

Jim The Papaw

A tribute by Tara Baugh at Jim Baugh's funeral, 01-07-2004

We can all look around here today and see all the people that Jim has touched throughout his life. However, one little person is at home today, Papaw's girl.

To say that Jim was overjoyed the day Jerrod and I told him that he was to be a grandpa is an understatement. He had waited and prayed for so long and finally all those plans of helping raise his grandchild had come true.

On January 21st, 2002 one little angel was born into the Baugh family, Gayle Evelyn. I have been told the stories about how Jim reacted when Jerrod went into the waiting room at the hospital and said it was a girl. Then the shock and even a tear or two when Jerrod told his dad she was going to be named Gayle Evelyn, after Jim's parents.

When she came home it was a long time before he missed a day of seeing her. That continued after she was older, and I would often worry about him if it had been 2 days that he hadn't come by.

Gayle sure loved his visits. He would pull into the driveway and turn on his police siren. Of course, she knew that sound and her face would light up as she ran to the door saying "Papaw!" They spent hours playing together and when he left Gayle would stand at the window to wave and watch as he turned on the lights on the police car until he pulled away.

Every Friday night we would get together with friends and family to have dinner with Jim and Laura Lee. Last Friday night we were not able to have our Friday night dinner with Jim because it seems he had other dinner plans with someone up above.

I know he knows how important he was in all our lives. Every time I think of him, my heart is filled with happiness and love. I am so fortunate to have been able to share in Jim's life. Jim, I am so proud to have been related to you. Having you as such a special friend, father-in-law, and Papaw. I have so many memories that I would not trade for anything. One is the day he showed up at the house with a small gift for Gayle, a trampoline. Mind you she was only one at the time. He was so excited to put her in the trampoline; it only takes up half the barn. He used to love to watch her play in it. Another memory is watching him teach her how to ride her wooden rocking horse he gave her with his badge and name engraved on the side. I know that even though he is not here physically watching her play, he will be watching her play every day from above.

Of course, I think she'll miss those visits to his home the most. We'll miss wagon rides around the basement, swatting the "buggies" with the fly swatter, feeding the cats together and eating our Sunday lunch. He had even taught her how to say "cheese" because every Sunday he would take at least 1 whole roll of pictures of her, then he'd take them to the 1-hour lab at Wal-Mart and then bring them over to our house later that night.

He sure loved those pictures. If you ever ran into him, he was quick to share the latest pictures of Gayle and sometimes even a story of something new they had done together.

I have talked to many people with whom he shared those stories and pictures. Most of them told me that they wished they were Jim Baugh's granddaughter or that if they could come back they would want to be his granddaughter in their second life.

Jim had cared for so many people over the years, but never asked for anything in return. That is not the type of person he was. He has taught so many people to be police officers, caring individuals, but most of all, he has taught Jerrod to be a wonderful husband and an outstanding father to Gayle. Thank you, Jim, for everything you did!

Jerrod, Gayle, and I will look back on our lives with you and realize how lucky we were. Because of you, we will look back on some of the happiest birthdays, holidays, family vacations, and trips that anyone can imagine. With the help of everyone around, Gayle will grow up knowing how much she was loved and cared about from you. These memories give us the strength to go on each day. These memories will soon replace all the sorrow and sadness that we are all feeling right now.

There have been many angels in my life and now I know I have one more looking down on me and one looking down on Papaw's girl. I love you Jim!

--- Tara Baugh ---