



## Michael Dennis Callaghan

July 5, 1948 - January 21, 2023

Michael Dennis Callaghan, 74, of Manassas, VA, passed away on Saturday, January 21, 2023.

He was born on July 5, 1948, in Rochester, New Hampshire. He graduated from Spaulding High School in 1966 and attended the University of New Hampshire, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History in 1971. He completed his Master's Degree in Public Administration from Golden Gate University in 1979.

Mike received his commission through Air Force ROTC in June 1971 and attended Undergraduate Pilot Training at Columbus AFB, Mississippi. After earning his wings, he attended Pilot Instructor Training at Randolph AFB, Texas, before returning to Columbus AFB as a T-38 Instructor Pilot and Check Pilot. In 1976, he was assigned to the 1st Tactical Fighter Wing at Langley AFB, Virginia, where he assumed command of the headquarters squadron and flew the T-39 while in the rated supplement. In 1979, he was reassigned to the 182nd Tactical Air Support Group as a Fighter Duty Officer and later as Operations Officer flying the A-37.

In 1981, Mike was assigned to the 380th Bombardment Wing at Plattsburgh AFB, New York, where he served as a KC-135 Instructor Pilot, Standardization/Evaluation Pilot, Chief of Training Flight, and Wing Executive

Officer. In 1986, he was transferred to Headquarters Strategic Air Command and served as Chief of Overseas Basing Branch and Deputy Chief of the Bases and Units Division. In the latter position, he was responsible for coordinating SAC's input to the Carlucci Commission on Base Closure, and he was the program manager for B-1 and B-2 basing.

In 1989, Mike assumed command of the 28th Air Refueling Squadron at Ellsworth AFB, South Dakota. He led the 28th Air Refueling Squadron in Operation Just Cause, and again in Desert Shield/Desert Storm. He assumed command of the 28th Operations Support Squadron in September 1991, and he was reassigned to the Pentagon in September 1992. While at the Pentagon, he was the Chief of the Base Transition Division, Air Force Realignment and Transition Office. In 1996, he was assigned to Air Combat Command as Chief of the Programs Division, where he was responsible for force structure management, basing studies, and Air Combat Command's long range plan development.

Mike retired as a Colonel in 2001 with over 4,000 flying hours in the T-38, T-39, O-2, A-37, and the KC-135 and was a graduate of Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College. His decorations for his service included the Legion of Merit with one oak leaf cluster, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Air Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Southwest Asia Medal with three bronze star devices, the Kuwait Liberation Medal, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Kuwait Liberation Medal, Emirate of Kuwait.

Mike continued supporting Headquarters Air Force basing in his post-USAF career as a Scitor Corporation Program Director. He built and managed a special project group of 20 consultants, which provided long-term management expertise to the US Air Force Air Staff over a multi-year program

to optimize the basing requirement needs for the modern Air Force. After retiring from Scitor, Mike was an Executive Consultant for the FAA and was instrumental in developing a Realignment and Management Process (RAMP) to fairly evaluate all Terminal Radar Approach Control facilities. The innovative process was deemed a model for the future.

The values and honor with which Mike served his country were at the heart of what made him a wonderful husband, father, and friend. Mike was a fiercely loyal and protective guardian of those he loved. He and Janet were happily married for fifty-one years. They were best friends and partners in all things. He believed in and supported all of his daughters' dreams. Mike lived bravely and to the fullest. Throughout his life, he pursued many hobbies, including riding dirt bikes, skiing, racing cars, woodworking, photography, marksmanship, astronomy, and traveling to places he always wanted to see. He was also an avid RC airplane hobbyist. He loved having four grandsons who shared his joy of flying kites, building rockets and Cub Scout derby cars, playing catch, and building gingerbread houses. He always listened to their stories with bemused interest and gently bestowed his life's lessons.

Mike was our anchor, our calm voice of reason during adversity, and our architect of adventure. He will be forever missed but always in our hearts.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Lorraine and Donald Callaghan, and his cousin, Diane Sullivan. He is survived by his spouse Janet Callaghan; daughters Amy and Meryl Callaghan; sons-in law Boris Wawrik and Robert Hall; and his four grandsons (Declan, Jack, Rowan, and Aaron).

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at Nativity Catholic Church (6400 Nativity Lane, Burke, VA, 22015) at 10:00 AM, Thursday, February 16th. A reception to celebrate his life will follow at 12:00 PM at Trummer's Restaurant

(7134 Main Street, Clifton, VA, 20124). Donations can be made to the Wounded Warrior Project or a Veterans Service Organization of your choice in memory of Colonel (ret) Michael D. Callaghan.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation in loving memory of Michael Callaghan to the Wounded Warrior Project ([https://support.woundedwarriorproject.org/Default.aspx?tsid=11585&ovr\\_acv\\_id=16828&campaignSource=ONLINE&source=BS23008AAABRXAA&gclid=EAlaIQobChMI68CunK2G\\_QIVGkFyCh2rvgkFEAAYASABEgJwTfD\\_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds](https://support.woundedwarriorproject.org/Default.aspx?tsid=11585&ovr_acv_id=16828&campaignSource=ONLINE&source=BS23008AAABRXAA&gclid=EAlaIQobChMI68CunK2G_QIVGkFyCh2rvgkFEAAYASABEgJwTfD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds))

# Previous Events

## Mass of Christian Burial

FEB **16**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Church of the Nativity Catholic Church  
6400 Nativity Lane  
Burke, VA 22015

# Tribute Wall



“ *By far the absolute best Squadron Commander I ever had. I had the honor and pleasure to serve under him while assigned to Ellsworth AFB. Unlike so many other superiors he spoke to me and treated me as an adult. Sending belated condolences to the family. I just saw a mention of his name in the MOAA magazine.*

Diane - April 03, 2023 at 05:39 PM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Michael Dennis Callaghan.*



February 14, 2023 at 01:20 PM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Michael Dennis Callaghan.*



February 12, 2023 at 05:12 PM



“ *Loving Lilies and Roses Bouquet was purchased for the family of Michael Dennis Callaghan.*



February 09, 2023 at 04:57 PM

JG

“ Mike was special. When I was younger I felt like I had to prepare for family gatherings because I knew if we had a conversation he would be sharp and think of twenty things about politics and the military that I hadn't thought of. He was always thoughtful and he and Janet made the effort to visit family and come to the important events. Mike was also a model officer. He was super intelligent, and not surprisingly spoke truth to power. Mike loved family and was devoted. We will miss him.

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**John G** - February 08, 2023 at 09:04 PM