

This Saturday marks the second anniversary of the death of the rap legend Jam Master Jay.

As his family members have pressed on, they continue to keep their loved one's name alive. A small gathering is planned in the Hollis neighborhood of Queens, New York, on Saturday (October 30), and in January they want to put on a benefit concert to celebrate what would have been the Run-DMC DJ's 40th birthday.

"Basically, we are doing fine," Jay's mother, Connie Mizell, said on Monday in New York. "We thank God we are doing as well as we are. I'd be remiss if I didn't say we miss Jason. We do miss him. Since I moved to North Carolina, it's a little difficult without him, but we thank God."

"Jason was a major supporter of what everybody did," Jay's brother, Marvin Thompson, said, sitting next to his mother. "Around the holiday season, it's even harder."

Jay was brutally murdered inside his 24/7 studio two years ago, and in the wake of his murder, several possible scenarios have been put forth in the press, including the theory that the legendary DJ was a drug dealer. Still, no explanation for his murder has panned out. "As far as the accusations with the drugs, I don't care if he was [involved]," said Jay's sister, Bonita Jones, who insists she has no knowledge of her brother dabbling in crime. "It doesn't make him a lesser person. They still should find out who did it."

"I never did like that," Mizell said about the unproven theories being printed in the papers. "The reason I don't believe it is that I've seen too many people that was on drugs come off because Jason entered their life and told them there was a better way to live than that. If he made a living selling drugs, why would he get his people not to use them? That didn't make sense to me. I think it was another way for the officers to get away from the facts and run someplace else."

Despite the police's inability to solve the crime or even name a suspect, the family has remained patient.

"I've spoken to [the investigating detectives]," Mizell said. "They have informed me that the case is still open. The [24/7] studio is not a crime scene anymore, but the case itself is still open. [The police] hope justice will be done. I know justice will be done in God's own time. He knows who did it, and that's the best person to know because He'll deal with them."

"We don't know the answers to anything," Jones added. "I would rather they take the time and find the right person rather than quickly find the wrong person. I need to know exactly who did it. I need closure."

JMJ Gone Two Years

Written by Westside ID279

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Shortly after Jam Master Jay was murdered, several members of the hip-hop community — including LL Cool J, Eminem and Russell Simmons — contributed money to assist the family and to create a tip hotline. Although Mizell acknowledges that her son's children have received some of the funds for college, she said that she has never received one dime and has been struggling to maintain the family home.

"I was never involved in the tip hotline," she said. "No one ever consulted me. I think I saw an article in the paper that said "the family was putting up money." Total untruth. At least I never said we was putting up any money. People will lie to make money. I was never with putting up money to pay anyone. My thing was that if anyone had any money to share, help us maintain the family home."

The Mizells have garnered the support they need to auction the van they call the J-Whip. In February, the family bought a GMC van and began getting several members of the hip-hop community to sign the inside of the vehicle with hopes of later auctioning the J-Whip off on eBay. The money they receive will go to the Jam Master Jay scholarship fund for college students.

Several months later, the Mizells now have more than 300 signatures, including those of Alicia Keys, James Brown, Kid Rock, the Beastie Boys, Jadakiss, Mobb Deep, Big Daddy Kane, Heavy D, the Terror Squad, DJ Kool Herc and Kanye West.

The current plan is to wrap the van's outside with a picture of the Jam Master and take the Whip on a 10-city tour starting in New York and ending up in Los Angeles. From there it would be auctioned on eBay with the family handing out money to college students by January.

"You sit and view the names and think who Jason was and what he means," Mizell said. "It's like Jason's spirit is right there in the van."

Tyson Beckford has donated rims, and DJ Skribble and JL Audio are donating an audio system for the vehicle.

In the long term, the family is calling up artists to perform at a benefit concert on January 21. The Mizells still want to add "Jam Master Jay Way" to the street signs down Hollis Avenue. They have gathered signatures in support of the move and said they have overwhelming support from the community. But they feel they have not had sufficient support from the local city councilman. The Mizells are now asking people to send them e-mails of support to jmjay4youth@aol.com

or

jmjay4youth@yahoo.com

so they can take the e-mails to the city council.

In the short term, a memorial service is planned for Saturday night at the Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Hollis, Queens, starting at 7 p.m.

"We just wanted to say thank you to some of the community for their support and encouragement," Mizell explained.

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