



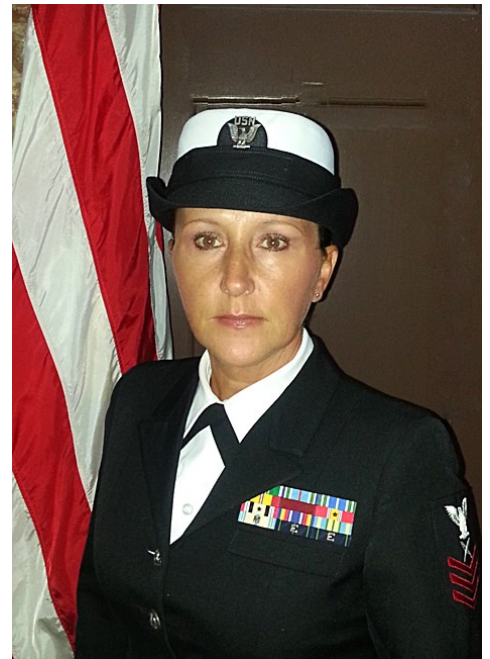
WENDA JOHNSON IS RUNNING FOR NAVY PETTY OFFICER FIRST CLASS LAUREN PRICE

A prominent advocate for military burn pit victims has died from complications related to her own toxic exposure injuries.

Lauren Price, a Navy veteran who co-founded the Florida-based Veterans Warriors Inc., passed away on March 30 from complications related to cancer. She was 56.

In a statement, group officials said her death was “due to illness and disease that directly resulted from her service in the United States Navy, specifically her exposure to toxic chemicals and substances during her deployment to Iraq.”

They also released a statement from Price given just days before her death: “It has been my greatest honor to serve the veterans of this nation as their advocate. The people and organizations that I have met and worked with have been the best in the world.”



Price served in the Navy from 2006 to 2013, a tour that included 13 months in Iraq at the height of the war. She testified before Congress that she frequently breathed in toxic smoke from burn pits as she drove trucks on and off base for missions.

Her own respiratory issues from that exposure inspired her to launch Veterans Warriors Inc. The group grew from a Facebook group trading burn pit stories to an organization focused on nationwide advocacy, legislative lobbying, caregiver assistance and other help for veterans dealing with health issues related to toxic exposure.

Price’s death comes as veterans advocates have increased focus on the issue of burn pits in recent months.

“Lauren was a fierce and tenacious advocate whose mission was clear as she worked tirelessly for 12 years serving Veterans and their families,” the group said in a statement. “Even as her health declined, Lauren was determined to not allow anything to get in the way of her selfless service to our veterans.”



Lauren C. Price, 56, of New Port Richey, Florida, passed away at home, surrounded by her family, friends, and beloved pets on March 30, 2021 after a courageous battle with cancer.

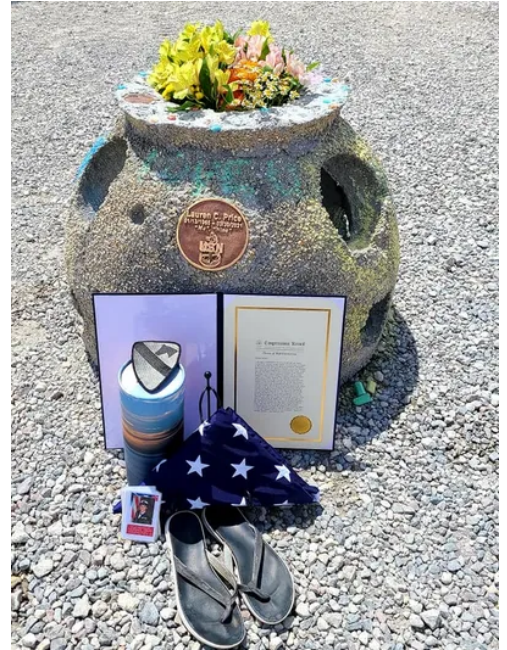
She was a beloved wife, vigilant mother, devoted grandmother, veteran of the United States Navy, and the kind of friend we all could only dream of having. Lauren, was born in Providence, Rhode Island on January 13, 1965, was predeceased by her father, Henry Frazier and brother, Phillip Jones.

She is survived by her husband James Price, sons Brad Frazier (Amber Sumrak), Aaron Maesse, Chad Maesse, Quinton Price, and Ricky "Noah" Price (Merry Dare Price); Grandchildren Brianna and Kyle Frazier, Wesley Maesse, Rylee Price, and Isaiah and Lauren Maesse. Lauren loved her family furiously; they were her pride and joy and there was nothing that she would not do for them. Lauren was many things to people and there was nothing that she could not do or accomplish. As a child, she was a gymnast, as a teenager she worked at McDonalds and Taco Bell and drag raced cars. She became an Army wife at a young age. She was a bartender when she needed to help her young family make ends meet, and while at Fort Dix, she began meeting people that would become some of the closest friends of her life. These friendships, and future ones over the years, were a cornerstone of the powerful force that Lauren was known to be. Lauren eventually became a single mother raising 3 young boys on her own. She owned a cleaning business and a professional glass shop. Later jobs included working as a master glazier, a debt collector, a city council member, and a paralegal. Although born in Rhode Island, she grew up in Washington State, but lived in New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Germany. Lauren was proud to say that over the years she had lived in 53 cities. In 2004, while battling and finally defeating cancer for the third time, Lauren moved to Florida to enjoy the sunshine. She bought a house and became an integral part of the community.





In 2006, she followed the family tradition of service to her country and joined the United States Navy. Lauren was deployed to Iraq in 2007 for a year, where she met her future husband, Jim. During her deployment, Lauren received injuries and exposures that ultimately led to her medical retirement from the Navy in 2013. This was when Lauren found her true passion in life, to help the veteran community. She became a friend and ally to countless veterans and their families across the nation. She was Co-Founder and Executive Director of Veteran Warriors, an organization whose goal is to aid veterans by any means possible. Lauren's spirit and fire allowed Veteran Warriors to blossom from a small local Facebook group into a thriving nationwide organization with a reach and influence beyond its founder's wildest dreams. If you needed something done, Lauren was the "go to person". She could always make it happen and if needed, she was always ready to say, "let me speak to your supervisor". Lauren's three greatest honors were being a mother, serving this country as a Sailor, and serving the veterans of the nation as their advocate.



Lauren has chosen to have her remains incorporated into a reef ball to be placed into the Gulf of Mexico to help with natural reef regrowth.

