

Obituary for Sgt. Kristopher J. Gould

February 12, 1986 - February 27, 2011



Gould, Sgt. Kristopher James, of Frankenlust Twp., Michigan, was killed in action while serving in Afghanistan in the U. S. Army Infantry. Age 25 years. Kristopher was born on February 12, 1986, in Saginaw. He was a 2004 graduate from Valley Lutheran High School. Kristopher joined the Army National Guard in 2003, served in Iraq from 2005 – 2006, was in the military full-time from 2006 to the present and he was on his 2nd tour in Afghanistan. He was a very caring and loving man and was so very proud when he wore his uniform to serve his country. Kristopher was involved in several Army combative tournaments. He loved to go dirt biking, motorcycle riding, and 4-wheeling in the mud, playing baseball and golf. Growing up, baseball was his life as he could play it 24-hours a day. He participated in football, baseball and wrestling while at Valley Lutheran. He enjoyed hunting with his late Uncle Paul Gottleber. Kristopher was a member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church and served with its usher group, youth group, and Boar's Head Festival.

Surviving are his parents, James A. and Ann L. (Gottleber) Gould, Frankenlust Twp.; his sister, Julianna (Gould) and Kevin Symkowiak; his nephew and niece, Tyler and Jennifer Symkowiak; also his good friend, Josh Williamsen, who was like a brother to Kristopher; special friend Jenny Callaghan; many aunts, uncles, and cousins; grandmothers, Irene Gottleber-Lange and Norma Jean Gould. Kristopher was predeceased by his grandparents, Burton Gottleber, Arthur Gould, Bud Lange, Esther and Johnny Gould.

Kristopher's memorial service will take place 3:00 p.m. Saturday, March 12, 2011, at Bethlehem Ev. Lutheran Church, 808 Weiss St. The Rev. Michael R. Korte and The Rev. Charles F. Buckhahn will officiate with Military Honors conducted under the auspices of the Michigan National Guard. Friends are welcome to visit with the family at the church on Saturday from 1:00 p.m. until the time of service. In lieu of flowers, the family wishes to have memorial contributions given to Valley Lutheran High School for its athletic program, Bethlehem Lutheran School for its athletic program, or to the Sgt. Kristopher J. Gould memorial account at Citizen's Bank to be used for recreational activities in Saginaw County.

Memories and sympathies of Kristopher may be shared with the family on his Obituary page at www.WakemanFuneralHome.com

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter on behalf of SGT Kristopher Gould and his family. I served with Kristopher as his Platoon Sergeant at Fort Knox, Kentucky and while deployed in support of Enduring Freedom to Ghazni, Afghanistan. SGT Gould was a non-commissioned officer and served as a team leader in charge of other Soldiers. SGT Gould was an outstanding non-commissioned officer and leader that always placed the needs of his Soldiers before his own. He trained and mentored every Soldier within our platoon and set the example for them to follow. I not only looked at Kris as one of my Soldiers but as a close friend and it helped that we were both from Michigan. Without a doubt, the hardest day in my 21-year military career was the day we lost SGT Gould. He volunteered for the mission we went on that day. The loss was tremendous to all who served with him, but Kris would not have wanted it any other way if that meant saving one of his comrades. "Are my Soldiers okay?" were the first words he uttered to me after the explosion that ultimately took his life. I pulled him from his vehicle that day. He wasn't worried about himself or his injuries, he just wanted to make sure the others were safe. This is a true testament to his character and the type of leader he was. He was a leader and a friend to everyone he came in contact with and he could always make you laugh, no matter what type of situation presented its self. The second hardest day of my military career was when I got the word that Kris had succumbed to his injuries. As the Platoon Sergeant it was my responsibility to inform my platoon of the loss. To this day, I could easily breakdown or cry at any given moment thinking of that conversation when I gathered my Soldiers into the chow hall and informed them that Kris had passed away. The devastation, hurt, and tears that flowed on all of their faces haunts me to this day. SGT Gould was a great human being that truly cared about everyone and would give you the shirt off his back without hesitation. I have developed a great amount of admiration and love for SGT Gould's parents as they have pretty much adopted my family and I as their own. Kristopher is dearly missed, respected, and honored by everyone who he came in contact with throughout his life. He truly was our guiding light and protector for the remainder of our time in Afghanistan and the reason we stay committed to fight for the freedom that he laid down his life for.

Respectfully,
Jeremy Benando
US Army
First Sergeant (Ret.)