



Frank Hallinger

March 6, 1948 - January 13, 2026

Frank Hallinger, lovingly known as Rusty, Dad, Pappy, and Nitty, passed away peacefully on January 13, 2026, surrounded by his loving family. He was 77 years old.

Frank was born on March 6, 1948, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Frank John Hallinger Sr. and Ann Tymel Hallinger. He built a life rooted in family, service, and friendship.

Frank graduated from El Campo High School with the Class of 1966 and went on to earn his Associate Degree from Wharton County Junior College. Shortly after, he proudly served his country as a United States Marine during the Vietnam War. His service was marked by honor and bravery, earning him the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal with device, Vietnam Service Medal with one star, Rifle Marksman Badge, Combat Air Crew Insignia with three stars, and the Strike/Flight Medal with Bronze Star #5.

Following his military service, Frank dedicated more than 40 years of his life working at Wharton Tractor Supply before retiring in 2014. He was also a proud member of the VFW in Wharton, Texas, where he continued to honor the bonds of brotherhood formed through service.

Frank shared a beautiful love story with his wife, Karen Wenglar. The two were high school classmates who graduated together in 1966, went on to live separate lives, and later found their way back to one another. From the moment they reunited, they were inseparable—where one was, the other was close behind. Their love was steady, joyful, and deeply devoted.

Frank was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, and friend. He is survived by his loving wife, Karen Wenglar; his sons Chad and Kristy Hallinger, Heath and Audrey Hallinger, Ryan Hallinger, and Kyle Hallinger; his stepchildren Sean and Angela Wenglar, and Juan and Sarah Vasquez.

He leaves behind a legacy carried on through his grandchildren: Jayce and Jerell Hallinger; Skylar Hallinger (Kinley), Seth Hallinger (Dharma), Spencer Hallinger (Lauren); Isaiah, Noah, and Joseph Hallinger; James Hallinger; Luke and Olivia Wenglar; and Emilia, Eli, and Eleanor Vasquez. He was also blessed with a great-grandchild, Adaline Hallinger, who brought him immense joy. Frank is survived by his sisters Cheryl and John Roach, and Becky and Robert Hardin.

He was preceded in death by his sister Cindy Waligura and his parents, Ann and Frank Hallinger Sr.

Frank's heart extended beyond people—his loyal dog, Ivy Elizabeth, was always by his side. He also held lifelong bonds with his special childhood friends Charles, Evon, and Delbur.

Frank loved spending time with his family, attending every possible game, performance, and activity for his grandchildren and nieces and nephews. He enjoyed watching football and baseball, taking long drives with Karen and Ivy, and simply being present for the people he loved.

Frank was generous, family-oriented, and a true friend. He embodied unconditional love and lived it daily—through quiet acts of kindness, unwavering support, and a heart that never stopped giving.

He will be deeply missed and forever remembered.

Visitation will begin at 9 a.m. on Saturday, January 24 at Triska Funeral Home. Memorial services will follow at 10 a.m.

Memorial donations in memory of Frank may be made to Everyday Heroes in El Campo or the Wharton VFW.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN **24**. 9:00 AM (CT)

Triska Funeral Home
612 Merchant Street
El Campo, TX 77437-3440
(979) 543-3681
triskafh@sbcglobal.net

Memorial Service

JAN **24**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Triska Funeral Home
612 Merchant Street
El Campo, TX 77437-3440
(979) 543-3681
triskafh@sbcglobal.net

Tribute Wall

EG

“ *Your Family Elisha, Isaiah and Noah Hallinger, and Eli. We love you always.*



Elisha Gilmore - January 24 at 03:49 AM

SS

“ *Shirley Shorter purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of Frank Hallinger.*



Shirley Shorter - January 22 at 08:46 PM

VF

“ *Vasquez family purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Frank Hallinger.*



Vasquez family - January 22 at 07:46 AM

VF

“ *Vasquez family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Frank Hallinger.*

Vasquez family - January 22 at 07:46 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Frank Hallinger.*



January 21 at 05:51 PM



“ *Mindy Labay lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger*



Mindy Labay - January 21 at 05:50 PM



“ *Your cousins- Rick & Patty Mossor, Joe & Karen Grasso, Jon & Jody Haucrigh purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Frank Hallinger.*



Your cousins- Rick & Patty Mossor, Joe & Karen Grasso, Jon & Jody Haucrigh - January 21 at 01:24 PM



“ *Lu Matzke lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger*



Lu Matzke - January 19 at 01:38 PM

TL

“ Thomas & Patricia Lutringer lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Thomas & Patricia Lutringer - January 19 at 11:05 AM

GS

“ Gayle Shelley lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Gayle Shelley - January 19 at 10:40 AM

JZ

“ Jo Ann Zernicek lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Jo Ann Zernicek - January 19 at 06:54 AM

KP

“ Kari Peikert lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Kari Peikert - January 18 at 12:41 PM

LT

“ Sending our deepest sympathies! Prayers and blessings to all the family. I know he will be missed by all 🙏 Ben and Lena Tupa

Lena Tupa - January 16 at 09:09 PM

CR

“ Clarence & Judy Rohan lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Clarence & Judy Rohan - January 16 at 08:06 PM

VQ

“ So sorry for your loss. Please know Karen your family are in my thoughts & prayers. God bless you, your family, & friends. RIP Frank ☐! He will be dearly missed by everyone who knew & loved him. Vicky Blair Ustynik Quijas



Vicky Quijas - January 16 at 03:24 PM

VQ

“ Vicky Quijas lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Vicky Quijas - January 16 at 03:14 PM

CA

“ Chris and Tonya Auer purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Frank Hallinger.



Chris and Tonya Auer - January 16 at 03:04 PM

 Randy Ratcliff

“ So sorry to hear about Frank’s passing. I remember him from high school days. After that, the next time I saw Frank was in Vietnam. I was walking up Freedom Hill in Da Nang to see the Bob Hope Christmas show. All of a sudden, I felt like a bomb exploded behind me. I was flying forward, getting a mouthful of red dirt. I didn’t have time to think or even be scared it happened so fast. Frank had tackled me from behind so hard! Then Frank flipped me around as I was lying there on my stomach, yelling at me what the hell are you doing here. I laughed and yelled back at him, you scared the hell out of me, and what are you doing here? Frank was a Marine’s Marine! Job well done, Marine.

Randy Ratcliff - January 16 at 02:16 PM

CR

thank you Randy for the story, Rusty told me that story many times and how surprised and happy he was to see you.

Cheryl

Cheryl Roach - January 19 at 03:19 PM

TD

“ Tony Dettling lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Tony Dettling - January 16 at 12:08 PM

AB

“ Cheryl, Becky, and the family of Mr. Frank Hallinger, our prayers are with you. May he rest in peace, and may the perpetual light shine upon him.



Augie & Terri Beltran - January 16 at 09:48 AM

WM

“ Such a great fellow and fun to be around..... may he rest in peace

Wendell McAskill - January 16 at 09:38 AM

KN

“ My heart goes out to Frank's family. He was one of my dad's best friends, and I loved hearing the stories about their young and wild ways. He was a treasure that will be missed.



Kimberly Newton - January 16 at 09:13 AM

JS

“ Julie Strnadel lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Julie Strnadel - January 16 at 08:57 AM

MS

“ Martin Strarup sent a virtual gift in memory of Frank Hallinger



Martin Strarup - January 16 at 08:09 AM

FF

“ Very sorry to hear Frank’s passing. He was a true marine just all-around great person. He will be missed rest in peace Frank.

Floyd Fisher - January 16 at 08:00 AM

EF

“ Erik, Katie, and family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Frank Hallinger.

Erik, Katie, and family - January 15 at 10:21 PM

EF

“ Erik, Katie, and family purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Frank Hallinger.



Erik, Katie, and family - January 15 at 10:21 PM

BC

“ He was a true gentleman in every aspect!
RIP Nitty! 😞
Robert and Becky Chomout



Becky Chomout - January 15 at 10:11 PM

CB

“ Charlene Kulcak Borak lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Charlene Kulcak Borak - January 15 at 09:55 PM

SS

“ Sandra Stary lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Sandra Stary - January 15 at 09:15 PM

HC

“ *My birthday twin, uncle & godfather. You meant so much to me. I love you, Uncle Rusty* ☐



Holly Waligura Class - January 15 at 08:12 PM

MM

“ *Melissa Mayo lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger*



Melissa Mayo - January 15 at 08:09 PM

SD

“ *Susan Dettling lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger*



Susan Dettling - January 15 at 07:51 PM

EA

“ So sorry to hear of Uncle Frank’s passing! I watched some home movies a while back and one was when they all came to Arkansas to visit us. I wasn’t very old then so I don’t really remember it but I have kept up with the family through Facebook... Sending my thoughts and prayers to his wife and Chad, Heath, Ryan, Kyle and family and friends!



Emily Brown Acklin - January 15 at 07:50 PM

SR

“ Suzie Ramsey lit a candle in memory of Frank Hallinger



Suzie Ramsey - January 15 at 07:18 PM