are deeply saddened by our loss, but extremely proud of the honorable way he served America as a leader in the U.S. Army. We will remember him, his strength, his infectious sense of humor, his faith in God, and his love for his family, friends and country with great pride."

Funeral arrangements are pending and details will be provided as they become available.

**SSG James Justice, 32**  
**June 30, 1978 - April 23, 2011**

**GRIMES** — James Alan, son of Larry and Lillian (Gunnlaugsson) Justice, was born June 30, 1978 in Manning, Carroll County, IA. He lived with his family in Manilla. James was baptized on August 17, 1978 at Zion Lutheran Church in Manning with Larry and Jeanie Young serving as sponsors. Later he was confirmed at Trinity Lutheran Church in Manilla. James attended school in Manilla and while in high school enjoyed participating in football, baseball and track. In 1997 James graduated from Irwin-Kirkman-Manilla High School. He enlisted as an Infantryman in Company C, 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry, Iowa Army National Guard in September 1998 at Denison and completed Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training at Ft. Benning, GA in May 1999. James deployed to Operation Desert Spring (Kuwait) in 2001, the Multinational Force Observer peacekeeping mission (Sinai Peninsula, Egypt) in 2003-2004, and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005-2006. He came from a proud family of patriots. A distant relative has documented that seven of James' ancestors fought in the War of 1812 and eight fought in the Civil War, as well as many in other conflicts.



April 17, 2009 James was united in marriage with Amanda Jo Sand at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Grimes. They made their home in Grimes and were the parents of one daughter. Prior to his mobilization to Afghanistan, he was employed full-time by the Iowa National Guard at Camp Dodge, Johnston. When not working with the Guard, he loved to spend time with his daughter and his dog Kinnick. He could often be found tinkering around the house and cooking for his family. James was an avid Iowa Hawkeye and Minnesota Vikings football fan. In his spare time, he liked to golf and hang-out with his friends, as well as work on tractors with his dad. James was a member of St. Peter Lutheran Church in Grimes and a lifetime member of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3517 in Manning. James volunteered for duty in Afghanistan in early 2011 to be with his unit because he loved his country and felt that is where he should be. After completing a routine security patrol at Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan, word was received of a downed OH-58 Kiowa helicopter in the neighboring Kapisa province north east of Kabul. James and some of his fellow soldiers from the Iowa Army National Guard's Alpha Troop 1st Squadron 113th Cavalry boarded a UH 60 Black Hawk helicopter to rescue the two man crew of the downed helicopter. After their craft landed the group came under small arms fire. James was killed at the site on Saturday, April 23, 2011. He was 32 years, 9 months and 24 days of age. James was escorted home to Iowa from Dover AFB by OC Alan Schmeckpepper.

James is preceded in death by his grandparents Kenneth and Katherine Justice and Maynard and Nora Gunnlaugsson, brother-in-law Lyle Christensen, and

aunt Alta and her husband Merlin Nulle. He is survived by his wife Amanda Justice and three-year-old daughter Caydence Justice of Grimes; parents Larry and Lillian Justice of Manilla; brother Kenneth Justice of Manilla; sisters Denise Christensen of Manilla and Christina Lingle (Kevin) of Manilla; nephew Doug Ridgley (Sarah) of Omaha and their children Emirsann and Elliette; nieces: Stephanie Ahrenholtz (Justin) of Manilla; Jessica Lingle (Alisa) of Manilla; Katie Lingle of Manilla; Rebecca Lingle of Manilla; Tonya (Shane)Darnell of Elrino, OK and Jamie (Justin) Chronister of Elrino, OK; parents-in-law Bill and Sue Sand of Eau Claire, WI; brothers-in-law: Bob Buckli of Eau Claire, WI; Tim Buckli (Kacee) of Omaha, NE; sisters-in-law Amy Buckli-Loew (Clyde) of Chetek, WI; Annie Luer (Tony) of Fall Creek, WI; grandparents-in-law Archie and Carol Sand of Eau Claire, WI; aunts, uncle, other relatives and many friends.

Visitation was held Tuesday, May 3, 2011, at the IKM-Manning Middle School Gymnasium in Manilla. Funeral services were held Wednesday, May 4, 2011, at 2:00 p.m. at the IKM-Manning High School Gymnasium in Manning, with Chaplain MAJ Gary Selof, officiating and Jessica Fine giving the Eulogy and Jeremy Vennink, Judy Erb, and Tyler Christianson, Remembrance Speakers. Music was "It's So Hard to Say Goodbye to Yesterday" ~ Boyz II Men, "I Will Remember You" ~ Anya Paulette, vocalist, and "Amazing Grace" on the Bagpipes and "Proud to be an American" by Lee Greenwood. Casket bearers were MAJ Jason Erb, SGT Andrew Bauer, SGT Robbie Rushton, Doug Ridgley, SSG Philip Edwards, SSG Shane Pankonen, SSG Nicholas Harvey, and SPC Matthew O'Connor. Interment with Military Honors will be held at a later date at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, VA.

*Ohde  
Funeral  
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