

Mark Udell

May 6, 2005

Wow. I just found out that my good friend Mark Udell was killed in a motorcycle accident this week. I'm in shock. I saw Mark during Easter weekend and he was doing great. He was getting ready to graduate with his special ed degree (finally). We watched Strangers With Candy episodes and drank Dr. Pepper. We shared modeling magazines and dreamed about all the cool airplanes of WWII. Mark was my soul brother. We dreamed of taking a trip to Vietnam and Cambodia – visiting the cities that we read about in the accounts of the Vietnam conflict and the Kimer Rouge. This was a common interest as both of our dads we involved in that dreadful war.

Mark was neat. His house was always so clean. I remember when I went into his bathroom and peaked inside his shower. It surprised me to find four or five beer bottles neatly placed on a shelf where most people keep their shampoo. Mark said he likes to drink a few while he takes a long bath. I told him he'll never get married!

Mark worked for Mat Hoffman Sr. (the father of famous cyclist Mat Hoffman) a few years ago. Mat had a cool twin engine Beachcraft King Air. It was white with blue accents and could easily seat ten people comfortably. One summer Mark had to wash the plane and wax it. Gosh! What a job! Well, Mat Sr. talked me into repainting the bezels on the instrument panel. It was hot and sticky summer and I was painting with a tiny Windsor Newton brush matte black on all the chipped areas and repainted all the lettering in white, red, or blue. The cool part of this job was being around airplanes and getting to take a few rides in the King Air. It was a great summer.

I met Mark ten or eleven years ago in Dallas at a militaria collector's show. At the time, I was collecting Royal Air Force items from WWII and Mark and his dad collected just about anything WWII, but focused on German Luftwaffe and US Marine. (at one time they had a killer German Luftwaffe collection). Mark knew who I was because he and his father had bought a set of prints that I had drawn years ago. The set depicted six German soldiers in WWII. Mark somehow found me through a crowd of people and introduced himself. We immediately created a common bond by interests – collecting stuff, modeling, history, books, crazy tv shows and me laughing at him being crazy.

My girls called him "Crazy Mark". They loved it when Mark came by the house. He always played with them and made us all laugh. My fondest memory of one a Crazy Mark visit was when he put his motorcycle helmet on Abbie, who was about three years old. The helmet was so large and Abbie so small – and Abbie was butt naked!

Mark will be missed. He was a gentle giant who loved



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working with kids – and kids loved Mark. He was going to be a great teacher. Mark was passionate. He loved 80's punk music, skateboarding, making people laugh, spending time with his dad, beer, girls, books, Indian food, sushi, his cat, his motorcycle, video games, and Monty Pythons.

I love ya, brother. Miss you already.

The Daily Oklahoman Newspaper account of the accident
– May 4, 2005

Accident with SUV kills motorcyclist

THE VILLAGE - A motorcyclist was dead when officers arrived at an accident scene Tuesday at Britton Road and Waverly Avenue.

Mark S. Udell, 36, of The Village died after his motorcycle was clipped by a sport utility vehicle attempting to change lanes. Udell was thrown onto the pavement, and the motorcycle rolled 20 feet before landing in the street.

Paramedics responded to a call about 3:50 p.m. When they arrived, Udell was dead. Witnesses said he was alive after the collision and that another motorist stayed with him until paramedics arrived.

Police said the accident occurred when the SUV switched lanes quickly, clipping the motorcycle and sending it spinning into a utility pole in front of a hardware store.

Police took the driver of the SUV, John Jaques, 39, of Ada in for questioning and later cited him for driving with a suspended license, Deputy Police Chief Steve Jagosh said.

