



## Benjamin Gates Sykes

September 27, 1990 - October 30, 2015

Benjamin Gates Sykes, age 25, of Centreville, Virginia passed away Friday, October 30, 2015 in Richmond, Virginia.

Ben was adventurous, loving, ambitious, honorable, and genuine with a passionate, caring heart. He was a smart, deep thinker, and honestly expressed his perspectives. He loved to make people laugh with his goofy sense of humor. Ben could often be found surrounded by friends working on a motorcycle. A compassionate, kind young man, Ben was determined to make a difference.

He was born on September 27, 1990 in Fairfax, Virginia the son of Mark D. and Kim (Scarborough) Sykes. A 2009 graduate of Westfield High School, a Distinguished Graduate with Honors of the Virginia Military Institute (Class of 2013), Ben was currently a first year Dental Student at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Survivors include his parents (Centreville, VA), older sister, Abigail Megan Sykes (Seoul, South Korea); paternal grandfather and step-grandmother, Janice & Beverly Gates Sykes, (Berkeley Springs, WV); Aunts & Uncles, Sandi & Phil Scarborough, Jr. (Cumberland, VA), Kay Scarborough & James Seaman (Chesterfield, VA), George Kevin Scarborough (Petersburg, VA) Laurie & Rich Dunham (Loudon, VA), cousins: Valery & Jon Ischinger

(Harrisonburg, VA) and Dr. Shannon & Jamy Erny (Glen Arm, Md), Gates Dunham (Loudon, VA), Athyna, Connell, & Aidan Ischinger (Harrisonburg, VA), and Elise & Suzanne Erny (Glenn Arm, MD).

The family will receive friends from 7:00 to 9:00 pm Friday, November 6, 2015 at the Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Ln, Clifton, Virginia where funeral services will be held at 1:00 PM Saturday, November 7, 2015 with the Rev. Dr. Lynn Stanton-Hoyle.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to:

Clifton Presbyterian Church for a fund being established in Ben's name, which will be directed toward one of his life goals-providing dental care to those in need, especially children.

Checks should be made out to: Clifton Presbyterian Church

\*\*Memo: In Memory of Ben Sykes

Checks should be mailed to: Clifton Presbyterian Church

12748 Richards Lane, PO Box 320

Clifton, VA 20124

or [www.cliftonpc.org](http://www.cliftonpc.org)

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV 6. 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Clifton Presbyterian Church  
12748 Richards Lane  
Clifton, VA 20124

## Service

NOV 7. 1:00 PM (ET)

Clifton Presbyterian Church  
12748 Richards Lane  
Clifton, VA 20124

# Tribute Wall



“ Anyone who knew Ben would mourn the tragic loss of such a fine young man. Words cannot express our deepest sympathy. May you find some comfort in the joyous memories he leaves behind.

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**Robert McFetridge** - November 08, 2015 at 10:45 PM



“ Ben was the first friend that I ever had. My parents were neighbors with the Sykes before Ben and I were born. I had a wonderful childhood knowing Ben. He was an amazing person. I will never forget all the memories I have with him. His sense of humor, his smile, his laughter, brought joy to the lives of everyone he knew. Every day with Ben was a great day. He was always curious to try new things, and touched the lives of so many. I will never forget all the times we had going to the park, the pool, the movies, the sleepovers, eating dinner together, playing soccer, skating, playing games, and sharing our stories. I cherish all the memories I have of him. I always looked up to him. He accomplished so many things, and lived life fully. My thoughts and prayers go out to the Sykes family. Mark, Kim, and Abby, we love you all. We love you Benjamin.

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**William Zuiker** - November 07, 2015 at 10:53 PM



“ Dear Kim, Mark and Abby, I am so sorry for your loss. I have been keeping you in my thoughts and prayers and will continue to do so. I have such fond memories of Ben as a little boy. Such a sweet, happy and spirited little guy. I know he grew up to be a fine young man, I'm sure due in large part to wonderful parents and a loving family, and I know he will be greatly missed. May God bless you with his peace and comfort. With love and heartfelt condolences, Susan Rehfield (Ben's primary teacher at MSO)

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**Susan Rehfield** - November 06, 2015 at 11:13 PM

MA

“ Kim and Mark, I know that you know how deeply we feel for you and your loss. Although we didn't know Ben intimately we sure knew of his exploits. I remember when we were living in Lex being so proud of him for starting the recycling program there at VMI. I remember thinking, I know the kid who started the recycling here, every time I put a water bottle into the recycling box at VMI. What a thoughtful person he was and only because he had such loving, caring and supportative parents. You two, regardless of the frustrations of Ben constantly pushing the limits, stood beside him, cheering him on. No child could ask for better parents and no parents could ask for a better child. He excelled at what he chose to do. Academic stars at VMI do not come easily! And he achieved them!! When he decided to do something he succeeded. He built a freaking motorcycle, he worked hard studying for the tests to get into the dental program at VCU and you guys were there to encourage and support him. He succeeded and was on his way to the bright future he and you saw for him.

We may never know or understand why this had to happen but in my heart I believe that Ben has once again succeeded. He is where he is supposed to be and we are all better for having known him. He has made a difference and that is all we can ask for in life. Make a difference in the name of Benjamin Gates Sykes!

Love you guys and will always be there for you  
Mary and Steve Amato

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mary amato - November 06, 2015 at 09:41 PM



“ I remember Ben at VMI and his passion for the environment. He had bright creative ideas for his future. I remember one of his visits after he graduated. By that time he had grown his hair out and seemed more like himself, and still curious and thoughtful about the options that lay ahead of him. May his gentle soul live on in our memories.

-Jennifer deHart

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**Jennifer DeHart** - November 06, 2015 at 08:39 PM

DH

“ David and Doris Hambright purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Benjamin Gates Sykes.



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**David and Doris Hambright** - November 06, 2015 at 05:57 PM

ST

“ Mark, Kim, Abby and family,  
We are very sorry and you all are in our daily prayers. Know that we are here to support you. May God heal you all and Ben will always be in your hearts.  
God Bless you. With deepest sympathy.  
Steve and Mary Amato '83

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**steve** - November 06, 2015 at 05:07 PM

JW

“ Dear Mark, Kim, Jon, Valery and family,  
We're sending our deepest sympathy to you and your family.  
Although, we did not have the privilege of knowing Ben, we can see  
what a remarkable life he lived. We know he will forever be a  
blessing to you and your family.  
Our hearts are with you. We pray the Lord's sovereign love and  
comfort be with you.

God Bless You.  
VBS Mortgage  
Harrisonburg, VA

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**Jill Weatherby** - November 06, 2015 at 10:45 AM

CT

“ Mark Kim and family

There are no words but sadness in the loss of your son. My heart is  
heavy this morning and may God put his healing arms around you  
and your family for the days to come to  
help you thru the grief process. This is one of the hardest things  
parents have to go thru and is so painful. My thoughts and prayers  
are with you during this most difficult time. May God Bless each and  
everyone of you the next few days and down the road.  
My deepest sympathy!

Cathy Thompson - Friend of Phil and Sandi Scarborough

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**Cathy Thompson** - November 06, 2015 at 08:58 AM

DS

“ *Mark and Kim,  
No words can fill the tremendous void that you must be feeling at the loss of your son, Please accept our prayers for comfort and healing.  
In deepest sympathy,  
Drew and Kim Smith '83*

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**Drew Smith** - November 05, 2015 at 10:21 PM

PW

“ *Paul Brown and Team WSMR purchased the Delicious Delights Basket for the family of Benjamin Gates Sykes.*



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**Paul Brown and Team WSMR** - November 05, 2015 at 08:54 PM

RD

“ *So sorry for your loss. Your family is in our thoughts and praying for God's comfort in the days ahead.  
Rodney and Iris Davison*

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**Rodney Davison** - November 05, 2015 at 07:39 PM

PB

“ *Mark and family,  
I am so sorry for your loss. This is one of the hardest things to go through and incredibly painful. I pray that you find strength, courage, and comfort with friends and family. May God bless you and help you through the this tragedy and through the long healing process to come.  
With deepest sympathy,  
Paul Brown and the WSMR Team.*

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**Paul Brown** - November 05, 2015 at 07:00 PM



“ *Mark and family,  
I'm sorry for your loss and know this time must be rough. Please  
ask for help if you need it and know that you will be together again  
someday.  
Carl Gibeault '83.*

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**Carl Gibeault** - November 05, 2015 at 05:32 PM



“ *There are no words to express the sadness that we feel. Ben was a  
former student at the Montessori School of Oakton. It was a  
pleasure and a privilege to have shared in his early academic life.  
On behalf of our Montessori community I extend prayers and  
sympathy to all who loved him.  
~ Carolyn Linke ~  
Montessori School of Oakton*



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**Carolyn Linke** - November 05, 2015 at 02:24 PM

KR

“ Kim, Haven't seen or talked to you in forever, but I want to offer my condolences on the loss of your son. There are no words that can begin to heal the pain you are feeling now. I am praying for you and your family for strength to get through this very difficult time.

*Kay Abernathy Rockett  
First Christian Church*

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**Kay Rockett** - November 05, 2015 at 02:10 PM

JM

“ I am so sorry for your loss. You are not alone, if you would like to attend a meeting of the Prince William Chapter of the Compassionate Friends we meet the 3rd Wednesday of each month, 7:30 pm until 9:00 pm at Buckhall United Methodist Church, 10251 Moore Drive, Manassas, VA 20110. You can also go to <http://www.tcfprincewilliam.org>, <http://www.compassionatefriends.org> or <https://www.facebook.com/TCFPrinceWilliam> for more information. Please feel free to also contact me at [tcfmanassas@gmail.com](mailto:tcfmanassas@gmail.com).  
*Jennifer Malloch*

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**Jennifer Malloch** - November 05, 2015 at 01:41 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Benjamin Gates Sykes.*



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November 05, 2015 at 12:37 PM

AT

“ Mark-

*Words seem inadequate to express how deeply saddened we were to hear about the loss of your son Ben who was taken at such a promising age. May the compassionate outpouring of support and prayers from the numerous friends of the Sykes' family help comfort and carry you through this difficult time felt by so many. We pray God blesses you with courage and strength in the days ahead knowing your treasured memories will last forever.*

*Yours In Peace, Alison & Charley Tichenor*

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**Alison Tichenor** - November 05, 2015 at 12:30 PM

CP

“ To the wonderful Sykes family,

*We are all still reeling over the loss of your precious son and brother, Ben - he was truly one of our favorite patients and I know Dr. Lee was looking forward to having him as a peer in the dental field. As I've gotten to know all of you over the last 7+ years, I was always impressed with what a lovely, close family you are...we are sending love, countless prayers and comforting thoughts your way.*

*Cathleen Pannell xoxo*

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**Cathleen Pannell** - November 05, 2015 at 11:17 AM

AE

*Mark and family:  
I am so sorry about The loss of your son, Ben. My prayers are with you all. Ann Eppinger*

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**ann eppinger** - November 05, 2015 at 06:39 PM

DG

“ *Mark and Sykes Family - on Behalf of the Grimm Family - we send our sincerest condolences on the loss of Ben.  
In greatest sympathy-  
Dave Grimm (VMI '86 and Army T&E)*

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**David Grimm** - November 05, 2015 at 10:30 AM

  
Michael  
Dawson

“ *Mark, I was VMI class of '87 and my son was a Brother Rat to Ben. Ben went to visit Frederick in Pittsburgh last year when he was considering dental school. My son is in his 3rd year at Pitt Dental. I know that this news hit their class hard but I wanted to give you my deepest and most sincere sympathies. Please know that you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.  
Mike Dawson*

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**Michael Dawson** - November 05, 2015 at 10:03 AM

BC

“ *Mark, I was heartbroken to hear of your loss, and hope that it brings a measure of comfort to you and your family to know that you are in the thoughts and prayers of friends everywhere. Wishing you peace at this difficult time.*

*Bruce Cohen*

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**Bruce Cohen** - November 05, 2015 at 09:34 AM

JM

“ Mark, I wept when I heard the news about your son. I know the pain because I lost my son when we worked at ATEC on Ford Avenue. The lord will send his angels to comfort you and your family. This I know! Remember the good times you had with your son and carry on his wishes as you continue your life. You know him and what he would want you to do.

I woke up this morning and thought about you and asked the Lord to send his angels and whisper in your ear that everything will be OK because he has your son and will comfort you and be with you and your family: The Lord wants to make sure you continue to do the things that matter to you and prepare to do some of the work your son would want you to do in memory of him.

Mark, always, always remember the joyful things you and your son shared. His spirit will always be with you and your wife and family.

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**Jim Marshall** - November 05, 2015 at 08:21 AM

DA

“ Our family has known Ben since he was born, and loved his warm, engaging smile and playful personality. His family has lost a spirited son, brother, grandson, nephew, cousin, and the world has lost a compassionate soul. We share your profound grief.

*Ralph & Donna Ainger*

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**Donna Ainger** - November 04, 2015 at 11:28 PM

TF

“ Ben and I grew up together. I looked up to him as he was 4 years older than me. I will never forget late summer nights playing flashlight tag, or when we would make funny movies with Abby. Some of my favorite memories are of our adventurous car rides, especially the ones when we were going to C2. Swimming in creeks and your bloody zombie costume for Halloween that I was obsessed with because of the bleeding mask. I don't have a single negative memory of or with you Ben. I promise to always keep your memory alive and share our stories. You were and always will be a great friend of mine. You are my family and I love you very much. Keep being goofy in heaven, I'll see you again someday <33



Taylor Fischer - November 04, 2015 at 04:01 PM



“ Ben and I were really close between 7th grade and 11th grade, when I had to move to CA. But we were still friends, talking every now and then. It didnt matter that we didn't talk everyday after I had moved. He was still a brother to me in my eyes. Ben and I were pretty goofy people. We used to always make these weird sounds, and words that were so distorted that other people didnt know what we were saying, but we knew. This would make us laugh all the time. We used to skate all over Centreville. Looking for random street spots, loading docks, gaps etc. Ben made such an impact on my life. He was one of the best people I ever knew. I will always miss him, and think of the many great memories we had. My love goes out to all of his family and friends.



Roman Anderson - November 04, 2015 at 02:02 PM

JM

“ *May your memory live on, in the hearts and minds of all who you have touched. May your family find comfort and peace in the joy you brought to them.*

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**J. Monique** - November 04, 2015 at 01:21 PM

CF

“ *This past week, the world suffered a tremendous loss yet heaven gained another angel. That angel's name is Ben Sykes. Ben may have only been with us for a very short period of time, but the lives he touched and the legacy he left created memories that are a guiding light and inspiration for many. Ben was a gracious, caring, smart, and fun loving young man who made an indelible mark on his community and those with whom he came in contact with. We are grateful for the opportunity to have known you Ben Sykes and for the memories of fun, laughter, and downright goofiness that you have instilled forever in all of us. Peace to you, Ben, and your family - Mark, Kim, Abby, and who can forget Ruby. May you rest in peace and may you and your family find strength and comfort in God's hands.*

*Hugs and much love!*

*The Fischer Family – Chuck, Penny, Tayler, and Cameron*

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**Chuck Fischer** - November 04, 2015 at 10:16 AM