
hon·or

/ˈɑːnər/

verb

hold in

great respect

Over the past months, honoring Sean has taken many forms.

We remember each and every act of kindness: words of comfort, luminaria and silent vigil, cards, calls, emails, gifts, texts, books, breakfast, lunch, dinner, wine, sweets, flowers, plants, trees, donations, cups of tea, expertise, toasts, photographs, communicating with others on our behalf, stories, home visits, errands, household tasks, laughter, tears, Instagram and Facebook posts, and hugs.

Noah Farr, Sean's high school friend and "PJ" aka a paramedic military superman, contacted the Wing Commander in Alaska immediately upon hearing of the crash. He asked for orders to join the operation so he could bring Sean off the Knik Glacier. When this could not happen, Noah followed Sean through the system in Alaska until he knew he was in Caitlin's and my hands.

Jordan Eastman, Sean's college classmate and funeral director in Anchorage, took exquisite care of Sean and us. **Alaska friends** stood by us.

Uncle Tommy aka Captain TJ McManamy has 47 years of experience flying military and commercial aircraft. He has eased every step of our way, acting as liaison with the NTSB and the military teams that worked at the crash site. He continues to help us understand the mechanical, weather, human and other factors that contribute to aviation accidents.

Eeva Latosuo was Sean's senior thesis advisor at Alaska Pacific University and later welcomed him as a colleague in avalanche and outdoor education. Eeva was called to conduct the avalanche assessment at the crash site before recovery operations could begin. Her photos, diagrams and explanations have greatly eased our way forward.

Rob and Dee McManamy sent us the installation of Help Each Other signs by Chicago artist JB Daniel. Please take one when you leave and spread that word.

Liesy Winny wrote Sean's obituary with us and then policed national and international publications for accuracy in reporting (and by the way, she was not the only one calling out the titans of journalism for inaccuracies).

Keith (who has changed Sean's life for the better in ways too numerous to count) has spent the past four months with his chain saw, excavator and skid steer creating a beautiful open two-acre site offering the distant views of Smarts Mountain, Holt's Ledge and Mt. Cardigan that Sean so loved from our Moose Mountain property. Trees sent to us from family and friends are planted in Sean's Grove and next, Keith will complete the ski hill, zipline, and firepit. Please come and sit for minutes or hours.

Mark Adamczyk and the **Skiway crew** moved mountains to make today's Gathering at Sean's home hill possible. A team characterized by willing spirits and sundry skills came together to create this Gathering: **Rob Grabill, Megan Castelot, Chris and Carolyn Sailer, Kelly Palmer, Eduardo Moran**, and the **Foulds, Kerrigan and Hochreiter Families**.

Mary Ballou designed the announcement and this program for our Gathering to Honor Sean, with love.

GATHERING TO HONOR

SEAN McMANAMY

November 28, 1982 • Norwalk, CT

March 27, 2021 • Knik Glacier, AK



Sunday • September 19, 2021
Dartmouth Skiway • Lyme Center, NH

GUIDE

Rob Grabill

WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE

Caitlin Hague

Michael Foulds

Alex Mackay

Geoff Masland

Mitch Bacon

The Cousins

Bill Allen

Dan Starr

Brian Horton

Nina and Jared Quinton

Casey McManamy Parker

THE FLOWERS OF THE FOREST

Traditional Celtic farewell

Melody dating to the 1600's

LINK ARMS AND HEARTS

Sean's Playlist, Cheers, Photos & Stories,

Sasquatch Hugs, Strong Coffee, Fogs,

Curly Fries & Cinnamon Sticks a la the old Brundage Lodge,

and love, love and more love



My Seanboy

"He's been here before," my colleague proclaimed as she studied Sean, the biggest and prettiest and most tightly swaddled baby behind the big glass nursery window at Norwalk Hospital on November 28, 1982. For those not raised with such aphorisms, she meant that he was an "old soul." Sean loved this story and understood what it meant from an early age.

When Sean turned 5 years old, I wrote in my A Tale of Mother's Days journal, "Sean surprises me with his insight. He is wise beyond his years. Sean does not fight; he is skilled at deflecting and diffusing conflicts with his peers. He includes the kid that others have excluded. He is a 'kid's kid' and can play with anyone. He gets lost in imaginative play for hours. He LOVES fun!! Set him loose and his heart soars, his intensity and worry disappear, he becomes giggly and full of himself. Sean has a huge circle of buddies and is hero-worshipped by younger kids. He speaks to babies and toddlers, softly and eye-to-eye, then communicates their needs to a grown-up. Sometimes, I look in the rear view mirror and see Sean holding his little sister's hand as she sleeps in her car seat. 'What's your family for?' he gently replies when I thank him. Sean expects a lot of himself. He has always had an inner life that sometimes causes him pain. He thinks a lot. He can be intimidated or angry when he does not succeed at a new task. Finally at age 5, he is loosening up and can sometimes laugh at himself when he is 'not the worst one' at something new. His preschool teachers report that he is 'the most willful child we have ever taught' and 'if you can direct that will into something positive, the results will be awesome.'"

The hundreds of stories shared about Sean in the past 25 weeks + 1 day read like my description of Sean at age 5. The force of his character has been consistent. He knew "true north." His impact has been enormous

yet he wielded it one-to-one, moment-to-moment. He practiced kindness, integrity, and loyalty and he shunned rote sentimentality or the muffling that organizations often require.

I think Sean's friends recognize his old soul when they speak of him as The Mythical Sasquatch, the light we all danced around, the center, the heart. Old souls, too, have lessons to learn and perhaps that is why they have also called him McNAB ("numb as a boot"). Sean explored his inner terrain with less surety than he explored mountains or surf, yet he did so even when fearful. He stumbled, fell, got up and kept walking, maybe even dancing. That is courage. That is grace.

Sean startled me when as a young adult, he said, "Mom, I have learned that I am a speck on this planet." For him, the potential for sacred, transcendental moments lived side-by-side with the potential for avalanche, an unseen crevasse and a fall. "No one wants to die," he said, "doing what they love or otherwise. We all want to go home." His work and play were governed by this perspective. His chosen role was to keep himself and others safe, while pushing forward to experience the magic that only the natural world offers.

Sean's greatest gift was to see a person, truly see a person and love them for who they are. Death brings an impulse to smooth out the rough and to reframe the up and down nature of kinship and friendship. I honor my Seanboy by continuing to see him, truly see him and to know him, love him and hold him and his old soul.

xoxo

Sean's Mom

(as in "Yo, Sean's Mom", as I have been called by hikers, skiers and surfers across the country)

**Peace.
Love Life.**

Barbara Fildes will post photographs and more stories about her Seanboy on seanmcmnamy.com.