

Richard George Fairbanks

February 22, 1946 ~ April 17, 2025

I have so many wonderful memories of Rich Fairbanks. He was our Bishop when we moved to Minnesota in 1986. After accepting a job at 3M beginning August 1986, I contacted the Stake President, President Richard Halverson, and asked who the "Stake Housing Coordinator" was, as my wife and I had an upcoming apartment hunting trip planned, and we were totally unfamiliar with the area. President Halverson chuckled a bit and said "You're talking to him!" (Okay, I had only been married a year and so maybe I was used to Singles Wards and Stakes where we actually had such a thing.) There was then a muffled "off-the-record" conversation that I later learned was between President Halverson and Bishop Fairbanks who happened to be sitting in President Halverson's office when my phone call came in. "You'll be in the St. Paul 3rd Ward," President Halverson told me. I said "no, you don't understand, we haven't actually found a place yet." "That's OK," he said "you'll be in the St. Paul 3rd Ward." I learned later that the St. Paul 3rd Ward area had not seen much growth, and this was Bishop Fairbanks' way of recruiting. That said, upon our arrival, I remember him looking me in the eyes and saying "I prayed you here." There was no joking tone to his voice. He was completely serious. After learning the kind of faith this good man had, I totally knew it was true. I still get a bit emotional as I think of him saying these words to me. Later on, I served as Bishop Fairbanks' Elders Quorum President. After losing both of my counselors, I remember commiserating with him in his office. We discussed the situation, and he offered up to have High Priests serve as replacement counselors. This just didn't feel right to me, and I told him no, we would carry on as best we could without counselors. I still remember the counsel he then gave me, something to the effect of: "Don't expect things to go perfectly. Know that there will be gaps and things that just won't happen. Don't be hard on yourself. Do your best, and the Lord will bless you and and accept your service." I don't recall ever having received prior to that time or since that kind of counsel from a Priesthood leader. I walked out of his office with a weight having been lifted from my shoulders and determined to do my very best. I loved Rich's heart and enthusiasm. He once told me that it was his life goal to do as much good for as many people as he possibly could in his mortal life. I remember thinking what a marvelous mission statement! And he lived his life like that every day, always looking to lift and help another. One of my favorite memories is attending the high school basketball games at White Bear Lake High School where his three sons and daughter all played basketball. Rich was down front on the floor with the megaphone acting as head cheerleader! When I asked him why he did this, he told me that the school cheer squad wasn't really doing much, and he wanted to get the crowd into it. As I recall, he did that for each of his four children. And who could forget his favorite cheer for anything good in humanity: "Yes, yes... ooooooh yes!" I later had the honor of serving simultaneously as home teacher and bishop to Rich and Nadene and family. Those are some

incredibly tender and cherished moments. How I loved (and still love) this family! I know that Rich has been welcomed home into the arms of his Savior with the greeting: "Well done thou good and faithful servant!" He will always be an example of discipleship for me. May the peace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ heal your hearts through this difficult moment of mortality. We will see Rich again! "Yes, yes... ooooooh yes!" Love, your brother, Dale Hulse

- Dale Hulse

Your Dad was someone I looked up to. His service to our family after my parents divorce was seen and appreciated. He was truly a man of service more than anyone else I have known.

- Jill Rogers Figgins

To all my Fairbanks cousins , Rick and I want to send our sincere condolences regarding the passing of your father. Love, Deanna and Rick Siefke.

- Deanna

Nadine & Family, I am so very sorry for the loss of your husband Richard (Butch) Fairbanks. High School was many years ago, but yours and Richards friendship was very special to me. Seeing you both at the East High Reunion this past fall, was wonderful and I will hold those memories close to me. When Richard recited the cheer it was priceless, even though the cheer really doesn't make sense, back in 1964 it was a very fun cheer. My condolences on loosing a very fine man. Sincerely, Renee Davis Nordlund

- Renee Davis Nordlund

So sorry for your loss. He was a good man and a good friend to my Dad. Thinking of and praying for your family.

- Katherine Holt Burgener

Dear family, I'm one of the three friends named Richard who grew up together from Bonneville Elementary School through East High School. I've known "Butch" for as long as I can remember. He has been a loyal friend, an example of hard work, integrity, commitment to principle and love for the Lord and family during all that time. He has blessed my life as I know he has yours. It's hard to see him go, but I'm certain it is to a wonderful reward. What a good man! I'm sorry I won't be with you for his viewing or funeral. My wife and I will be out of the country visiting family. Lord bless you all. May His perfect peace attend each of you at this tender time. Richard Boyer Holladay, Utah

- Richard Boyer

I am so sorry to hear of Rich’s passing. I knew Rich and your family when you were in the St. Paul Ward. Always a loving and kind person. My prayers for comfort for each of you as you go through this difficult journey of grief. Love and prayers, Marilee

- Marilee Hakari

When we moved to Minnesota in 1997, Rich and Nadine became surrogate grandparents to our young boys. (I suspect many young families in their circle felt the same way.) Our five boys were automatically drawn to Rich - his many stories, his sincere interest in their sports and his genuine love for them. He was always up for playing and laughing with them. Even though we haven't lived near Rich and Nadine for decades, they have continued to be an important part of our family's life. Rich will be remembered as a loving, supportive friend who always thinks of how he can help others. We will miss him. Love and heartfelt condolences to all the Fairbanks family, Kim and Christie Facer and family

- Christie Facer

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we want to say our sympathy to you and your family. we remember we used to live in Minnesota for one and a half years. We are a young couple. he is a good man.

- Andrew and Cheryl Banton

I'm so sorry to hear about your loss. Just wanted to let you know I was thinking about you and your family and will be keeping you all in my heart and prayers.

- Cheryl Maxfield

Nadine and family I'm so sorry to hear about your loss. I just wanted to let you know I was thinking about you and your family and will be keeping you all in my heart and prayers. Love, Cheryl

- Cheryl Maxfield

Dear Fairbanks Family, So sorry to learn of the passing of our true friend, Richard Fairbanks! Your family was an important part of our family's growing up in White Bear Lake, MN. I had a big brother I had never had and a great example to follow in ministering to others, as a ward mission leader and seminary teacher! Rich may be gone but will not be forgotten! Love, Jim and Peggy Hopkinson

- Jim Hopkinson

Richard was my companion in Japan and roommate at BYU. Always an inspiration and a wonderful example of good and righteous living. I cherish the opportunity to have seen him at the mission reunion and followed that short visit with an email that was undoubtedly not received before he passed. I am taking the liberty of sharing it here. Blessings to your family and to the memory of one of the great ones! Dear Elder Fairbanks, It was so good to see you at the reunion last week. In recent months, I have been repeatedly prompted to re-connect with people who have had a strong influence in shaping my life. I have been compiling my personal history and reliving many choice and sacred memories involving you and others. After unsuccessful searches for your contact information, I was delighted to learn that you might be able to attend the NFEM reunion. Upon arriving, I was disappointed to hear that you would not be well enough to attend, so I was elated to see you. We only had a few moments to visit, but I would love an opportunity to catch up by phone or email. I was saddened to learn of your health challenges but happy to hear of your marriage, presumably brought about as a result of your stay in a care facility. If you are up to it, I would love to hear about your family, your career, your church experiences, your interests and anything else that can fill the 60 year information gap since we were together in Japan and at BYU. I am happy to share the same if that would be of interest to you. Most of all, I want you to know that I have thought often about those days so long ago, and the blessings that were a result of those foundational experiences. Blessings to you and your family, Alan

Doman 206-795-3375 88 Woodhaven Pl Woodway, WA 98020

- Alan Doman

I was a counselor to Rich during his time as Bishop in the late 1980s. I was a direct witness to his love, care and compassion for others. His special talent was to provide secret acts of service to any and all he could. Although he never said this, I am convinced he started each day with the thought, “who could I help today that would make them feel that an anonymous person loves and cares about them?” If I listen hard enough I can still hear his gentle laugh in my mind. I will probably hear it until I join him on the other side. What a great man.

- Tom Cureton

Dear Family, I'm the third of the three friends named Richard alluded to above. As others have mentioned, Butch (definitely his name during the time I knew him) was a great friend, a terrific athlete from the start, an outstanding student and someone with genuine values--a kid whom your mother would always feel good about having you spend time with. It could be intimidating being around him though; he was always so good at everything! From baseball to throwing rocks at trees, Butch was always the best. And yet he was never full of himself. You were always comfortable being with Butch Fairbanks. Peace be with you. Richard Reichman Rochester, New York

- Richard Reichman

Rich was a great example of Christ like service when he first came to Jamestown when he learned of the book I wrote he read it right away & wrote a very uplifting review on my website he was always seen helping others no matter there condition he will be sorely missed!

- Dave Farr

In 1975, Jill and I moved to White Bear Lake, Minnesota. When I came home from work one evening, Rich Fairbanks was sitting in a maple rocking chair in my living room. His athletic stature and big smile made this moment memorable - he was there to welcome us to the St. Paul Third Ward. He was our new Elder's Quorum President. This was the beginning of a wonderful friendship we enjoyed for about 40 years. Rich and Nadine were among our closest neighbors in the Church. When Rich served as bishop, I had the opportunity to serve with him as a ward clerk and as a counselor in the bishopric. As an adult convert to the Church, his example and mentoring were significant factors in my Church activity and growth. He would often ask me to accompany him on visits to members who needed assistance, and I always enjoyed being with him. Rich was always studying and learning. He introduced me to Stephen Covey's "7 Habits of Highly Effective People" which I studied regularly - learning how to apply gospel principles to everyday relationships. Jill and I have a son who is profoundly deaf. Rich set up a computer terminal with a keyboard in his office at Church to use to communicate with him during Bishop's interviews. We really appreciated his kindness and taking action to help. When Rich was released as bishop I was serving as his counselor and knew about the change in ward leadership that was coming. Several of us scheduled and planned a ward social the Saturday night before he was to be released with a program patterned after the "This Is Your Life" TV show from the late 1950's. Richard and Nadine were brought on stage in comfortable chairs while hidden guests introduced an event they shared with Rich. Rich was asked to guess who was speaking, then that person would come on stage to greet Rich and tell "the rest of the story". Recorded interviews with Rich's mother and others who were out of town were also included, along with songs and skits by ward members. A memorable event for a great bishop. Later, when I was called to serve as bishop, I came home one snowy day from work to find my driveway cleared of snow. I asked my neighbor if they had done this, and he said "no" - but they mentioned

that they saw a large blue Ford passenger van parked in front of my house, and a tall man wielding a snow shovel. It was Rich Fairbanks. This was a common occurrence during the time I served as bishop. Rich was always looking for ways to help and support ward members. Our family was often invited to the Fairbanks home for activities and dinner. After adding a large room to the back of their home, Rich and Nadine enjoyed entertaining guests. We have fond memories of those fun events with the Fairbanks family. They made everyone feel welcome and loved. Rich Fairbanks will always be remembered for his kindness and integrity. His Christ-like demeanor has touched the lives of many, including me.

- Del Simcox

One Sunday in 1997 I showed up in Rich's St. Paul, MN ward. I had just taken a job there, and was moving from California. We got to chatting, and within minutes he had invited me over for Sunday dinner. Conversations with Rich and Amy focused my home search, landing us in White Bear Lake. We became friends, and I remember Rich volunteering the better part of a Saturday to help me drywall the ceiling of the basement I was finishing. We preceded Rich and Nadine in relocating to Utah, but after the move to Highland, Rich frequently joined our group for early morning basketball. You won't find many men who can claim to have slammed a basketball on a regulation rim post 50th birthday - Rich was one of the few! Unfortunately, I haven't spoken to Rich since we moved from Highland in 2020. However, this much I can say - Rich was a good man, and one of the world's nicest people. Rest in peace, and God be with you till next we meet!

- Greg Madsen

What a great man is Rich Fairbanks. My Randy and myself moved to Minnesota in 1981 and quickly grow to love all the Fairbanks. I remember many kind acts of service from both Nadine and Rich. We loved having the time to get to know all the Fairbanks. We appreciated all the friendships we had . I can remember some of the great talks and testimony given over the stand at the St. Paul Third Ward . Rich was a great teacher and disciple of Jesus Christ. Sending my love to all your family at this grief filled time. I know my Randy greeted him with a big smile on the other side of the Veil. So grateful for the things that we have in common being the Gospel of Jesus Christ that brings such peace and comfort at times like this.

- Joann Bell

My condolences Amy . I am sure the entire family was by his side and he left such a lasting legacy of a loving family . Be good to yourself Amy. It’s times like this we give ourselves to our creator. Bless you all.

- Maria A Arbulu