

Army Captain Christopher Scott Cash – Age 36
October 2, 1967 – June 24, 2004

My name is Nancy Lee Kelley and I am a very proud American Gold Star Mother of my dear son, Army Captain Christopher Scott Cash. Thank you for asking me about our family and his wonderful life.

My three children, Jodie, Christopher and Stacey were born in Pawtucket, Rhode Island in the 1960's. My first husband was Robert F. Cash. Chris was born on October 2, 1967. He was constantly busy, running and playing with his two sisters. In 1979 our life changed. We moved to Old Orchard Beach, Maine with my husband Robert J. Kelley and we raised our three children in our home (now of thirty years), until each one pursued their individual careers outside of Maine.

Christopher loved running. He ran before he walked. In Junior High School and High School he was a good athlete and excelled in track and cross-country for Old Orchard Beach High School, setting numerous records and qualifying for the National Junior Olympics in Louisiana. Chris was also an outstanding student and citizen of Old Orchard Beach, being chosen to attend Dirigo State in his junior year of high school. He and other young leaders participated in a weeklong seminar at the University of Maine in Orono, Maine. They were selected because of their intelligence and leadership ability.

Chris graduated from Old Orchard Beach High School in 1985. His teachers, coaches and classmates loved him. Chris loved Maine and the rural setting we all enjoy. Our home is only one mile from our famous seven mile beautiful sandy beach.

After graduating from Old Orchard Beach High School Chris attended The University of Southern Maine, but found the experience unfulfilling and left him wanting more than just a classroom. In 1986 Chris joined the US Army as a Private E-1 and went through basic training and advanced infantry training at Fort Benning, GA. After advanced infantry training Chris requested admission to jump school at Fort Benning and was accepted. After graduating from jump school and receiving his "wings" Chris requested admission to US Army Ranger School at Fort Bragg, North Carolina and was once again accepted. Upon completion of Ranger training and receiving his "Ranger Tab", Chris was assigned to the 82d Airborne Division, initially as a machine gunner but over time assumed more responsibilities as he moved up through the ranks as a non-commissioned officer.

After leaving active duty in 1989 Chris moved back to Maine with his new wife Samantha and joined the National Guard, initially with the famed 10th Mountain Division, but later transferred over to Mechanized Infantry in a Bradley Fighting Vehicle unit in North Carolina where he had returned with Samantha. Back in North Carolina Chris attended North Carolina Wesleyan Collage where he received a bachelor's degree in fitness education. By this time Chris had two sons with Samantha, Christopher Jr., and Mathew.

Upon receiving his bachelors degree from North Carolina Wesleyan Chris applied for and was accepted to Officers Candidate School with the North Carolina National Guard, and upon completion of his training was commissioned a 2LT.

Chris had remarried in 2001 to Jennifer Dawn Swain and they purchased a new home in Winterville, North Carolina where they lived at the time of Chris' deployment to Iraq.

At the time of his deployment to Iraq Chris was the Commanding Officer of Company A, 1st/120th Inf. Reg./ 30th Heavy Separate Brigade/30th Brigade Combat Team.

Chris was killed along with Sp-4 Daniel A. Dessins Jr. on June 24th, 2004 in Baqubah, Iraq in a fierce gun battle against approximately 150-160 insurgents. Against heavy enemy forces who were well trained, competently led and equipped with large caliber machine guns, mortars, RPG's and AK-47's Chris' Company prevailed. Over 100 of the enemy were killed and for several months thereafter no insurgents could be found in that area.

My son is buried in North Carolina where his two sons reside. In 2006 The Captain Christopher S. Cash United States Army Reserve Center in Winterville was dedicated to Chris.

In August 2004, shortly after Chris' death, my husband and I founded the Captain Christopher Scott Cash Memorial Scholarship Fund. All proceeds benefit graduating seniors who are going on to further their education. Our first "Run For Cash" Memorial 5K and Family Race Day took place the following summer on June 25, 2005. Hundreds of runners, walkers and children participate in our event each year. Our goal is to celebrate our sons thirty-six years of life. Also, in 2006 Chris was honored by having the Old Orchard Beach High School track dedicated in his name.

I miss Chris every moment of every day. I could not be more proud of his accomplishments.

My husband and I pay tribute to not only my son Christopher, but to all of our military servicemen and women, past, present and future.

"May the Blessings of Each Day,
Be the Blessings You Need Most."