

Russell J. Boyle & Son Funeral Homes, Inc

The Honorable Jacob Hagopian

(July 3, 1927 - November 19, 2017)



Narragansett

Retired Federal Magistrate Judge Jacob Hagopian, 90, passed away on Sunday, November 19, 2017, at South County Hospital with family by his side. He was the beloved husband of Mary L. (Pomoransky) Hagopian.



Born in Providence, Rhode Island, he was the son of the late Peter (Bedros) Hagopian and Varvar (Leylegian) Hagopian. He was predeceased by his sister Rosalie Yazijian and his brother Dr. Martin Hagopian.

He was a Federal Magistrate Judge for the United States District Court for the District of Rhode Island. He was first appointed as a Magistrate Judge in 1971 and was later recalled into judicial service in 1995. Judge Hagopian fully retired from judicial service in 2012.

While in high school he dreamed about joining the Army and signed up for The Rhode Island State Guard where he spent more time than he did in school. He left home and his beloved parents, and without completing high school, he set off to pursue his dream to be a soldier and paratrooper, and enlisted in The United States Army at age 17. He entered Active Duty as Private and rose in rank to Colonel. He received his GED and went to college and law school nights while raising a young family. Judge Hagopian attended The George Washington University, where he received an A.B. degree. He then entered The American University, and earned a Juris Doctor degree. He later enrolled in the Judge Advocate General's School in Charlottesville Virginia, became a Graduate in International Law, as well as the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Washington DC, all while on active duty in the Army and helping his young wife raise a family of five.

His Active Duty Assignments included: 11th Airborne Division, Private to 1st Sergeant; Airborne Infantry 82nd Airborne Division, 2nd Lieutenant to 1st Lieutenant; Army Security Agency, Washington D.C.; 501st Reconnaissance Group, Special Operations Korea; Army Security Agency, Tokyo, Japan.

In 1960-63, he was assigned as an officer in the Judge Advocate General Corps, along with his family, to Berlin, Germany, where he was the Deputy

Staff Judge Advocate to the U.S. Army Commander in Berlin and served in a Special Operations Unit as Principal Legal Adviser to the Intelligence Community, during the Berlin crisis.

Afterwards, he was reassigned, and settled his family stateside, back in Washington DC.

While in Washington D.C., he served as Appellate Counsel and Group Supervisor, Defense Appellate Division, Office of the Judge Advocate General and served in the capacity as Deputy Chief, Criminal Law Division, Office of the Judge Advocate General, Department of the Army, at The Pentagon. He received the Legion of Merit award for his judicial and legal advice to the government.

In July 1970, he retired at the age of 42, from the U.S. Army where he served as Appellate Judge, on the U.S. Court of Military Review, the highest military court, USA Court of Criminal Appeals and USA Judiciary.

In 1971, he was appointed Federal Magistrate Judge for the United States District Court for the District of Rhode Island.

He held several Academic Positions, alongside his civilian judgeship, and his judge advocate and military positions, including: Adjunct Faculty, University of Maryland, Berlin, Germany Center; Adjunct Professor, American University Washington DC; Director and Adjunct Faculty, Roger Williams College Law Center Rhode Island; Adjunct Professor, Suffolk University Law School, Boston, Massachusetts; Honors Faculty Fellow, University of Rhode Island; and Adjunct Professor, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island; with his teaching and scholarly writing focusing on law, military justice and international law.

Magistrate Judge Jacob Hagopian received an honorary degree from Roger Williams University School of Law on May 22, 2009.

He retired, after 21 years on the federal bench, in August 1992. Six months after his retirement, The Federal District Court of The State of Rhode Island recalled U.S. Magistrate Judge Jacob Hagopian. He served on the federal bench in Senior Status until February 2012.

It was well known, that while he was scholarly, and dedicated to his judicial and legal service, he was most proud of his military career and being just a soldier. He felt it was his greatest accomplishment; and the time he held so dear, is the time he spent in the 82nd Airborne Division as Qualified Parachutist, Gliderist and Jumpmaster. In his later years he was known to say that," he had very bad knees from jumping out of perfectly good airplanes".

Growing up as a poor boy from 909 Manton Avenue in Providence, raised in a third floor, cold water, walk-up, one who wore knickers, who had darker skin, and came from a household where a different language was spoken,

despite his many accomplishments and accolades, he remained devoted to his humble beginnings, and continually reminded his family that they should never forget where they came from. That sense of humanity permeated his entire legal career.

Magistrate Judge Jacob Hagopian is survived by his loving children, Mark J. Hagopian and wife Soon-Hie, daughter Mary Lou Hagopian-Lamb and husband Kenneth, son Dana A. Hagopian, son Jan C. Hagopian and wife Glenna, and son Jon G. Hagopian and wife Christine.

He is also survived by five cherished grandchildren, Jacob C. Hagopian, Sydney K. Hagopian, Jacqueline R. Hagopian, Julia E. Hagopian, and Livia A. Hagopian.

Visiting hours Tuesday, 3:00 - 7:00 pm, in the Russell J. Boyle & Son Funeral Home, 142 Centerville Road, (Rt117) Warwick.

The funeral for Judge Hagopian will be held Wednesday, at 11:00 am, in Saints Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, 70 Jefferson Street, Providence, to which relatives, friends, and colleagues are invited. Burial, with full military honors, will be held in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, in the near future.

The first virtue in a soldier is endurance of fatigue; courage is only the second virtue.

Napoleon Bonaparte