

Sgt. Jonathan Ry Pemp, 25

Sgt. Jonathan Ry Pemp, 25, passed away unexpectedly Sunday, April 25, 2009, from natural causes at his home in Naples.

A memorial service will be held 1 p.m., Saturday, May 2, in Becker Auditorium at Bonners Ferry High School. After the military service, a celebration of his life will be held at the family home in Paradise Valley.

Jonathan was born Oct. 17, 1983, in Bonners Ferry to Joseph and LaTresa Pemp. He was raised with his older brother, Colin, in Moyie Springs and on Parker Canyon Road in the Cabinet Mountains, which made a strong imprint on him.

In his youth, Jonathan participated in 4-H and played baseball. The mountains — fishing, camping, four-wheel riding, climbing, hiking and hunting — were his passion. Jonathan had many lively stories to tell about his outdoor adventures.

He attended Bonners Ferry schools, and at age 17, joined the Idaho Army National Guard, attending basic training in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Jonathan returned home for his senior year of high school, and then returned to Missouri for engineer training.

While a member of the 116th Cavalry (Engineers), Jonathan volunteered for active duty immediately following 9/11 to serve a two-year Homeland Security tour. He was stationed at Mountain Home Air Force Base as part of their security forces and trained as a sniper.

In the fall of 2004, Jonathan volunteered to deploy to Iraq for his first tour with his original Bonners Ferry group. During this 18-month tour, he was wounded in action twice and earned a Purple Heart and Bronze Star.

A body-builder and runner, Jonathan came home to work as a personal trainer at Iron Mike's Gym, and then volunteered for a second mission in Iraq. After his second tour of duty, he was stationed at Fort Bliss near El Paso, Texas, to recover from injuries related to his service.

Jonathan also received numerous awards and commendations, including the Army Commendation Medal with Valor for courage under enemy fire and Soldier of the Quarter.

He was extremely proud to serve his country and to have made many friends while in service. Jonathan returned home to Bonners Ferry in 2008 to hunt and



third tour in Iraq.

Jona-than will be remembered for his ability to light up a room with his fun-loving nature, infectious laugh and wonderful bright smile. Raised in a home where

fish and spend time with his fiancée, Geneis Smith, whom he hoped to marry after a

4-30-09
music was always playing, Jonathan loved to dance. He was "king of the barbecue" and could smoke a mean fish. Jonathan loved life.

Survivors are his parents; a brother, Colin, of Sozha China; his fiancée of Troy, Mont.; his grandmother, Elaine Murray of Colorado Springs, Colo.; his grandfather, Donald Pemp, and his wife, Bobby of Bonners Ferry; aunts and uncles Sherry Murray of Colorado Springs, Bruce Murray of Douglas, Wyo., Susan

and Stephen Drinkard of Sandpoint, Barbara Pemp of Tucson, Ariz., Robert and Brenda Pemp of Great Falls, Mont., and Brenda Garrett of Bonners Ferry; and six cousins.

Jonathan was preceded in death by his grandmother, Joyce Pemp; grandfather, Don Murray; and uncle, Don Pemp.

In lieu of flowers, make donations to Wounded Warrior Project, 7020 AC Skinner Pkwy, Suite 100, Jacksonville, Fla., 32256.