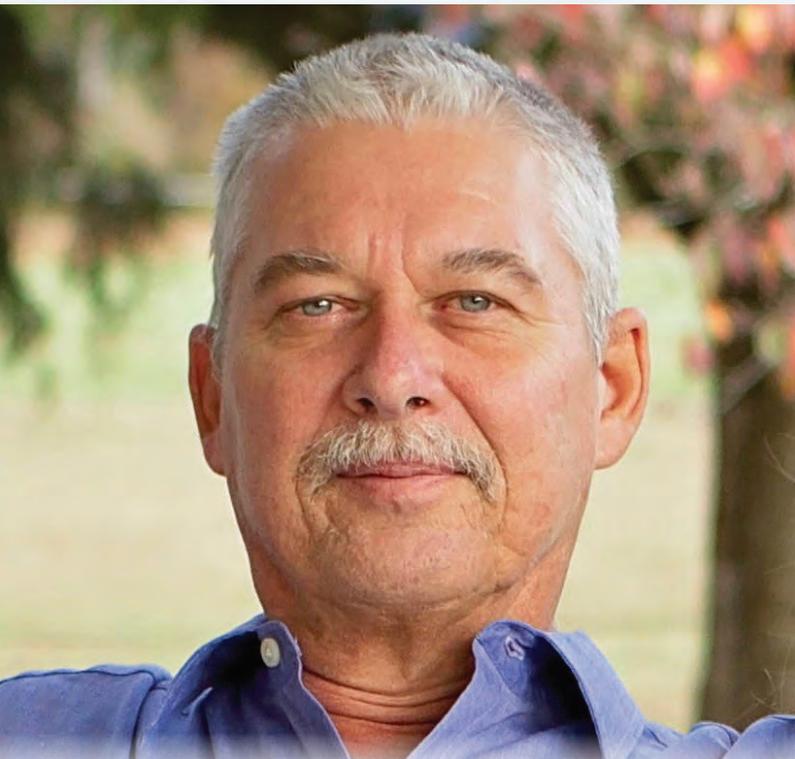


Remembering



James Ronald Varnell

**Bakertown Volunteer Fire
Department – North Carolina**

Volunteer Firefighter

February 2, 2016

Age: 53



James Ronald “Jim” Varnell, 53, of Elm City, North Carolina, died in the line of duty on February 2, 2016. Jim was a wonderful husband, father, and friend. He loved and cared deeply for his family and was indelibly present in their lives. Jim enjoyed all of life’s everyday conversations, being a father and supporting his daughters’ pursuits, cracking jokes to make his wife laugh, and surprising his family with encouraging notes and detours to take the scenic route home.

Jim was a quiet, steady man with a sense of humor. He loved his community and never hesitated to drop whatever he was doing to lend a helping hand to someone in need. He always had time to listen and made a point to visit with people frequently and often unannounced. Jim was a dedicated member of Wilbanks Christian Church; he loved God, his church family, and listening to the choir and sermons.

Jim was an active member of the Bakertown Volunteer Fire Department for nearly 22 years. He loved the fire service and believed strongly in its mission helping the community. Jim helped start the junior firefighter program at the department and was head of their training group. Getting the youth involved in service to their community was important to him, and he loved teaching and passing down the tradition of volunteer firefighting. He was a volunteer EMT with Elm City EMS for many years and also responded to emergency medical calls with Bakertown Volunteer Fire Department, where he helped establish the first responder program. Helping people was his passion.

When asked, Jim said the most beautiful place he had ever been was right here at home, on the farm where he grew up and raised his family. He is remembered as a Simple Man—the song by Lynyrd Skynyrd captured his life and love of classic rock. He is greatly loved and missed by his family, friends, and the community he was so deeply rooted in.

Jim is survived by his loving wife of 31 years, Amber Varnell, and his daughters, Misty Varnell and Dana Varnell, all of Elm City. He was preceded in death by his parents, Ronald and Jeanne Varnell, and his sister, Rhonda Varnell Taylor.