



David Joe Cassady

December 31, 2025

David “Bunka” Joe Cassady, 85, of Newport, Rhode Island, passed away peacefully with family at Newport Hospital on December 31st. A retired United States Marine Corps Colonel, Vietnam War veteran, attorney, and devoted family man, he lived a life defined by service, integrity, and deep devotion to those he loved.

Born on February 12, 1940, in East St. Louis, Illinois, David was the son of Theodore John Cassady and Juanita Eva McDowell Cassady. He was raised in a large Midwestern family that instilled in him a lifelong belief that home and family were the bedrock upon which a life was laid. That foundation helped to create an amazing life.

The second of six, David was an accomplished student and athlete . . . and a proud member of the Glee Club. He played baseball most of his young life, and started to play a new sport, soccer, in college when he attended McMurray. In the early 2000s he was inducted into their sports Hall of Fame. In an effort to help afford school, he agreed to join the Marine Corps after graduation. Those plans were delayed when he enrolled in law school (after being told he didn't have the math scores for flight school) where he attended Washington University in St. Louis and then joined the Marines on a career path that led him to be one of the senior most Marine JAG officers.

David served more than three decades in the United States Marine Corps, retiring at the rank of Colonel after a distinguished career as a Judge Advocate. A Vietnam War veteran, he combined legal rigor with principled leadership, earning the respect of those he served alongside and those he mentored. His career included senior legal and instructional roles, culminating in service as an instructor in Newport, Rhode Island, where he helped shape future officers. His decorations included the Legion of Merit, the Navy Commendation Medal, and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, among many others.

He was married for many years to Susan Marion Barkman Cassady, a Navy nurse when they met and a lifelong member of the nursing profession. Over the course of her career, Susan progressed from clinical nursing to nursing administration, and later into roles supporting and facilitating medical computer systems designed to assist nurses in their work. David was deeply proud of her dedication, professionalism, and adaptability, and of the lasting impact she made within healthcare. Together, they built a life shaped by service, frequent moves, and an unwavering commitment to family.

After retiring from the Marine Corps, David opened a law practice on Spring Street in Newport, Rhode Island, where he practiced for a decade. What he believed would be a final chapter became instead a transition, as Susan's career brought them to Northern Virginia to be closer to their children and grandchildren. Family was always the priority and it was time for her career to take the lead, and David followed mostly willingly. After Susan's passing in 2010 and the loss of their daughter Amy Cassady Wassenberg in 2013, David returned to New England, where Newport once again became home.

For the last years of his life, Newport was a place of renewal, friendship, and belonging. He shared a home with his son Joseph, lived fully within the community, and formed close friendships rooted in good people, good food

and drinks, and fine cigars. It was also here that he grew especially close to his youngest grandchildren, finding joy and meaning in everyday moments, and living his best life. While there were many places that served as home, Newport was the one he chose.

David was predeceased by his parents; his wife, Susan; his daughter, Amy; and his siblings John Mac Cassady, Richard Cassady, and Allen Cassady. He is survived by his brother Stanley Patrick Cassady and his sister Mary Cassady Kepler, both of Illinois.

He is also survived by his children Jennifer Cassady Charles (Scott) of Hamilton, OH, David Joe Cassady Jr. (Gloria) of Gibsonville, NC, Gregory Cassady of Alexandria, VA, and Joseph Cassady (Carrie) of Newport, RI. He was the proud grandfather of twelve grandchildren: Caly Bruton (Daniel), David Manuel Cassady (Quinn), David Cassady Hoffman (Katy), Suzi Bibee (Richie), Amanda Radoye (Doug), Marisa Cheek (Will), Diana Mannucci (Jerrod), Rebeca Cassady, Joel Cassady, Stephen Wassenberg (Millie), Colin Cassady, and Erin Cassady. He was also blessed with 22 great-grandchildren, including the youngest, whom he met shortly before his passing.

Known affectionately within the family as “Bunka,” a name given to him by his first grandchild, Caly, David took great pride in being a grandfather and a great-grandfather. He personally traveled well into his 80s to meet each of them after they were born, and he would be happy to list all of them for you. Sue was lovingly known as “Nana,” and those names endured as expressions of warmth, identity, and family continuity.

He was a mix of discipline and stoicism who, when asked about his standard stern photos, replied he, “smiled with his eyes”. But he was equally mixed with genuine compassion, understanding, and a strong belief in justice. He was

every bit the Marine, but none of the stereotype. David believed above all in family as the enduring center of life. His legacy lives on in the generations he helped raise, the officers he mentored, and the communities he called home.

Services will be held as follows:

A viewing will take place on Tuesday, February 3, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Miller's Funeral Home, Woodbridge, Virginia.

A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, February 4, at 10:00 a.m. at the Marine Corps Museum Chapel, 1775 Semper Fidelis Way, Triangle, VA 22172.

Burial with full military honors will follow at 12:30 p.m. at the National Marine Corps Cemetery at Quantico, 18424 Joplin Road, Triangle, VA 22172.

A reception will be held after the burial for those who wish to attend at Full Distance Brewing in Stafford where there will be drinks, food, and paying tribute the way Bunka would have preferred.

A celebration of life will also be held in Newport, Rhode Island, at a later date. This gathering will provide an opportunity for friends and community members unable to attend the Virginia services to pay their respects and share memories in a meaningful and welcoming setting. Details will be announced when available.

In lieu of flowers, my father would have appreciated gifts made to Dana Farber and The Jimmy Fund for Kids' Cancer.

Previous Events

Viewing

FEB 3. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Miller Funeral Home & Crematory, Inc.
3200 Golansky Blvd.
Woodbridge, VA 22192
703-878-CARE (2273)
<https://millerfuneralhome.net/>

Funeral Service

FEB 4. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

National Museum of the Marine Corps
1775 Semper Fidelis Way
Triangle, VA 22172

Interment

FEB 4. 12:30 PM (ET)

National Memorial Cemetery at Quantico
18424 Joplin Road
Triangle, VA 22172

Tribute Wall

MT

“ *My sincere sympathy on the passing of your dear father, grandfather and great grandfather!*

Sincerely,

Mary Teresa Cassady Tojo

(Cousin) (Daughter of Thomas & Mary Cassady)

Mary Teresa Cassady Tojo - January 17 at 03:03 PM