



James "Jim" Wegener

January 17, 1948 - November 8, 2019

Obituary for James Wegener

Jim "Wags" Wegener passed away unexpectedly on the 8th of November 2019 at home peacefully in his bed.

Jim could best be described as a loyal and passionate man. His love for his family and his country trumped everything else. Jim was an amazing husband, father and veteran. Jim's interests were evident as he always wore them on his sleeve. He could always be found wearing his Vietnam veterans' hat, patriotic tee-shirt and coffee mug with pictures of his grandkids printed on it.

Jim graduated from St Francis as a football hero and homecoming king. He sold cars for years, drove a school bus for TCAPS, and was currently a limo driver.

Jim was drafted into the Army during the Vietnam war in 1968. In his 2 years of service Jim traveled the country and the world in defense of our freedoms. He served as a baker in Vietnam and a brief stint as a drill instructor at Fort Sam Houston. Though Jim's formal service to our country ended after the Vietnam war, he continued his service through numerous veterans' organizations to include the local Vietnam Veterans' chapter, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Grand Traverse County Board of Veterans Affairs and he was a founding member of the Grand Traverse Area Veterans Coalition. Jim was scheduled to be the master of ceremonies for numerous events for this Veterans Day, and planned to read the following thank you letter to all veterans during his speech:

"As I get a bit older each year, I have really begun to appreciate the freedoms that I have. We live in the greatest country in the world, due in part to the efforts of our armed forces who often put themselves in harm's way to protect our rights, freedoms, and our people. I just wanted to personally say to each of you that served that I really appreciate what you did to protect us all. God Bless You, and God Bless America."

Jim was always the person to have on your side. He was fiercely loyal to everyone he loved and would literally give the shirt off his back if it was needed. He was a man of quick wit and was an expert at delivering the best "one liners". He will be deeply missed.

Jim is survived by his wife Susan Wegener (Lenhard), his daughters Emily Opper and Amy Weisberger, his step son David Brouse, three brothers, two sisters and 7

grandchildren.

Jim was preceded in death by his mother Bernadine Wegener (Michels), his father John Wegener, and his brothers John Jr, Robert, and Joe.

A celebration of life will be held at the Traverse City American Legion on Saturday November 23rd at 6pm, 1231 Hastings. All who knew Jim are welcome to attend to enjoy stories and good whiskey. The only request is that you wear Jim's favorite color, green.

The color of money as he would say.

In lieu of flowers please send donations to the Grand Traverse Veterans Coalition 2650 Lafranier Rd, Traverse City, MI 49686.

Events

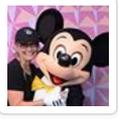
NOV **Celebration of Life** 06:00PM

23

American Legion Post 35

1231 Hastings St., Traverse City, MI, US, 49686

Comments



“ Susan Wegener lit a candle in memory of James "Jim" Wegener

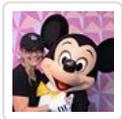


Susan Wegener - November 23, 2019 at 01:09 AM



“ Thank you, Sue, for calling me regarding Jim's passing. I will forever cherish the fond memories of Jim and our times together, always remembering his warm smile and encouraging words. I pray God will wrap his comforting loving arms around you and your family during this difficult time. Sending this with love.

Larry Ferguson - November 17, 2019 at 04:10 PM



“ Thank you Larry. I felt such a comfort when you payed with me on the phone.

Susan - November 23, 2019 at 01:01 AM



“ Knew Jim from his days at Les Hatch. He was always a kind and caring and our community will greatly miss him.

Dave McLeod - November 17, 2019 at 01:11 PM



“ I worked with Jimmy at Hertz Car Sales. We always had a lot of fun. He was a great guy and an even greater patriot!! He spoke proudly of his service to our country and it was always clear he had great admiration and respect for his fellow veterans. He was proud too, of his wife and kids, and always came to work with fun stories of their adventures. So sad to see his obituary. Such a young man taken too soon. My condolences to Sue and the kids. Accept my gratitude Jim for your service to our country and may you rest in eternal peace.

Karen Schaub - November 16, 2019 at 10:58 AM



“ Jim was in sales at Les Hatch Pontiac Mazda. We purchased five Mazda before 1978, wondering why never bought in Traverse City. Les could not match price, upsetting Jim. But the rotaries were warranted by Mazda, replacing engines in them. Jim settled down and attempted to get service (parts) and appreciated him for this.

dana - November 15, 2019 at 03:28 PM



“ Thank you so much for sharing!

Susan - November 16, 2019 at 05:06 AM



“ Gonna Miss You Wags....

Captain Larry Butcher, Chapter 211 VVA, Silver Star, Purple Hearts... is up there right now showing you around Heaven. It's a big place and by now Larry knows where all the fellas hang out..

I will never forget the best Christmas I ever had, when you dressed up like Santa, and we all got on the school bus loaded with presents, clothes that fit the kids, special things for this Vietnam Vet and his frightened wife, as they all lived off the grid deep in the forest swamp near Thompsonville...no electricity, tiny kids being home schooled in fear....the fella had the worst type of PTSD...un-diagnosed and mostly helpless, he could hunt, that's all he knew...And we fulfilled one of our little roles in the VVA . We set up a huge dinner, played Christmas Music on a battery fed boom box, and sang Christmas songs together. You and John LeBrunn and his sweetheart, Bill Seater, John Lopez,, I think Larry was there. There were others, other VVA 211 members and spouses and forgive me for not remembering everything better. I brought my two small daughters Leigh Anne and Molly so they could see first hand what Christmas really looked like.... You smiled and and laughed even when the fake beard was falling off your smiling face.... and I will never forget it...those little kids living in that shack opened up their gifts in front of us...they couldn't wait...The aroma of all of the fine cooking filled that wood stove heated shack up and the feasting began....while the vet lingered outside, nearby in the woods....

That was James Wegener, Santa! that was who we called "Wags'. We left after a spell, and the buss was quiet, until we all started crying like kids...My daughters did not understand, the crying was so contagious they joined in just for the joy of it....

Wags...you did good while you were here, exiled here on this world with the rest of us. You were the best Santa ever....

Say hi to Larry for me.

and all the fellas we buried doing honor guard and color guard duties,,,

Recall, we eventually got that fella in the woods into some key interviews, and medical assessment and turned that situation around.....i think he made out ok...Captain Larry Butcher, took charge and made sure that happened.

(I think they let you wear your Silver Star in Heaven.)

Amen,
Greg Nachazel

Gregory Nachazel - November 21, 2019 at 09:01 AM



“ Sue and all of Jim's family. I know it has been a long time, however, a flood of sweet memories came when I heard of Jim's passing. He was truly a Blessing to all who had the honor of knowing him. His "speech" and Obit. near perfectly describes him. Sorry I can't be with you in person, by you have my thoughts and love. Prayers that God hold you all in the palm of His hand, as you continue your travels without this amazing man. 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'
Anita Mennel (LeBrun)



Anita Mennel - November 14, 2019 at 02:19 PM



“ Anita, it has been years! Thank you so very much for your kind words. It was an absolute terrible sudden shock. Hope this finds you well & happy...& you did get your RN, right?!?!?

Susan - November 14, 2019 at 05:24 PM



“ We are so grateful for the loving support of all our friends & family, but please, no flowers.

Susan Wegener - November 12, 2019 at 10:39 PM