Richard Alvin Christenson

August 22, 1931 ~ July 25, 2018

Richard "Skip" Alvin Christenson passed away July 25, 2018 due to Alzheimer\s Disease and Aortic Stenosis. He was born August 22, 1931 in Salt Lake City to Alvin Oscar and Kathryne Corless Christenson. Skip attended school at Ensign, Uintah, Roosevelt and East High before graduating from the University of Utah with a degree in finance. On June 18, 1969, he married Margaret Mason in the Salt Lake Temple.

Skip started working downtown in the early 1940s as a dishwasher and short-order cook at the Grabateria, a small restaurant on Main Street. He then joined his family's finance company, Capitol Thrift and Loan, and spent the rest of his career in the finance industry as a lender and real estate investor. He was President of the Utah Consumer Finance Association and a Director of the American Financial Services Association.

After a stint in the Army, Skip served in the Eastern States Mission in the era when missionaries worked on the Hill Cumorah Pageant each summer. His assignment was constructing sets, which he greatly enjoyed. He also served in Manhattan, giving him a lifelong affinity for New York City. Through the remainder of his life he served faithfully in many other church callings, including Bishop of the Parleys First Ward.

Skip believed service was the rent we paid for living in our community so he was involved with many worthwhile organizations and always willing to help those in need. For many years he was President of the LDS Hospital Deseret Foundation. He was also on the boards of the University of Utah Alumni Association, University of Utah College of Nursing, Bennion Center, LDS Hospital, Arrington Lecture Series at Utah State University, Utah Open Lands and Ballet West.

Staying active was important to Skip. Most days he could be found running flights of stairs in one of the downtown office buildings or parking garages, something he did well into his eighties. Even as Alzheimer's diminished his mind, he was still game for a push-up contest with his children or innocent bystanders. No matter what challenges faced him, he maintained an optimistic and positive approach to life, which paid dividends through his final years as his health declined. Skip rooted for the underdog, whether in sports, business or life and enjoyed being a cheerleader behind the scenes.

His passion for biographies and autobiographies led him to be an early adopter of the Sony Walkman and books on tape. He enjoyed sharing the teachings of America's Founding Fathers, Winston Churchill, Peter Drucker, and Fiorello La Guardia. We will never forget his many sayings including: "Clean cars drive better," "Work expands to fill the time available," and "Wars are won on reserves." Experiencing the breadth of life was an important teacher to Skip so he introduced his family to travel, business, farming, public transportation and the humanities at a young age. He gave his children a love of reading, learning and adventure for which they are grateful.

While many will recall Skip's plaid Osh Kosh B'Gosh work overalls or dated exercise clothes, he will be more fondly remembered as a loyal friend, man of prayer and a committed follower of Christ. Skip believed in and loved the principle of forgiveness, including forgiving ourselves, and the peace of mind and joy it brings.

Skip is survived by his wife and children ‚Äî Ann, Paul, Tyler (Rachel), along with his sister-in-law, Marilyn Watkins (Vernon), a grandchild and nieces and nephews. His sisters Gloria Belnap and Janice Brown predeceased him.

A funeral will be held at the Parleys First Ward, 2350 South 2100 East, Salt Lake City on July 31, 2018 at 11 a.m. Friends may visit with the family at Larkin Mortuary, 260 East South Temple, Salt Lake City on July 30, 2018 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. or at the Parleys First Ward from 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m., prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Maliheh Free Clinic, a provider of free medical care to low-income individuals, 415 East 3900 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84107.