



Who Would Jerry Vote For?

Most victims just want to see justice



Jerry was my older brother. He was a popular guy and known for his big wide smile. He was full of fun, talented, skilled and hard working. I loved and

admired my brother. Jerry had two children and was a devoted father! His son David was six and the his daughter Michelle was 11. He loved those kids so much!

Jerry loved camping, hunting and fishing and being outdoors. He was an engineer with the forestry service. He mapped out the roads and helped manage large areas of eastern Arizona forest and then later worked in Whitefish Montana doing the same thing. Eventually the warm climate of Arizona brought him back. The forestry service valued his service a great deal. He had a helicopter at his disposal to go out to check on how the decisions he engineered would impact the forest. He cared a lot about the forest, the people and animals.

One day he was at a dance where a woman approached him for help. She said that her boyfriend was drunk and after her and she was scared. He really didn't want to be involved with their relationship but she begged him a number of times because she was afraid. He eventually went with her to a restaurant to have some coffee and talk.

The drunk boyfriend, Ted, followed them. When Jerry saw him he asked they guy to sit down, told him he would leave so they could work things out. The fellow, Ted, said: "NO! But you are going to be sorry!" Ted left.

Jerry went to pay for the coffee, as he told me later, he had a horrible feeling something bad was going to happen. As they stepped out of the restaurant the bullets started flying. Ted had gone home and got his 22 rifle, came back and was looking for them. He fired multiple times. The girl got under one of the cars outside of the restaurant. People were there and called the police. But in those few minutes Ted turned on my brother and shot him in the back. Jerry fell to the ground after one shot hit him in the spine.

Jerry was paralyzed as the guy stood over him threatening to finish him off. When the police came, Ted turned the gun on himself. The police talked him out of it. I talked to Jerry about the night he was shot. I heard what happened directly from him.

Jerry lived for two more weeks while the doctors tried to help him recover after surgery. The bullet had bounced around from organ to organ and he had

so many injuries. Finally blood clots went to his brain and he died.

Jerry was trying to make sense of the situation. Being an active outdoorsman and facing being paralyzed was a huge blow to him. He had done nothing wrong and was a productive member of society taking care of his family.

The day the blood clots struck his brain was so hard. I knew in my spirit the moment it happened and called the hospital to find the doctor was working on him and they were on their way to surgery to see if they could alleviate the stroke. For three days I sat beside his bed as the doctors had to establish every cell in his brain was dead before they could turn off any life support that was keeping his heart pumping. That was due to the fact that his was now a murder case and the hospital did not want to be responsible for any chance at causing his death, so they did every test twice. His hands already had rigor mortis in them.

I was a nurse. The X-rays around the room showed the extensive injuries he endured. I knew he was gone, but the docs said we needed to keep talking to him because he might come back. My mom and dad were grief stricken. The whole family was. Three long days we sat with him, talked to him about our childhood, our home, our families time together and how we loved him.

He left behind two young children. They miss him, Lots of people miss him. He died at age 38. I will always miss him. Ted took all of Jerry's rights -- forever removed by this fellow who served six years because the judge said Ted was drunk when he killed my brother so he really wasn't responsible -- fully. Jerry is still gone.

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Senators Sara Gelser (D-Corvallis), Floyd Prozanski (D-Eugene), Michael Dembrow (D-Portland), Chris Gorsek (D-Portland), Kate Lieber (D-Beaverton), Representatives Janelle Bynum (D-Clackamas), Pam Marsh (D-Ashland), Andrea Salinas (D-Lake Oswego) have sponsored [SB 571](#) to restore the voting rights of incarcerated felons so they can register and vote while serving time in prison. I suppose they will have more voters from it. Proponents say it will help connect the prisoners with the community.

People are in prison for violating other peoples rights and to protect society from harm they may perpetrate. It is the consequences they face.

I think it is great when people face their mistakes and change their life direction for good. We are all sinners. I do believe in redemption, but some people don't care , feel remorseful or repent. I gave Ted a bible with his name on it. I told him about Jesus how he died to save us all from the punishment from hell and restore us to himself for eternity. Ted never said a word to our family. I have to leave it there. It is in God's hands.

Those who have violated others all need to serve their time. Most prisoners will be released at some point. Let them enjoy their restored voting rights then.

My brother's rights were permanently taken from him. [SB 571](#) is about justice. Most victims of violent crime and their families just want to see justice. We do not seek revenge. We know all to well nothing will bring them back. But there has to be some justice for crime. There just has to be if we are to live in a just and peaceful society. Our family members are precious to us. Does the judicial system say their lives don't really matter? Do they have value to society? Its just not ok to violate other people's rights and face zero consequences.

The Senate Committee On Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation will have a work session on [SB 571](#) on March 31 at 8:00 AM to decide if felons should have their voting rights restored while they serve time in prison.

--Janice Dysinger

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