

Community reeling from loss of local teen

By Mark PavilonsEditor

The entire King community is mourning the tragic loss of a local teen. Jack Shepherd, 16, died Aug. 16 in an ATV accident in Schomberg. He's described as a "ray of light" to all who knew him. Jack's uncle Randy Shepherd, a King firefighter, and minor hockey president, noted the family received thousands of messages over the past week. "The outpouring of love and support from the community is truly special and a testament to Jack's character as a young man. He touched so many lives, helped so many people and persevered through many challenges in his young life. Jack was truly special. In a time when no words can describe the grief we are all experiencing. Jack was special. And he will be missed dearly," he said. He extended thanks to King Fire and Emergency Service Station 36 for being there and supporting Ben, Evan, Jacob and Scaff. "The crew was amazing and we thank you for all that did and we take solace in knowing that the boys had familiar faces to rely on during the worst night of their lives. Thank you to my Brothers and Sisters of 36. Thank you." He also extended thanks for the efforts of YRP, York EMS and Ornge. Jack was a valued member of our KTMHA membership, and player for the King Rebellion U18AA hockey team. According to the hockey association, Jack was not only a talented hockey star but also highly respected by his teammates, friends, and coaching staff. "His loss is felt profoundly within our community. We are actively seeking additional resources to support his teammates and coaching staff during this difficult time. It's moments like these that remind us of the importance of coming together as a community to offer comfort and strength." "The Shepherd Family was and has been by our sides from the beginning with Abby," noted Becky Eveson. "They offered more support to us than we could ever have imagined. Abby Magnets for the cars, signage for all of our events, all of our photos for Abby's Celebration of Life, and the list goes on. There are no words to describe how incredibly wrong it feels to be on the other side, now supporting them through this tragic event that their family is living through. Holly Douglass launched a GoFundMe campaign to help alleviate the financial strain on the family. So far, it has raised more than \$100,000 "an incredible amount! Douglass said they wanted to set up this fundraiser, not to help with funeral costs as those will be covered by the family, but so Tom and Shannon can focus on their grief and their family without the burden of worrying about finances. "We have had so many people reaching out genuinely wanting to help. A wonderful way to help at this time is to take some of the financial burden off their plate. For more, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/jack-shepherd> According to Rod Abrams Funeral Home, Jack is survived by his devoted father and best friend, Tom Shepherd, stepmom Shannon Mead, sister Ryleigh and little brother Hudson, Grandparents Kathy Cartan, Cathy Pearson, Randy Shepherd and Pam Agar, Poppy, Ros and Bob. Jack is predeceased by his loving mother, Tanya Shepherd, and grandfather Mike Pearson. He will be terribly missed by his aunts and uncles Randy and Jenn Shepherd, Holly and Jaime Douglass, Kate and Chris Glassow, Ashley and JD McFarlane, Laura and Kirk, Cris and Angelina Mead, Tonya and Stephen Ross, Lydia and Cory Berger, and Bryce Bednarz. Jack was absolutely adored by his many cousins: Wesley, Isla, Blair, Sloan, Bronwyn, Taylor, Tenley, Madelyn, Hailey, Tyler, Milena, Nathan, Aubree, Blake, Ryder, Austin and most of all his best friend and cousin Ben. Jack was very special to many people, but the Boston family "Brandy, Larry, Jack's best bud Jesse and his first love Jorja in particular. He was a loving and thoughtful older brother to his sister Ryleigh, and to his 2-year-old brother Hudson, whom no one could make laugh harder than his big brother. An old soul from day one, Jack was a ray of light for everyone who knew him. Always smiling, kind, gentle and helpful, he was loved by all. He was learning the trade of carpentry through his talented dad, Tom, and was hardworking and looking forward to following in his dad's footsteps as a carpenter. They recently enjoyed a trip to Michigan for a Motocross race, which Jack described as the highlight of his life. Jack was dedicated to hockey and was a tenacious learner and a great team player. He excelled on the ice and truly loved the sport. In the summer months Jack loved to be outdoors, riding his dirt bike and hanging out with his many, many friends. He had a deep love and appreciation for music, particularly country. He had recently started collecting vinyl records, which his sister Ryleigh will lovingly continue. Jack will be deeply missed by all who knew him. The only solace through all of this is knowing that he is reunited with his mom, and that Tanya is finally back with her beautiful son. The family will receive friends at the Trisan Centre, 25 Dillane Dr, Schomberg. There will be a Celebration of Life service on Wednesday, Aug. 28 at noon with a visitation period beginning at 10 a.m. A reception to follow the celebration of life.