

Memorial march from county jail to Lathrop in aftermath of Lum's death

LATHROP – A peaceful march in memory of the young Lathrop man whose untimely death has become a catalyst for awareness of the many issues affecting the mentally ill will be held Saturday, Sept. 12.

Family and friends of Jeremy Lum, 28, are inviting the public to join them in what is being described as “a peaceful memorial march to promote positive change of awareness, policies, and procedures for the mentally ill.”

Jerry Lum, the father of the University of California at Berkeley graduate, said the march is to “complete the walk (his son) could not finish.”

The march will begin at 11 a.m. at the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office at 7000 Michael Canlis Blvd. off Manthey Road in French Camp and will end at the Lathrop Police Offices on Seventh Street.

Ironically, the police offices is located in the old Delta Market building that the Lum family operated for decades as a popular neighborhood mom-and-pop store. The city is leasing about half of the Lum's building for police services.

The march is part of the Lum family's ongoing effort to turn their tragedy into something positive. Appearing before the Lathrop City Council shortly after Jeremy Lum's death, his aunt Connie Lum Perez asked the city leaders and the community to join the family in creating a database that law enforcement agencies could use to identify people with mental illness, and to establish an information warehouse of family and friends that can be contacted during emergencies in the hope that others would be spared of the pain and tragedy that their family just went through.

The march is starting at the Sheriff's Office because that was where Jeremy Lum, who was described by family as bipolar, was released after he was detained overnight allegedly for being under the influence. The night before, he was picked up by Lathrop Police in a residential front yard not far from his own home after residents called police about a suspicious circumstance. Family members believed Jeremy, who was with his dog Attila, were headed in the direction of Lum Perez's home not far from his home in the old central part of Lathrop but became disoriented. Lathrop police reportedly took the dog back to his home.

After he was released at the county jail, barefoot and without any means of transportation, Jeremy Lum vanished.

A massive land and air search followed which included his father who, ironically, is also a pilot and a member of a citizens rescue unit. Tragically, the search ended the Sunday after his disappearance when his body was found floating in the San Joaquin River not far from the Sheriff's Offices.

On the 30-day anniversary of his death, family and friends were joined by dozens of people at the northeast corner of Woodfield Park on Lathrop Road in a candlelight vigil to celebrate his life and to raise public awareness of their mission to help others. The intersection also happens to be near Jeremy's home and the homes of several relatives including his aunt and grandmother, and near the location where he was arrested on July 9 for alleged public intoxication.

The walk will be held the day after the Sept. 11 poker tournament fund-raiser sponsored by The Jeremy Lum Memorial Fund – “Justice for Jeremy” at The Emory Hall at 1028 W. Yosemite Ave. in Manteca. Games will begin at 6:30 p.m. To reserve a spot at the tournament, or for more information about the fund-raiser, send an e-mail to Nick Glogovac of Manteca at nick.glogovac@hotmail.com.

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