



## Sgt. John Thomas Rikard

November 12, 1977 - December 9, 2015

Sgt. John Thomas Rikard, 38, of Clyde, died on Wednesday, December 9, 2015. A native of Black Mountain, John was born on November 12, 1977 to the late Robert Vann Rikard and Barbara Moring Rikard.

He was a 1997 graduate of Owen High School where he played football and was the 1997 State Champion in the Heavyweight Division for Wrestling. He was inducted in the Owen High School Hall of Fame in 2013. He attended Western Carolina University and graduated from Appalachian State University with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master's degree in political science. In June of 2003 he began working with the Asheville Police Department.

John enjoyed working out, making jokes with his friends, fishing with his brother-in-law, watching sports and his beloved Georgia Bulldogs. He loved his bulldog Bristol and loathed but tolerated Nicole's dog Copper.

More than anything in the world, he loved his son, Tucker.

John is survived by his loving wife, Nicole (Gonnelli) Rikard; his beloved son, Tucker Thomas Rikard; his aunt, Pat Thomas and her husband, Billy of Nahunta, GA; his cousins, Jeff Thomas and his wife, Tammy, Cindy Sullivan of FL, Kristen Thomas and her husband JT with their boys, Garrett and Gannon,

Magan Thomas Barnhill and her husband George all of GA; his mother-in law, Barbara Treu Gonnelli of Boca Raton, FL; his father-in-law Paul Gonnelli III and Vivian of Frankfort, KY; his brother-in-law Billy Gonnelli and his wife Ashley of Palm Harbor, FL; his niece Harbor Rose Gonnelli; and his best friends: Bill McGee, Jakey Jacobson, and Josh Hill.

So many more extended friends and family including Katie and the Allison family; his work team that he supervised and watched over: Tyler Garrett, Lara Lemons Raymond, Heavan Dunne, Doug Williams, Robert Lanning, and Bobby Beard. And of course all of his Brothers and Sisters in Blue that he spent many hours, days, and time with working side by side.

A funeral service will be held at 10am on Friday December 18, 2015 at Biltmore Baptist Church with APD Chaplain Tim Brady officiating. The family will receive friends from 4pm to 7pm on Thursday December 17, 2015 at Morris Funeral Home, 304 Merrimon Ave.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/jonathanrikard> or to Owen High School Athletics football and wrestling (Black Mountain, NC) in John's memory.

# Previous Events

## Family will Receive Friends

DEC 17. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Morris Funeral & Cremation Care  
304 Merrimon Ave.  
Asheville, NC 28801  
(828) 252-1821  
info@morrisfamilycare.com  
<http://www.morrisfamilycare.com>

## Funeral Service

DEC 18. 10:00 AM (ET)

Biltmore Baptist Church  
35 Clayton Road  
Arden, NC 28704  
<http://www.biltmorebaptist.org/arden/>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Morris Funeral & Cremation Care created a Tribute Video in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



**Morris Funeral Home** - December 17, 2015 at 11:11 AM

CB

*I didn't know him or the family. I felt a need to watch the memorial video and it was a very emotional one. He was so full of life and you could tell he loved everyone he came into contact with. My deepest sympathy goes out to the family and hope you know Angels are among us and watch over us. God Bless.*

**Cynthia bugg** - December 18, 2015 at 05:11 PM

VH

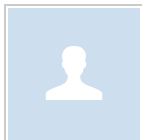
*John will be greatly missed, but never forgotten... always in the heart of all who loved him.  
Thank you, Morris Funeral Home, for doing so much to help Nikki at such a sad time.*

**Vivian Ann Hippe** - December 18, 2015 at 10:57 PM



*Nicole, my continued prayers for you and your family. Beautiful tribute video. May God watch over you during this difficult time and may you always remember the wonderful moments you had together.*

**MA Brinley** - December 19, 2015 at 06:59 AM



“ *Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM

TS

“ John was a wonderful guy, and will be missed by many. We here at Alan's Jewelry & Pawn always enjoyed working with John, and our thoughts and prayers go to the family and friends.

Tonia Sheppard - December 18, 2015 at 03:42 PM

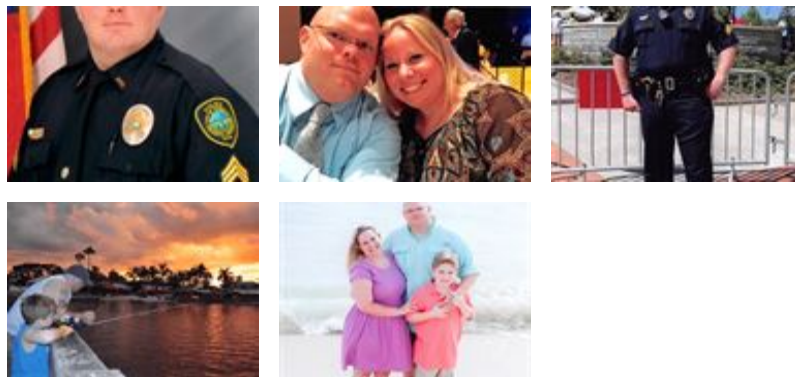
 Regina Harper

“ I met John during my Freshman year at Western Carolina University during the summer semester of 1997. He lived two doors down the hall from me in the dorm. We immediately became friends, he had a great attitude and infectious smile. Many years passed by and I began working for Child Protective Services and John and I ran into each other because he was sent by APD to assist me on a case. I was so happy to see his face because I knew the type of person that John was and that he would protect all involved. John was an amazing person and he will be greatly missed! God bless your family!

Regina Harper - December 17, 2015 at 04:47 PM

 established 1919

“ 65 files added to the album Life Tributes



Morris Funeral Home - December 17, 2015 at 11:03 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard.*



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December 17, 2015 at 10:50 AM



“ *Holly Layton lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



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**Holly Layton** - December 17, 2015 at 06:58 AM



“ *Shelli Tayman lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



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**Shelli Tayman** - December 16, 2015 at 07:54 PM



“ *Nicole, we are very sorry for your loss. John was like a son to us. Our prayers are for you, Tucker and family. May John rest in peace!*



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**Tom and Pat Owens** - December 16, 2015 at 01:50 PM



“ *Krissy Seiple lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



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**Krissy Seiple** - December 16, 2015 at 11:47 AM



“ *Jane And Allen Lee lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



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**Jane and Allen Lee** - December 15, 2015 at 07:09 PM

JL

“ John was a big teddy bear with a bigger heart. He was such a special man. Memories.....very funny texts to Aunt Jane not so very long ago....extra fun family time in Sebastian..his love of fishing and of the ocean....and our special surprise trip to NC for Sophia....John and Nicole were sure to have it filled with lots of planned outings and family fun time to boot, (catching fireflies was a bonus!!), John was the best chauffeur and tour guide ever! It was so humbling to see how much he loved his "new" family and how much he loved his time with Nicole and Tucker!

*Our hearts feel so heavy for Nicole, Tucker and all that knew and loved John.*

*Thanks for those special memories.*

*Love and miss you John,*

*Aunt Jane and Uncle Allen*

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**Jane and Allen Lee** - December 15, 2015 at 07:08 PM

MW

“ Mimi Wilms lit a candle in memory of Sgt.  
John Thomas Rikard



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**Mimi Wilms** - December 15, 2015 at 06:16 PM

EH

“ *Ellen Hilton lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



Ellen Hilton - December 15, 2015 at 04:18 PM

KB

“ *3 files added to the album Memories Album*



Kimberly Sullins Burpeau - December 15, 2015 at 11:47 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard.*



December 15, 2015 at 10:41 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard.*



December 15, 2015 at 10:21 AM

DI

“ *Diz lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



Diz - December 15, 2015 at 10:05 AM

DI

*We shall meet again my friend.*

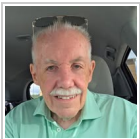
Diz - December 15, 2015 at 10:08 AM

ES

“ *Eric & Meredith Stoneman lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



Eric & Meredith Stoneman - December 15, 2015 at 08:53 AM



“ *Terry Threadwell lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



Terry Threadwell - December 15, 2015 at 02:39 AM

TF

“ *The Crawford Family lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



**The Crawford Family** - December 14, 2015 at 08:36 PM

TF

*The Crawford Family from BRPD*

**The Crawford Family** - December 14, 2015 at 08:39 PM

KB

“ *Thinking of you Nicole and praying for You, Tucker and the family.*



**Katie Murray Broadway** - December 14, 2015 at 08:26 PM

PV

“ *The Rikard family and the entire law enforcement community remains in our deepest prayers. God bless you. Rest easy, John.*



**Patrick & Bobbi VanderVeen** - December 14, 2015 at 08:02 PM

VH

“ *Loving memory.... RIP, John. All of our memories are now turned into treasures.*

**Vivian Ann Hippe** - December 14, 2015 at 07:18 PM



“ *John is one of those high school students that always brings a smile to this retired teacher. He was always ready for another laugh and hard work, whether in sports or in the classroom. He was a good man.*

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**Mary Creath** - December 14, 2015 at 07:05 PM

WT

“ *John you were a great friend,who I knew since the middle school years. You were always a sincere, honest friend that was always there for you. You always had such a big heart. I know years past and we all went our separate ways,but a good man has been lost but our memories will always live on. RIP my brother you are missed.*

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**Will Teters** - December 14, 2015 at 05:10 PM

DA

“ *Dawn lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



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**Dawn** - December 14, 2015 at 03:39 PM

JB

“ I will always remember John’s kindness and that special glowing smile which was contagious with anyone he/she came in contact with.  
My prayers and thoughts are with you.

*Always In Our Thoughts, Your Memories Live On Forever In Our Hearts*

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**Jackie Brank** - December 14, 2015 at 02:05 PM



RT

“ Rick And Angie Tullis lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard

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**Rick and Angie Tullis** - December 14, 2015 at 01:20 PM



CL

“ My sincerest condolences to John's family and friends. He was a great guy who had a lot of respect for other people. It was always a treat to run into him around town and catch up. He will be missed.

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**Chris Lee** - December 14, 2015 at 12:53 PM



SF

*In high school John was a student that everyone loved. He was kind to all different types of kids, thoughtful, a good student, a great jock, a lot of fun. He had a serious side but didn't seem to take himself too seriously. My heart breaks to know how he hurt and how his family hurts. Sending love, prayers, and peace.*

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**Sharon Fender** - December 14, 2015 at 08:38 PM

JM

*I worked with John while he was in college at App State. We would often hang out after work & talk about our dreams. I was always proud of him for achieving his goal to work for the APD. Over the years I reached out to him from time to time & it was like nothing had changed. I'm sorry we won't have another opportunity to chat again on this earth. You were a good man John & are missed by so many friends & family. Peace be with you.*

Jon Magee - December 15, 2015 at 11:13 PM

CM

“ Courtney M lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard



Courtney M - December 14, 2015 at 09:24 AM

AK

“ My deepest condolences to the family.




Amy Kim - December 14, 2015 at 08:12 AM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Morris Funeral Home - December 14, 2015 at 07:52 AM

  
Jennifer  
Mull

“ Jennifer Mull lit a candle in memory of Sgt.  
John Thomas Rikard



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**Jennifer Mull** - December 14, 2015 at 07:02 AM

JS

“ John was an amazing man. I know that no  
matter what finding Nicole, spending time with  
Tucker and Bristol, and getting to do what he  
loved every day made him so happy. Prayers  
and Love to all.



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**Jenn S** - December 14, 2015 at 12:42 AM

DB

“ Don And Flo Burton lit a candle in memory of  
Sgt. John Thomas Rikard



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**Don and Flo Burton** - December 13, 2015 at 10:52 PM

DB

*Condolences to John's family and fellow LEOs.*

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**Don and Flo Burton** - December 13, 2015 at 10:53 PM

JG

“ I've been gone over 20 years now but of the few memories that connect me with Black Mountain the Rikard brothers are the ones which bring the most smiles to my face. Damn John I wish I had made it home to have one more great conversation with the two of you. You're smile and easy laugh always brought peace to those around you. Safe journeys to whatever heaven you call paradise. I hope to meet you there some day. The world will miss you. Thank you for your protection in the darkest of night. Robert if you read this send me a message.

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**Jacob Gould** - December 13, 2015 at 10:10 PM

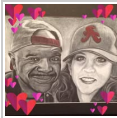
KR

“ Kathy Russell lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard



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**Kathy Russell** - December 13, 2015 at 09:46 PM



**GOD BLESS** in this difficult moment. **PRAYERS** are going up in the name of **JESUS CHRIST. RIP**

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**Corey Ray** - December 14, 2015 at 08:06 AM

KR

“ I will never forget when we first met John. Brint introduced him to us and from the start we liked him so much. we talked about family and how we all cared for each other. we hadn't talked recently. The last time we seen John we ran into him at the store he came up to Brint and I and hugged our neck. We told him how proud we were of him and we were so glad our son Brint had introduced us year's ago.His personality was so joyful you had to love him... He was a great man and Father. He will be missed by many. Our love and prayers go out to all his family and his family in Blue.. Especially Tucker who John loved so much... May GOD give you comfort and peace.  
with much love Brint Sr. & Kathy Russell

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**Kathy Russell** - December 13, 2015 at 09:46 PM

KF

“ When I coached John, I considered him one of my favorite "sons." He was a leader and had the heart of a Warhorse. He won a state wrestling championship, and no one does that unless they have something special - beyond what anyone else has. I will always remember the conversations we had when I used to take him home after practice. He was the first player I knew who had pet goats:) John was an awesome leader for the football team as well as for the entire student body at Owen High. I wish I could understand all of this, and I will always respect him and love him.

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**Kenny Ford** - December 13, 2015 at 09:02 PM

SB

“ Dear Nicole, I am so very sorry we have lost John. I am sure you, John's family and your family are heart broken. John was an outstanding young man whom we all respected and loved. We are praying for you and love you.  
Sue Barron

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**Sue Barron** - December 13, 2015 at 07:53 PM

Jennifer Proctor

“ My condolences go out to a great man. He impacted so many people growing up and in our community. I will always remember his smile, his voice, and his hugs in the halls of Owen High School. He was a talented all-around athlete and friend with a positive attitude. Praying for the family and those closest to him at this time. May he Rest eternally in Peace.



Jennifer Proctor - December 13, 2015 at 06:54 PM

LH

“ Prayers for all his family, from work and home. RIP Sgt. Rikard. - L. Harwood (BCEMS)



Lydia Harwood - December 13, 2015 at 06:37 PM

SS

“ Sherry Searcy lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard



Sherry Searcy - December 13, 2015 at 06:25 PM

KO

“ Kimberly Silver Omar lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard



Kimberly Silver Omar - December 13, 2015 at 06:17 PM

KH

“ Kimberly Rice Hanna lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard



Kimberly Rice Hanna - December 13, 2015 at 05:17 PM

Lynn Aly

“ Lynn Aly lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard



Lynn Aly - December 13, 2015 at 05:08 PM

TF

“ I'm so sorry to hear about John he was a friend to everyone. He always wore a smile no matter what I'm praying for you all and im praying for tucker if I can do anything. Let me know

teresa fox - December 13, 2015 at 03:58 PM

PS

“ Penny Sams lit a candle in memory of Sgt.  
John Thomas Rikard



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**Penny Sams** - December 13, 2015 at 03:00 PM



“ Tamara Stewart lit a candle in memory of Sgt.  
John Thomas Rikard



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**Tamara Stewart** - December 13, 2015 at 10:45 AM



*John was such a pleasure to work with, and he will be missed. Prayers to his wife, son, brothers and sisters in blue, and all the rest of his family.*

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**Tamara Stewart** - December 13, 2015 at 10:46 AM

MH

“ My family and I would like to offer our sympathy at this time... we all have fond memories of John and pray that those memories, along with others, will help you get through this very difficult time. The Higgins Family

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**marilyn higgins** - December 13, 2015 at 10:22 AM

MH

“ *Marilyn Higgins lit a candle in memory of Sgt. John Thomas Rikard*



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**marilyn higgins** - December 13, 2015 at 10:19 AM

JB

“ *John was like a son to us. His delightful and helpful spirit was evident early on when he volunteered to help at our auctions at the young age of ten. All through his teen years and into college he worked hard and triumphed over many of life's challenges. He was a state wrestling champion, an all star football player, enthusiastic participant in other sports and extra curricular activities. One could always count on John to be on time, dressed and ready to play, no matter the event. John, we thank you for all the hard work and fun times we shared together. Heaven surely got an All Star Angel when this beautiful Soul arrived. He was so proud of his son and loved him very much. To his friends and family we send our love and condolences to each of you.*



*"Jackie" & James Buchanan*

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**Jacqueline Buchanan** - December 13, 2015 at 09:53 AM

DW

“ It was my pleasure to serve as John’s choral music teacher in middle and high school at Owen. I could always rely on John’s full support in whatever the chorus was trying to do. He was always focused and attentive in class, as well as being pleasant to work with in our musical endeavors.

I send my condolences to his family at this sad time. John will live on in my memory as being a person of high integrity. It was a privilege to know him.

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**Dale Whittington** - December 12, 2015 at 07:48 PM