



## Sergeant Carl D. "Dewayne" Graham Jr.

Badge #223  
EOW ... March 20, 2005

I met Dewayne almost 20 years ago, when we were at college at SEMO (South-east Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau, MO). Dewayne was the same person today as he was back then. One of the first things I remember about Dewayne was the smile he kept on his face — he always had that. The way, when he was proud of himself, he would push his belly out, put his hands on his hips, grin, and just look at you until you would smile back.

Dewayne was fun loving and loved to work. While at SEMO he worked with the campus police writing parking tickets. I remember he always loved to tell the story about having a parking ticket writing contest with Les Thurston. He would always tell me how, after an hour, he met back up with Les only to find out he had written double the tickets Les had. Then, Dewayne would give me that big grin and push out his belly until I told him how great he was. He would tell me about how much he had carried Les and I to get where we were today. Then, I would always tell him I had actually carried him, and what a really heavy load he was. We would go back and forth for the next five minutes about who had carried the other most.

Dewayne gave everything in anything he did. Whether it was the job or his personal life. If you went to eat with Dewayne he always wanted to pay. If you planned something, like a zone get-together, Dewayne always wanted to bring everything. He just like doing for others.

A couple of years ago, Dewayne came to me and ask me to find him a good computer to buy. We got on the Internet and found him a computer and he ordered it. Well, it did not take long until Dewayne's house was the stopping spot. Just like Dewayne always was, he would go out and buy a computer game and then play it for hours just so he could get ahead of all of us. Then, when we would come over to play the game he was always telling us how we were such poor game players and he was so much better. He would get his big grin and push out his belly until we told him how great of a game player he was.

Dewayne loved to play jokes on me. I remember one time when I was working in Mountain Grove, MO, I came into the zone office and there were Sergeant Roger Hillhouse, Dewayne, and some others. (I should have known then something was up.) My zone mailbox was on top of a cabinet and I had to tip toe to see into it. I greeted everyone and when I went to check my mailbox, Dewayne came out with a stepstool, "painted in trooper blue" with my badge number on it, for me to use. Dewayne brought it over and put it down for me to step on. I thought I was going to have to call an ambulance for all of them they were laughing so hard.

Dewayne always wanted to help. I remember about two years ago when I was building a new house, Dewayne always asked to help with it. One day, I finally gave in and told him I needed help. Dewayne showed up, and typical Dewayne, he was wearing a T-shirt that was too tight and pants which were too short. He had a hammer in one hand. When I saw him, he looked at me gave me his big grin and pushed out his belly until I laughed hard enough I almost fell out of the rafters.

Later on, Dewayne wanted to help me move into the house. He showed up the day we were moving and started moving boxes and everything else. Before the end of the day, my wife and I would cringe when we saw Dewayne going in for another load. All we'd heard all day was a big crash or bang followed by Dewayne saying, "Oh" or "Oops." It will be OK. I do not know how much got broke, but Dewayne would always smile and tell me he did not have a dime in it.

Dewayne and I have been through a lot together — both good and bad. I remember when Dewayne was his most proud. He was holding his newborn son in his arms and smiling at me. I remember being at the hospital with him, and watching him as he just beamed with pride. We had no better times together then when we were talking about our sons. Dewayne's life was his son, Hayden. He spent every bit of his off time with Hayden. I remember last summer when Dewayne wanted to take Hayden fishing. He took him to the river, and before the day was done had Hayden covered in poison ivy and chiggers. I remember Hayden standing in front of me almost one big red dot, itching and scratching, talking 100 mph telling me about all the fish he had caught. Dewayne was there standing behind him smiling with pride.

Dewayne Graham was one of my best friends. He was a great trooper, a great man, and the best father. He worked harder



*Pictured are Sgt. C. Dewayne Graham and his son, Hayden, 2002.*

than anyone I know and loved what he did. When we were in the Academy together Dewayne and I were talking one night. He told me then, 12 years ago, his ideal job in the Highway Patrol would be zone sergeant in Van Buren. I am proud to say Dewayne had worked hard enough to accomplish that.

It was a rare day Dewayne and I did not see each other or talk on the phone. I could always count on him for support and knew I could vent my frustrations to him. To say I will miss him is such an understatement. But, I will miss him dearly. God bless you, Dewayne. You are a hero.

*(Cpl. Craig N. Ponder, Troop G, wrote this article for the March/April 2005 Patrol News. Cpl. Ponder is now Sergeant Ponder, Troop G.)*



*Sgt. Dewayne Graham, Hayden, and their dog enjoyed spending time outdoors.*

*Sergeant C. Dewayne Graham Jr. was survived by his four-year-old son, Hayden, his parents: Mr. Carl Dewayne (Sr.) and Mrs. Beverly Graham, and Mrs. Donna McGinley. Sgt. Graham (223), 37, was shot and killed in the line of duty on March 20, 2005. Sgt. Graham parked his patrol car in his driveway and exited the vehicle just prior to the shooting. When Sgt. Graham opened his rear car door to retrieve items in the back seat of his patrol car, the suspect ambushed and shot him. Sgt. Graham died instantly.*

*On March 29, 2005, a member of the Patrol placed Lance Shockley under arrest for the murder of Sgt. Graham. Shockley was a suspect in a single fatality traffic crash investigation that was led by Sgt. Graham. Shockley was charged with first degree murder and armed criminal action.*

*On November 16, 2006, the bridges on Missouri Highway 60 crossing the Current River located within the city limits of Van Buren, MO, were dedicated as the "Sgt. Dewayne Graham Jr. Memorial Bridges MO*

*State Highway Patrol."*

*On February 8, 2008, family and friends gathered at the Missouri National Guard Armory in Dexter, MO. The group dedicated a portion of U.S. Highway 60 in Stoddard County from where U.S. 60 and Missouri Route ZZ intersect to where U.S. 60 and Missouri Route 25 intersect as the "Sergeant Carl Dewayne Graham Jr. Memorial Highway."*

*In 2009, a jury found Shockley guilty of murdering Sgt. Graham. On May 22, 2009, Judge David Evans sentenced Shockley to death. In 2013, the Missouri Supreme Court upheld Shockley's conviction. The U. S. Supreme Court also denied Shockley's petition to hear his case. Shockley was executed on October 14, 2025, at the Eastern Reception Diagnostic & Correctional Center in Bonne Terre, MO. Numerous Patrol members and retired Command Staff were in attendance to show support to the Graham family.*

*Sergeant C. Dewayne Graham Jr. was the 24th member of the Highway Patrol to make the ultimate sacrifice.*