



James William "JB" Brown

April 10, 1954 - September 14, 2024

James William "JB" Brown, of Blacksburg, VA, died Saturday, September 14, 2024, of a heart attack while watching a Virginia Tech football game. He was 70.

JB was an extraordinarily bright light who preferred being in the background. He was kind and positive and beloved by a huge number of people.

He loved life and took great joy in doing things for other people: actual physical tasks as well as tracking and celebrating the successes of others, especially kids. He cared about doing a job well and was able to focus on a project despite obstacles all the way to the end, whether it was installing drywall in your basement, doing your taxes, shoveling your walk in the winter, or helping you figure out how to handle a thorny behavioral issue at work.

JB was born on April 10, 1954, to Bill and Emma Lou Brown at Roanoke Memorial Hospital. His parents were locally famous; his mother was a long-time secretary at Margaret Beeks Elementary School, and his father was the Blacksburg High School coach for whom the stadium is named.

Boy, was he born into the right family! JB loved sports of all kinds. He grew up watching and playing sports whenever possible, and was a three-season athlete throughout his time at Blacksburg High School as a member of the

football, basketball, baseball and track teams. As a student athlete at Virginia Tech, JB ran cross country and track, specializing in the steeplechase. JB has been a staple of the running community in Blacksburg, as an enthusiast, competitor, Jock Shop owner, respected official, and dedicated track dad.

JB's pride and joy was his daughter Hannah. Fortunately for both, Hannah also loves sports. JB spent countless hours supporting Hannah and her teammates' endeavors. He never missed a game or meet. JB's pride in Hannah's athletic career was second only to his pride in her person – her accomplishments, her friendships, and her character. He never missed an opportunity to tell her that he loved her and was proud of her.

Nine years ago, JB took up Elliptigoing after a hip replacement forced him to give up running. He could often be seen on the Huckleberry Trail and around town on his standup bike with a big smile on his face. He was a leader in the national online Elliptigo community, devoting his supportive (and competitive) energies toward his online team and virtual competitions.

Graduating from Blacksburg High School in 1972, JB enrolled at Virginia Tech, where he earned a degree in Business (1977). He pursued an MBA while working full-time, and eventually became a CPA, working in the bursar's office at Virginia Tech for 16 years as well as for various area businesses.

He was funny and wise and a great father, son, brother, uncle, friend, and life partner. His nose would crinkle up when he found something touching, and he would tear up at the poignant parts in a movie. He remembered every joke he was ever told.

JB is survived by his mother Lou, partner of 24 years Miriam Rich, daughter Hannah Brown, sister Patty Devens (Pat), former wife Kathleen O'Connell, nieces Katy Zamer (Craig), Kym Gouker (Joel), nephew Rick Devens (Becca), and seven beloved great nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Bill Brown Scholarship Fund
c/o Hannah Brown, 1312 Hillcrest Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24060.

A celebration of life service will be held Sunday, November 17th from 1:00 –
3:00 pm at Blacksburg High School, 3401 Bruin Lane, Blacksburg, VA 24060.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

NOV 17. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Blacksburg High School
3401 Bruin Lane
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Tribute Wall

BW

“ I knew JB at a different point in my life---when my first son was little decades ago, and JB lived around the corner and Hannah (she's always HannahBrown in my mind) was in my son's Rainbow Riders class. I remember those years with great fondness and as our kids grew, when I'd see JB and Miriam out an about, it was our conversational focus. What a kind, giving, involved man, and my heart goes out to the whole family.

Beth M. Waggenpack (and Sasha and Will) - November 13, 2024 at 06:12 PM

K&

“ Please accept our deepest condolences on the loss of your loved one. We enjoyed visiting and seeing him on the trail. Sending healing prayers and comforting hugs!

Huckleberry Trail Family

K&F - November 12, 2024 at 10:39 AM

WP

“ *Lou and Patty,*

I just heard of Jimmy's death. My heart is breaking for your terrible loss.

Love,

Pam Winfrey

winfrey pamela - September 28, 2024 at 12:44 PM

TM

“ I worked with JB for several years in the Virginia Tech Bursar's Office. He was always kind, funny, and a joy to work with. He always brightened my day with his smile. He was a blessing to many, and he will be greatly missed.

My prayers of comfort go out to Lou, Miriam, Hannah, Patty, and all of his friends and family.

*Traci McCoy
Blacksburg, VA*

Traci McCoy - September 24, 2024 at 08:30 AM

TD

“ I will miss Jimmy's affable, infectious smile. He was a genuinely caring person who always made me feel comfortable and warm inside – like hot chocolate on a cold day. He was always in such great shape, that this news was truly a shock. Jimmy put mega-miles onto that Elliptical bike – as I still wonder how in the world he balanced on it!

Our hearts go out to Miriam, Hannah, Patty and Lou. May your own hearts find rest in the near future. I think that Coach Brown is looking down now with one arm around Jimmy. Sending you their love.

Such an ardent and dedicated Virginia Tech fan - Jimmy needs to hear it one more time:

*Hokie, Hokie, Hokie High.
Tech, Tech, VPI !!*

*Ted and Barb Devens
Sarasota, FL*

Ted Devens - September 23, 2024 at 08:14 PM

KR

“ We are so sorry to hear this news.💔 JB was such an amazing man and wonderful father to Hannah and all the girls who played with her. He will be greatly missed.🙏 ~The Radfords - Gary, Kim, Alayna & Hunter



Kim Radford - September 22, 2024 at 07:59 PM

VB

“ Such a shock to see JB's obituary this morning! I walk the Huckleberry often and so enjoyed seeing JB flying by on his standing bike with his fabulous smile. I can hear his "Hi, Vicki" as I write this. He will be greatly missed.

Vicki Brackett - September 22, 2024 at 12:07 PM