



Dennis Joe Morgan Jr

October 1, 1956 ~ June 14, 2025

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US Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer (Ret.)

Dennis Joe Morgan Jr., 68, of Salt Lake City, Utah, passed away peacefully on June 14, 2025, after a brief and courageous battle with an aggressive, unknown cancer. He was held in the arms of his devoted wife, Ashlee, as he took his final breath at the University of Utah Medical Center—just blocks from their home.

Born on October 1, 1956, to Dennis Joe Sr. and Wilma Jean Morgan (both deceased), Dennis was raised with strong values of service, loyalty, and grit. He was one of five siblings: preceded in death by his sister Theresa and his younger brother Donald, whose passing in childhood left a lifelong ache in Dennis's heart. He is survived by his sisters Sheila Harris and Karen Embry (Charlie), and his half-brother Edward McGregor.

Dennis proudly served in the United States Navy from 1980 to 1997, achieving the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer. He was a member of Navy Special Forces, serving in both the Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) units—elite roles requiring exceptional bravery, technical skill, and physical endurance. His military journey began through ROTC, which helped him earn a degree in Electrical Engineering. He later earned a second Electrical Engineering degree from San Diego State University, where he also taught gas turbine engineering as an adjunct professor. A decorated veteran of the Persian Gulf War, Dennis was a true leader and a fierce protector, earning numerous honors including 3 Navy Commendation Medals, 5 Navy Achievement Medals, a Combat Action Ribbon, a Navy Expeditionary Medal, 2 National Defense Service Medals, a S.W. Asia Service Medal, a Kuwait Liberation Medal and more for his dedication and heroism.

After retiring from the Navy, Dennis continued to travel the world through his work with Solar Turbines, a Caterpillar company. He began in the test cells and rose through the ranks to become District Manager of the Mountain States region, based in Salt Lake City. It was there that he met the love of his life, Ashlee. The two were inseparable from the start—attached at the hip, people often said—and were married on her family's ranch on July 26, 2014.

Together, Dennis and Ashlee poured their hearts into their historic home and shared a passion for cheering on their beloved Utah Utes. Their bond was rare and unwavering.

Dennis was the proud father of three daughters—Ashley (Marcus Cahill), Candice, and Autumn. He was a proud grandfather to Candice's three sons: Daniel, Ayden, and Conner. He also leaves behind his loyal border collies, Annabelle and Cowboy, and the memory of many beloved dogs before them.

A man of many talents and adventures, Dennis was once a professional bull rider, a world traveler, and a brilliant mind with a rugged charm. He was wildly intelligent, fiercely loyal, and unforgettable to all who knew him.

Dennis was a man of deep faith who trusted fully in God's greater plan. His belief in divine purpose gave him strength throughout his life and comfort in his final days. He faced his illness with courage and grace, anchored by the peace of knowing he was held in God's hands.

In accordance with his wishes, Dennis will receive a burial at sea in true Navy tradition. The United States Navy will carry out the ceremony off the coast of San Diego, California, at a time of their choosing.

Dennis's favorite quote, which he strived to live by and leaves as a parting message to all:

"...And Always Stay Humble and Kind".

—*Tim McGraw*