

Mark Johnston



Mark Johnston was born June 10, 1962 in Ottawa to parents; W. Ronald & Gayle (Moore) Johnston. He had two sisters Leslie and Jill. The family moved to Carp area when Mark was six and he attended grade school at Huntley Centennial School and then high school at Earl of March. After graduation Mark went on to the University of Ottawa where he studied kinesiology.

Mark excelled at team sports and played football for Ottawa University Gee Gee's and the famed Ottawa Sooners. His love of being part of a team made his chosen career as a Fire Fighter a natural fit. Mark Johnston joined his new team the Nepean Fire Department in April of 1990 and was enthralled to be working in a career that he loved each and every day. He was honoured to be working with so many exceptional individuals and helping those in distress. Mark believed that no single gesture was too small, the sum of these were what truly mattered.

Mark met and fell in love with Rebeccah Erskine; they married in 1991, and they had a son Trent and daughter Lahra Grace. They were the true jewels of his life. Mark and his family lived in Stittsville.

In 2002 Mark learned the devastating news that he had contracted colon cancer and was determined to fight the deadly disease. Together with friend, fellow fire fighter and cancer patient Jim Andrews he founded "Quest for a Cure" an annual outdoor adventure race which has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars and awareness to support a cure for cancer. The Ottawa Regional Cancer Centre set up a "Mark Johnston Compassionate Care Fund" which helps families cope with the expenses not covered by OHIP. There is a Mark Johnston benefit football game held in his name by the Ottawa Sooners along with a Mark Johnston Golf Tournament organized by John Ielo of Astral Fitness. All these events show the high esteem in which Mark was held by his friends and peers. He further fought to have certain

cancers recognized as workplace related illnesses right to the end. It was only after his death that his colon cancer was recognized.

Mark Johnston succumbed to the deadly disease on April 7, 2006 at the age of 43. His funeral at Holy Sacrament Church drew over fifteen hundred mourners a true testament to this kind and gentle man.

A quote from Mark Johnston;

“The Journey of Hope begins with Love”