



## Aaron James Casillas

November 5, 1966 - January 12, 2023

Aaron James Casillas, 56, passed away January 12, 2023 in Houston, Texas. Aaron was born November 5, 1966, in San Antonio, Texas to Guadalupe and Celia Casillas. He was preceded in death by his mother, Celia Casillas. He is survived by his wife of 28 years, Karen, and son, Christopher; father, Guadalupe Casillas; brother, Dr. Eric Casillas, and numerous cousins, friends, and family members.

Aaron was born and grew up in San Antonio, Texas. He graduated from Luther Burbank High School and received his Bachelor of Arts in Music from Southwest Texas State University. He was proud of his roots and proud to be a native Texan.

His career as a middle school band director spanned almost 30 years, working first in Laredo, Texas and then in Houston, Texas at Spring Oaks Middle School, where he spent 25 years as the head band director. He was voted 2023 Teacher of the Year at Spring Oaks, and his nomination read in part: "Mr. Casillas cares about each of his students, seeing each one's potential and drawing out each student's best." It was a source of pride for him that his students consistently did well in competitions and he celebrated their accomplishments as if they were his own children, many of which he kept in touch with long after they left Spring Oaks.

Aaron had a wide variety of interests. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and barbecuing on the weekends. He made many memories as a boy hunting with his father, uncles, cousins, and best friend, Gibby, a tradition he continued with his own son and theirs. He was an accomplished saxophonist, but truthfully he could play any band instrument well. In his younger years, Aaron played in several Tejano bands and had his own band, The Keymasters, with which he performed in San Antonio and South Texas. Music was always a huge part of his life. Whether it was jazz, classical, old country, heavy metal, new wave, or Spanish, his musical tastes were vast. Aaron was also an avid collector and breeder of snakes. His knowledge of herpetology, reptile husbandry, and genetics was well respected in the snake collector's community, and occasionally he would even get calls from vets or friends needing to identify a particular animal. Additionally, he loved to travel with his family and was able to visit many different states and countries over the years. He was always ready to go on an adventure, whether it was a road trip, a cruise, or an international flight.

Aaron was also known for his mischievous grin, wicked sense of humor, and his zest for life in general. He always made a gathering more fun and made sure that everyone else was having a good time, too. His presence will be sorely missed by friends and family alike.

A memorial service honoring Aaron's life will be held Saturday, March 11, 2023, at 11:00 AM at Dettling Funeral Home, 14094 Memorial Drive, Houston, TX 77079. A private interment will follow at a later date.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

MAR 11. 11:00 AM (CT)

Dettling Funeral Home  
14094 Memorial Drive  
Houston, TX 77079  
(281) 497-2121  
[david@dettlingfuneral.com](mailto:david@dettlingfuneral.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Aaron James Casillas*

October 08, 2023 at 10:52 AM



“ *Aaron James Casillas*

October 06, 2023 at 01:12 AM



“ *Aaron James Casillas*

October 05, 2023 at 09:45 AM



“ *Aaron James Casillas*

October 05, 2023 at 01:54 AM



“ I was lucky to meet Mr. Casillas when I was 9 when the Terrace beginner band program started. In middle school I continuously asked him if I could join the jazz band, and eventually he agreed to allow me to join and play on the clarinet. Part of being a member meant that all members were given a nickname, mine was “ Shortbarrel” because I had to get a shorter barrel on my clarinet to get in tune. During summer band, Mr. Casillas was in charge of the clarinets so I had the opportunity to tell him that when I ordered my letter jacket I would be using my jazz band nickname on the back.

Perhaps the most meaningful memory I had occurred during UIL concert season in high school when I was on bass clarinet with another peer. Mr. Casillas said he was able to tell my tone apart from the other bass clarinet player, and that I sounded good.

Mr. Casillas, Rest In Peace. You will be deeply missed.



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**Melissa Williams** - March 11, 2023 at 08:26 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Aaron James Casillas.



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March 10, 2023 at 07:12 PM

US

“ Uncle Mike, Aunt Sue, Roz, & Steph purchased the Large Basket Garden for the family of Aaron James Casillas.



Uncle Mike, Aunt Sue, Roz, & Steph - March 09, 2023 at 05:31 PM



“ 25 files added to the album Life Tributes



Dettling Funeral Home - March 09, 2023 at 12:50 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Aaron James Casillas.



March 09, 2023 at 07:48 AM



“ *Rose Remembrance was purchased for the family of Aaron James Casillas.*



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March 08, 2023 at 11:33 PM



“ *I am stunned & saddened. Aaron was my band student at Lowell middle school. A model student. I am so proud of his accomplishments. I never imagined he would be gone before me. Rest In Peace Aaron! Make beautiful music in heaven!*

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**Albert Sandoval** - March 04, 2023 at 05:19 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Aaron James Casillas.*



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February 27, 2023 at 07:43 PM



“ *Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Aaron James Casillas.*

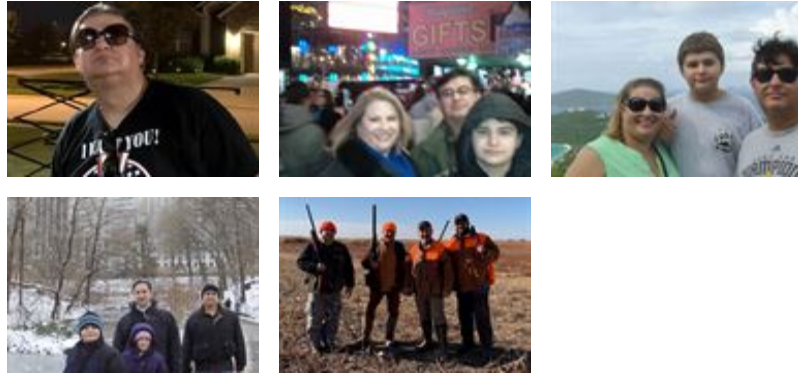


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February 23, 2023 at 11:43 AM



“ 157 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



**Detting Funeral Home** - February 21, 2023 at 03:26 PM

GB

“ *George & Margie Bondor purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Aaron James Casillas.*



**George & Margie Bondor** - February 18, 2023 at 02:10 PM

RO

“ *My friend Aaron, I think I spent more of my high school years at his house hanging out than I did at my own home and I always appreciated him looking out for me like a big brother. Aaron was a good friend and I will miss getting together and hanging out over the last 30 years sharing crazy fun stories with friends.  
Love you brother.*

**Robert olivarri** - February 16, 2023 at 11:10 PM

AX

“ Aaron, I cannot explain what your friendship meant to me and the rest of our group. Our daily risqué text messages to outright ruthless name calling. It was always great fun. Thank you for being the older brother of our group. You were the leader of our pack and we loved you for it. We always had a great time hunting, in high school, college, and our favorite pastime, consuming cold beverages. Thank you for being my friend, confidant, and brother. You're loved and missed more than you know. Rest easy brother. It's not goodbye it's see you later.  
Love you brother.

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**Alfredo M Ximenez** - February 16, 2023 at 06:23 PM

WH

Your passing has left a huge hole in not only my heart, but my entire families. The last time we communicated was just three days before we lost you. I'll miss the get togethers that we will never have but cherish the one's we had. I thank GOD for the time we had together over the last 29 years. You made a huge impact on people's lives, especially your students. I know you were super proud of Chris's accomplishments and I know you will be looking down from Heaven as he continues his successful journey throughout life. I'll so miss talking HERPS and sharing information in the hobby with you. Rest easy my good friend. We will re unite one day and continue our conversations.

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**Wayne E. Howell** - February 16, 2023 at 07:18 PM