

Rhoad's memory will move forward through youth

By Enoch Autry
Publisher

Exactly how Carter Rhoad died may never be fully known by his family, but a localized effort will keep his memory known for generations.

Rhoad, son of Rabun County's Hal and Page Rhoad, spent his life doing selfless works for countless others in the United States and internationally.

Through the Lake Burton Civic Association, an endowed scholarship will be put in Rhoad's name for a future graduating senior at Rabun County High School.

In May 2024, a surfing trip on the West Coast ended in tragedy for Rhoad and his two Australian friends when all three were found murdered just over the American border inside Mexico.

Along with 30-year-old Rhoad, the victims were brothers Jake, 30, and Callum Robinson, 33. Jake Robinson moved from Australia to San Diego, and Callum Robinson resided in Perth, the capital of Western Australia.

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RHOAD

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According to the Rhoad family, four Mexican citizens have been arrested in connection with the deaths of Rhoad and the two brothers. The trial has been postponed.

"We speculate this is a robbery gone bad," Hal Rhoad told *The Clayton Tribune*.

During Rhoad's 30 years of life, he made an impression on many people's lives. He just wanted to help others who were less fortunate.

The proposed Carter Rhoad Memorial Scholarship would be an endowed four-year scholarship to be awarded by the Lake Burton Civic Association Foundation, Inc., to a deserving Rabun County High School senior every four years.

"The scholarship will specifically support at-risk or first-generation college students, providing them with financial assistance throughout

their undergraduate education," according to the scholarship proposal.

Being the administrator of an organization, the civic association foundation will work in conjunction with the North Georgia Community Foundation.

Initially, the award amount would be \$14,000 as \$3,500 would be awarded to the recipient annually for four years. The award, however, is based on endowment growth, so the award could increase in the future.

The initial funding goal is \$70,000 to establish the endowment with the civic association foundation donating a minimum of \$5,000.

The projected first year the scholarship will be available for a RCHS senior to apply would be with the Class of 2026.

"The Carter Rhoad Memorial Scholarship represents a meaningful opportunity to honor Carter's memory while significantly impacting the lives of Rabun County students for generations to come. Through this endowed scholarship, at-risk and first-generation

to hear this. When the scholarship is presented, his story would be told. More people should hear his story. It truly is an inspirational story."

Marlow said Rhoad had "a heart for people who were disadvantaged."

Rhoad, a resident of San Diego, Calif., was a newlywed to his wife Natalie. He played soccer internationally and his summers were spent on Lake Burton with his family.

Hal Rhoad said it has been a very difficult year and holidays have been even more challenging.

"Our Fourth of July week will never be the same," Hal Rhoad said.

"He was the 'King.' It was like he was the Piped Piper around our family."

Hal Rhoad said his son was very generous and most of the things Carter Rhoad did, his family did not have knowledge about. He just would see a need and address it.

"If you are going to lose a child, it helps that he lived his life well and impacted so many," Hal Rhoad said.

"I believe Carter

figured out how blessed he was, and he wanted to give back," Hal Rhoad said.

Carter Rhoad also had traveled on mission trips to underprivileged parts of the world.

Page Rhoad said she had numerous people walk up to her at her son's funeral with story after story of what Carter had done.

"I am successful because of your son," Page Rhoad noted one individual said. Carter had assisted that person with getting an apartment.

"I know there were 1,000 people praying for us," said Hal Rhoad of how supportive the community has been.

Page Rhoad said she constantly thinks about Carter. She misses him.

"Someone told me that you never heal. It is a walk in a new direction. There is not going to be a 'new' anything from him. It never gets better, but it gets softer," she said. "My other children are suffering too."

"He was a great kid. We miss him greatly," Hal Rhoad said.



QR Code for donations toward Carter Rhoad Memorial Scholarships

people who reside around the lake wanted to do something in honor of Rhoad.

"Hal and Page are fixtures on the lake," Marlow said. "When this happened to Carter, we had a lot of people who said 'we need to do something.'"

Marlow said he attended the funeral for Rhoad and it was incredible the number of people who told stories of how much Rhoad had meant in their lives.

"The testimonies were amazing," Marlow said. "I wanted everybody

tion college students will receive the support they need to pursue higher education and create new opportunities for themselves and their families," according to the proposal.

To mail donations toward the goal, address the letter to --

North Georgia Community Foundation
340 Jesse Jewell Pkwy,
Suite 605

Gainesville, GA 30501
Enter in Memo: Carter Rhoad Scholarship Fund
Dan Marlow, the Lake Burton Civic Association president, said several