



## Norm Lagasse

April 16, 1960 - March 17, 2020

Norm Lagasse, 59, of Van, Texas, passed away on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at his home. He was born April 16, 1960 in Maine. He joined the United States Air Force upon finishing college. During this time, he met and married his wife Charlene and had two daughters. Norm retired in 2004 as a Lieutenant Colonel after 22 years of service and moved to Anchorage, Alaska, where he was the director of first the Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum and then Habitat for Humanity. Upon moving to Van in 2017, he became a member of the Holy Family Catholic Church in Lindale, Texas, where he was Deputy Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus. He was a woodworker and firearms enthusiast and greatly enjoyed fishing, building models, and fixing just about anything. Norm is preceded in death by his father, Joseph Lagasse.

Norm is survived by his wife, Charlene Lagasse of Van, Texas; children, Alexandra Lagasse of Little Rock, Arkansas, and Camilla Seckers and husband, Andrew of Columbia, Maryland; mother, Carmelle Lagasse of Lewiston, Maine; brothers, Ron Lagasse of Georgia, and Bert Lagasse and wife Terri of Alabama; sisters, Claudette Jewell and husband Irving of Maine, and Jan Harr and husband Mike of Ohio; brothers-in-law, Warren Adams and wife Minerva of Virginia, Robert Adams of Illinois, Richard Adams and wife Joeleen of Texas; sister-in-law, Anne Dempsey and husband Guy of Illinois; and numerous other loving family members.

Private family services will be held.

# Cemetery

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## **Dallas\Ft.Worth National Cemetery**

2000 Mountain Creek Parkway

Dallas, TX, 75211

# Comments

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“ A tribute video has been added.



**Caudle-Rutledge-Daugherty Funeral Home** - March 19 at 05:52 PM



“ Dear Sharlene, Amy, and Cami:

The memorial video of Norm was very well done, and a well-deserved tribute.

Norm was Top-10 in my book, one who unexpectedly comes into your life and never leaves.

I remember the Elmendorf tour he gave the Cub Scouts, with a lucky few - Sam - getting to sit in his fighter jet - wow!

Also, when I got a tour of the Alaska Air Museum. They actually PAID a retired jet fighter to do that job? I still have a jacket from the museum I got on that trip.

My sincere condolences to y'all. There is no chance Norm will be forgotten.

Please let us know what we can do.

Sincerely,

Fred M Getty

**Fred M Getty** - March 23 at 12:04 PM



“ It was a privilege and Honor to have served and flown the F-15 with Norm “Nahmy” Lagasse. Norm was the Night Vision Goggle (NVG) Expert that brought NVG capability to the F-15 Community, an extremely valuable capability which changed the game for Night F-15 Tactical Employment. Norm had a great sense of humor, Loved his family, Alaska (picture salmon fishing here!) and his country.. Cheers! Nahmy! Jim “Boots”Bowman

**Boots Bowman** - March 25 at 01:09 AM

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“ Dear Lagasse Family,

So sorry to hear of Norm's passing. I wanted to share my favorite "Norm" story with you.

I was a 1Lt, just moved into the 38th (Osan) squadron in the previous 6 months. I had transitioned from Hueys into the HH-3 and was a relatively new copilot in the squadron. We were participating in an exercise called Ulchi Focus Lens, which at the time, was the largest SOF exercise in the world. Truly epic number of airborne assaults, helicopter insertions and extractions, all over the entire country. As an example of the types of missions we did two nights earlier, a pilot named Ray Moschler and I had infil'd a bunch of CCT (special ops guys that control airfields and airstrikes) and they were all on motorcycles. The motorcycles were running in the back of the helicopter when we landed, we put ramp down, and they raced out the back, the first CCT guy hit his head on the tailboom and fell off, the second guy ran right over him and kept going! As you can tell, it was a little bit "Wild West".

So, two nights later, Norm and I were infiltrating a large team of Korean SOF and some US Army special forces into a mountainous site. I didn't know him very well prior to this mission, but Norm was the aircraft commander and I was his copilot. It was the usual pre-mission wait, waiting at some base for the sun to go down so we could do the whole thing in the dark. The SOF team lead was really nervous about getting to the right place, and so he keeps wanting to go over the map with me, the copilot, who will be navigating him to his objective. He's being kind of a jerk, seeing the youth of the man who will determine if he walks 2 miles or 20 miles tonight. Finally, Norm has had enough, he comes over and tells the MSgt to "shut the f\*\*k up, the Lt knows what he's doing," Norm went on to say, "and at 0317, when I say, "Ropes" I expect you to get your ass on the rope and it will hit that LZ . . . now leave my Lt alone."

I loved him after that!

He was a great pilot, leader, friend, and loved his family dearly.

I am blessed to have known him.

Tim "Ghandi" Healy, Col, USAF (Ret).

Tim "Ghandi" Healy - April 01 at 11:14 AM

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“ Flying H-3s with Norm in Alaska in the 80s - what a treat! The stories and memories of Norm are exploding on the various Air Force Rescue/Special Ops Facebook sites. We have all lost a friend and AF Helicopter legend. RIP my friend.

**Karl Jacobson** - March 25 at 11:08 PM

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“ I'm very sorry to hear of Norm's passing. He and I were squadron mates in Alaska and shared on of both of our great experiences flying an HH-3E from Alaska to Pensacola and then a different aircraft from Portland to Anchorage. It was only last week I was telling of our great adventure to someone and remarking on how solid a co-pilot he was and how exceptional his vision was. You will be missed my old friend... Hadji

**Mike Hodge** - March 25 at 02:05 PM

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“ Char,  
My condolences for your way-to-soon loss. Hard to believe. I have lots of memories of Norm, but one of my favorites was flying with him on my first rescue mission as an Aircraft Commander in Alaska. We went down near Homer and brought a man, his boys, and their German Sheppard back to their mom, who was at the Homer airport. They had been lost and bogged down on snowmachines in the hills. The relief and graitude in her face was clear, even in the dark.  
I will certainly never forget him or his selflessness to me and all those he served. He was a great person, pilot, and friend to me.  
Dave Looney

**Dave Looney** - March 25 at 11:38 AM

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“ Lorry Faber purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Norm Lagasse.



**Lorry Faber** - March 25 at 11:04 AM

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“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Norm Lagasse.



March 25 at 10:02 AM

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“ I've known Norm, Nahmy since my F-15 days and was fortunate again to have him join us in the HH-60 world later on with the 176th Wing. We had such a great Tdy to Singapore and Malaysia in 96. Great times, great memories. He will be missed.



**Christopher Cosher** - March 22 at 10:10 PM

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“ Hello,

My name is Leslie Fried. I am the curator of the Alaska Jewish Museum in Anchorage. Norm worked with the Museum for more than four years pretty much on every exhibit we did in the 1220 E. 35th building. The list of his skills is endless. Electrical, exhibit design and drafting, computer stuff, building, painting, refinishing, etc. If there was a solution to something, Norm could find it, or invent it!! And he did it all with integrity, patience, a profound interest in history and a great sense of humor. He was an awesome collaborator! He talked all the time about his beautiful “bride” Charlene. Charlene, Alex and Cami, please accept my sincerest condolences for your loss.

Warmest,  
Leslie

**Leslie Fried** - March 22 at 07:38 PM

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“ Didn't get to know Norm too well, just well enough to go to supper one Saturday night and to save a seat for him and Charlene @ 5 pm most of times...got to be good friends.. He will be missed...Nancy Smith

**Nancy Smith** - March 22 at 12:48 PM

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“ Richard Beckerman is following this tribute.

**Richard Beckerman** - March 21 at 12:47 AM

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“ Nahmy has always been one of my heroes. It was an honor to serve with him.



**Mike Jefferson** - March 20 at 06:28 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album LifeTributes



**Bill Bassett** - March 20 at 04:49 PM

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“ I knew Norm through my parents, and I know he will be sorely missed. He was one of my father's best friends and every time we would visit Alaska the first person Dad would be sure to see was Norm. Norm was always quick to help in anyway he could; not only our family and his other friends, but also every charitable organization he spent his time with will sorely miss his chipper smiling face, and astoundingly deep knowledge base. Everywhere he went he helped people and made the world a better place. I only hope I can live a life like he did and help as many people.

**Brian** - March 20 at 03:50 PM

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“ Norm - really Nahmy - lived his dream! Every moment of it. He was many things to the many people whose lives he touched. He was a Son, Father, Husband, Brother, councilor, provider, and much more to his family.  
To his friends and the rest of the world that were privileged to know him he was one of if not the best person in their world.  
His kindness and generosity knew no bounds. One could not be around him and not be infected by his love for life and everyone and everything that he touched. And he touched so many lives throughout his journey through.  
From growing up, through a brilliant Air Force Career - few people will ever know of his real impact as a Zipper Suited Sun God, but it was tremendous- I was fortunate to be involved in a very small part of it.  
But his contributions continued after his retirement - his contributions while running the Alaskan Air Museum; Habitat for humanity; Knights of Columbus; the many projects he led or just did for public schools in TX and AK.  
His laugh, his smile, his knowledge will be missed by many, including me and my family.  
The ultimate “NormAdage” - “Can we or should we?” will live forever in our family's lexicon.  
Absent Companions!

**Monte Bourn** - March 20 at 01:00 PM

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“ 3 files added to the album LifeTributes



**Bill Bassett** - March 19 at 10:36 PM

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“ 2 files added to the album LifeTributes



**Bill** - March 19 at 10:28 PM

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“ I first met Norm 2005. At the time I was working at Museum of Flight in Seattle. He had just taken the job as Executive Director of the Alaskan Aviation Museum. He was in Seattle for a Smithsonian event called the Mutual Concerns of Air and Space Museums conference, a national conference just for aerospace museums and science centers.

After the conference there was a follow-on two day bus trip through the region to visit other aviation museums, while getting an idea of what this part of the country is like for folks from more distant places. Along the way, we talked a lot on that trip had a lot of laughs, plus a lot of good discussion about museums and why we both valued them.

While he was at the Alaska Aviation Museum, he brought me up to work on several projects and we did a lot of great work together. He remade that museum and took it many steps ahead of where it had been.

He had a degree in aeronautical engineering from Embry-Riddle. He also served in the Air Force, as a Major doing Search and Rescue piloting in Alaska as a Commander. He had some amazing stories about pulling people off mountains, to watching two grizzlies having a fight in an open meadow. After the Air Force, he signed up in the Air National Guard, with another rank as Major and became a Fighter Pilot Instructor for F-15s. Needless to say he was a very talented leader. With all that behind him, he was a great teacher. After watching him a few times, he was particularly great with kids in the museum, presenting technical perspectives as simple storytelling that kept the kids engaged and in awe. Adults too - he explained some of the questions I had about aviation.

He was well known and liked by the museums community and served on the Museums Alaska board, again providing leadership.

After leaving the Museum, he provided his woodworking and technical skills for several museum in the state, and eventual he went to work Habitat for Humanity before leaving to his new home in Texas.

My heart goes out to Charlene, Alex, and Cami. He talked about his family often, we shared notes on having daughters and he was especially proud them.

I'll miss Norm a great deal, his positive attitude, boundless energy, and gregarious presence.

Rest in peace my friend!

Richard Beckerman  
Seattle, WA



“ Norm was a great guy. He and Charlene always had an open door and wonderful hospitality. We had good times in Korea, visits in Enid and a wonderful time in Alaska. Norm will be missed. Thanks for the memories Norm.  
Jim & Bev Bettes

Jim & Bev Bettes - March 19 at 09:45 PM

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“ Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Norm Lagasse.



March 19 at 08:17 PM

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“ Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Norm Lagasse.



March 19 at 05:08 PM

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“ Norm will be very much missed. I remember the good times, including the fun at Limberlost, painting the house ceiling in Alaska, touring the Grand Canyon, and getting a sugar rush from our ice cream eating contests. I remember him giving my sister a jewelry box at Christmas with hidden jewelry inside, and my brother and I singing "Norm to Alaska" when he and my sister got engaged.

Warren - March 19 at 05:05 PM

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“ 46 files added to the album LifeTributes



Caudle-Rutledge-Daugherty Funeral Home - March 19 at 05:03 PM

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“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Norm Lagasse.



March 19 at 03:01 PM

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“ Peace Eternal Wreath was purchased for the family of Norm Lagasse.



March 19 at 12:22 PM

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“ The Newtons - Terry, Cindy, Randi, Jim and Sharon. purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Norm Lagasse.



The Newtons - Terry, Cindy, Randi, Jim and Sharon. - March 19 at 10:23 AM

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“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Normand Lagasse.



March 18 at 04:06 PM