



## James Christopher Ryan Wells

July 1, 1980 - August 10, 2020

James Christopher Ryan Wells, age 40 of Murphysboro, passed away Monday, August 10, 2020 suddenly at home.

He was born July 1, 1980 to David and Darla (Ellet) Wells in Memorial Hospital of Carbondale.

A quote from one of James' favorite authors, J. R. R. Tolkien, "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us". James choose wisely, as he fully devoted his time to inspiring and developing his students to achieve their full potential in life.

James was a teacher for the Murphysboro School District, teaching 7th graders at Murphysboro Middle School. As described by one of his students, "James was more than a teacher". When he wasn't teaching in the classroom, he was volunteering his time to the MHS Key Club and Drama Club, MMS Builders Club and Drama Club, Murphysboro Apple Festival, Murphysboro Youth Center, and several other community service initiatives. James was also a second-degree black belt and donated his time to teach the discipline of karate to kids at the Murphysboro Youth Center. One of James' favorite hobbies was videography and photography. He enjoyed capturing life's special moments, whether it was those of his students or of his family.

James is survived by his parents, David and Darla Wells of Murphysboro; sisters, Jennifer (Mike) Throgmorton of Creal Springs and Kelsey (Kyle) Stevens of Thebes; maternal grandmother, Sadie Ellett of Grand Tower; nieces and nephews, Hunter Throgmorton, Colton Throgmorton, Noah Campos Throgmorton and Eli Campos Throgmorton, all of Creal Springs; Bentley Worthen and Adelynn Stevens of Thebes; aunts and uncles, Bernice Wells, Mary Beth (Larry) Baltzell, Gene (Cindy) Ellet, Deneen (Shawn) McMahan, all of Grand Tower; Johnny (Kay) Ellet of Bluffs; Denise (Mike) Hanson of Anna and Kathleen (Jeremy) Freeman of Jacksonville; other relatives, many friends and a host of special students.

He was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, James & Susie Wells; maternal grandfather, John Ellet; and a brother-in-law, Ramon Campos.

Graveside Service for James Christopher Ryan Wells will be Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 11:00 am in Pleasant Grove Memorial Park with Mr. Robert Henson officiating. Inurnment will follow.

Family and friends are ask to go directly to the cemetery. Everyone attending will be required to wear a mask and practice social distancing.

Memorials can be made to the Murphysboro School District and will be divided between the MMS and MHS Drama Clubs, MMS Builders Club, and the MHS Key Club.

Crain Pleasant Grove-Murdale Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

# Cemetery Details

## Pleasant Grove Memorial Park

31 Memorial Dr.  
Murphysboro, IL 62966  
(618) 687-1145  
crain@crainsonline.com

# Previous Events

## Graveside - Pleasant Grove Memorial Park

AUG 18. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Pleasant Grove Memorial Park  
31 Memorial Dr.  
Murphysboro, IL 62966  
(618) 687-1145  
crain@crainsonline.com

# Tribute Wall

AN

“ *Mr. Wells was a great teacher and an even more compassionate man. I sincerely enjoyed being his student in Murphysboro Middle School in 2019. I remember one incident in which my locker was jammed and I couldn't get it to open. My locker was near his classroom, so I went and asked him for help. Mr. Wells graciously gave up his lunch break to help me open my locker. Mr. Wells, you will be missed. Thank you.*

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**Anthony** - December 04, 2025 at 09:57 PM



“ *James Christopher Ryan Wells*

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October 23, 2023 at 06:26 AM

AL

“ *Mr.wells was a very good teacher.he will be dearly missed.*

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**Allysa** - September 17, 2020 at 03:54 PM

LR

“ James was an art student of mine at MHS. He was always a kind and respectful person to teachers and fellow students. Then he became a kind and respectful teacher with total dedication to the school district, his students, fellow teachers and all the clubs and activities he participated in, and there were many. He gave of his time to all the plays and musicals at the middle school and high school helping where ever he was needed. If he didn't know how to do something, he would try his best to figure it out. He didn't ask for recognition, but quietly went about doing good for others many times without the person knowing about it. He surely had the Spiritual gift of “Helps”. He will have rewards in heaven, well deserved. I'm glad to call James a friend.

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**Lloyd Roberts** - August 18, 2020 at 06:51 PM

NA

“ I gave James an authentic wedding turban from India. He loved it. He said his students loved it. It was a Christmas gift for teaching my daughter, Gita, karate at the MYRC. He's the best.

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**natalie** - August 17, 2020 at 07:23 PM

MG

“ James worked with me for many, many years as Chairman of the Children's Free Fair for the Murphysboro St. Patrick's Day. He always made it a complete success. I loved & respected this young man for all his accomplishments. He will be so missed by everyone who knew him.

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**Marlene McGregor Gibbs** - August 16, 2020 at 04:01 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of James Christopher Ryan Wells.



August 15, 2020 at 10:23 PM



“ Starbucks Coffee Condolences was purchased for the family of James Christopher Ryan Wells.



August 15, 2020 at 02:21 PM



“ James was such a quiet, wonderful man. It was a privilege and a pleasure to volunteer beside him and get to know him through Key Club. He made this world a better place.  
Margie Toniny

Margaret Toniny - August 15, 2020 at 07:56 AM



“ Darla and David,  
Our hearts go out to you and all your family with the loss of your son James. We want you to know our thoughts and prayers are with you all . May God comfort and guide you through this difficult time. Rollie and Kathy Matlock

Kathy Matlock - August 14, 2020 at 10:58 PM

CM

“ Our hearts are breaking at the passing of Kiwanis Club member James Wells. In his quiet way, James had woven himself into the core of our club. He was an engaging advisor for both the Murphysboro Middle Builder and High School Key Clubs, organizer of the St Patrick's Day Irish Kids Fest and an active participant in our multiple fundraisers and service projects.

James joined the K-Family in 2003, led the Kiwanis Club as 2005-2006 President and served two terms as I-I District Division 36 Lieutenant Governor beginning in 2007. Throughout his life James exemplified the Kiwanis Vision by being "a positive influence in communities worldwide — so that one day, all children will wake up in communities that believe in them, nurture them and provide the support they need to thrive."

He will be missed.

Cynthia M. Mill  
Immediate Past President  
Kiwanis Club of Murphysboro

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Cynthia Mill - August 14, 2020 at 06:09 PM

TA

“ Man This is so sad as i sit here im reminded of all the builders club meetings we had after school with Mr.Wells my 6th Grade year he was a very intelligent funny man he was down for our thoughts and opinions he always wanted the best for any of his students whether you werein builders club or he was your homeroom teacher or just a met him in passing throught the hall he wanted the best and wanted each kid to be successful He will be missed By Many

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TaQuan Adams - August 14, 2020 at 11:48 AM

SW

“ I was a student of his. I am very sad that he is gone. I will miss him, he was my favorite teacher. He was someone I trusted, someone I'm glad to call my friend. He did good things for the community. And I wanna send my condolences to the family. I know it is hard right now with everything going on. And I am sorry for your lose. I know he is in heaven right now making people laugh and smile. Rest in peace James Wells.

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**Skylar Williams** - August 14, 2020 at 11:03 AM



“ James was such a great server. It is such a shock to hear of your family's loss. The loss the world feels now from his heart service to his students. He dedicated his time and patience with my daughter Courtney. He got her involved in Builder's Club and she continued on to Key Club thanks to the help and direction of James. He convinced her to be on the board and showed her service to others. Thank you James for all your devotion to our children.

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**Stephanie Marler** - August 14, 2020 at 08:48 AM

CM

“ I was a student of his and I was also in some of the clubs he helped with and I am just so in shock of this he was an incredible person to be around he would joke around a lot and he was just an overall amazing person and teacher and he will be missed.

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**Cameron Mitchell** - August 13, 2020 at 09:20 PM

NF

“ He had a lot of patience with his students, and it’s sad to say he’s gone. RIP, Mr. Wells.



Natalie Blair Fraser - August 13, 2020 at 07:08 PM

KS

“ I was a student of his. I'm proud to have called him my teacher. I will always remember his life lessons when I am faced with a difficult situation.

Kaylie Spann - August 13, 2020 at 06:13 PM

MH

“ If only two words could be used to describe him it would be thoughtful and helpful. As a student of his, I’m sure he would ask me to elaborate on that answer, but simple words are best for now.

Madi H - August 13, 2020 at 05:02 PM

AL

“ I have had the pleasure of getting to know Mr. Wells from middle school through high school. He is a great person . He served this community greatly... He will be missed.

ashley lindsey - August 13, 2020 at 03:26 PM

JB

“ He was such a kind soft spoken man. He taught my 2 kids karate and saw them grow up. Which both became brown belts. May Heavenly Gates swing open wide. You will be greatly missed. 🙏🙏  
🙏🙏

John Beasley - August 11, 2020 at 09:36 PM

AV

*James was a friend of my son steven varner we are so sorry*

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**Ann Varner** - August 12, 2020 at 01:46 PM

KL

*In everything he did he served. There is no greater form of leadership or expression of love. Thank you James for teaching me things I thought I already knew. Key Club was in his blood, and is in his debt!*

*Kevin Lipe*

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**Kevin Lipe** - August 13, 2020 at 08:59 AM