



James Young Causey

June 5, 1944 - March 1, 2016

James Young Causey, Jr. served his final game a decorated and courageous champion, gracefully coming off the court of life to join his loving heavenly Father on March 1, 2016. His story is one of triumph and tragedy, but nevertheless, a story authored by an indomitable spirit worthy of its own record book.

Born in Greencastle, Indiana, Jim experienced tennis stardom at an early age. He racked up championships on the national circuit with his dedicated father and namesake, Dr. James Causey, faithfully standing courtside. The gifted left-hander would later capture back-to-back state men's singles championships in 1961 and 1962 at North Mecklenburg High School--a rare feat in high school athletics. In 1963, the University of Georgia called his name and solicited his amazing talents on the court. Jim took on SEC tennis with great gusto, playing both singles (alternating between the 3 and 4 positions) and doubles for the storied Bulldogs. The world at his fingertips, life hurled an unforeseen ball to the college junior in May 1965. Jim was involved in a near fatal, single car accident, leaving him paralyzed.

The former sports headlines of tennis glory now told a new story—one of a former champion who would miraculously survive a 14-month coma, multiple surgeries, and painstakingly relearn how to speak, all with the support of his loving mother and father, two sisters, and devoted Davidsonians. Jim would

spend many years in Davidson, frequently visiting the tennis courts to watch the Wildcats practice, faithfully walking his parallel bars, and venturing across campus with his parents on their daily pilgrimage for fresh air and the mail. Self-declared the "jolly trio," they brought cheer to all that came upon their path, and proved that from life's lemons can come the sweetest of lemonade if strong devotion and a love of life are forever present.

Despite the distance provided by time and circumstance, Causey's tennis legacy was never forgotten. The NC Tennis Association presented Mr. Causey with its President's Award for his contributions to the sport and for his perseverance and determination in the face of adversity. The University of Georgia Bulldogs annually present a team award named after him--the Jim Causey Overhead Award--and at Davidson, where his game was refined, the men's tennis team hosts "the Jim Causey Invitational" each fall. In November 2012, North Mecklenburg High School honored their star from a bygone era as a "Viking Legend," only the third to receive the distinction and the only North Meck male to ever win a state tennis title.

Jim is preceded in death by his wonderfully loyal parents, Dr. James Young Causey, Sr., and Ruby Walton Causey, whose loving care enabled him to remain in his home for over three decades. He is survived by treasured sisters, Joanne Causey Ratchford and Ruth Causey Deaton; brother-in-laws, J. Thomas Ratchford and W. Edward Deaton; and adoring cousins, nieces and nephews.

Immense gratitude is extended to Penn Nursing Center for their dedication to Jim's care and to his sister, Ruth, who was ever-vigilant in visiting her dear brother and in demonstrating that love is indeed a verb.

The quintessential Southern gentleman, Jim never lost his ability to say, "Please, thank you, and I love you." Armed with these vital words and

magnetic charm, he went about his days ever so courageously, with immense faith in his God. His deep yearning to return home to Davidson will be realized in a celebration of his life, to be held on Saturday, March 5, 2016 at Davidson College Presbyterian Church at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the James Y. Causey Scholarship Fund at Davidson College/ P.O. Box 7177/ Davidson, NC 28035-7177.

Tribute Wall



“ *James Young Causey*

February 14, 2021 at 11:24 AM



“ *James Young Causey*

February 14, 2021 at 11:04 AM



“ *James Young Causey*

February 14, 2021 at 11:03 AM



“ *Jim, is now completely healed of all pain and suffering.What a courgracious Guy.Johnny FryarLake City , S.C.*

Johnny Fryar - March 07, 2016 at 12:00 AM

PC

“ I didn't know Jim Causey when he was a tennis star, before his terrible accident in 1965, I was quite a bit younger, but I saw him and knew him for many years in his wheelchair at church at Davidson College Presbyterian Church. He was there in a side aisle every Sunday back in the late 60s and 70s and for years afterwards. Everyone knew his tragic story. He and his parents were inspirational. I shook Jim's hand many times and would try to talk a little everyday foolishness to him as I could. His father sometimes called me "Brother Cole", and it meant a lot to me. Jim always smiled to see me and talked a little with all the many folks who came up on those church occasions. I wish I could have known him better. His tragedy was profound, a watchword of parents in Davidson during the 60s. "If you don't watch out, you'll end up like Jim Causey." He didn't deserve his fate - a catastrophic college days car accident - but he lived it for 50 years. He showed us all perseverance and grace in the face of cruel adversity. He was an inspiration, a mighty athlete, and a loved member of the Davidson community.

Paul Cole - March 06, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MR

“ Ruth and Joanne, When I was in high school (North Mecklenburg Class of 1969), I worked on weekends as a switch board operator at Huntersville Hospital. I got to know Jim during that time and was always delighted to see him and his warm smile. My husband, Jeff Ritchie, knew Jim and your parents when Jeff was a student at Davidson (class of 1971). Neither of us have lived in NC for over 40 years. We learned today of his death and read the obituary online. Please know that your family made a deep impression on us those many years ago. We are grateful that our paths crossed. May you be comforted in the days ahead by a loving God and the memories of Jim's courage and strength.

Megan (Knox) Ritchie - March 05, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MR

“ *You were a treasure on Earth and now a bright star in Heaven.* ”

Maxine Robinson - March 04, 2016 at 12:00 AM