Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone

March 26, 1931 ~ May 12, 2018

Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone, 87, Emeritus General Authority for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, passed away peacefully in his home surrounded by his family and in the arms of his eternal companion, Merlene, on Saturday, May 12, 2018.

Elder Featherstone, ‚ÄòBig V', was born March 26, 1931 in Stockton, Utah to Emma Marie Johnson Featherstone and Stephen Elvin Featherstone Sr. He was the third child of eight with five brothers and two sisters. He was married and sealed to his high school sweetheart and the love of his life, Merlene Miner, on September 15, 1950 in the Salt Lake Temple. They have six sons, one daughter, their seven spouses, and 133 grandchildren and great grandchildren at last count.

To those who knew and loved him Big V was larger than life. He was ‚Äòa man's man' who loved the outdoors, hiking the Wasatch Mountains, taking a long drink from a clear stream, and swimming in any pond, lake, or river he could find. He was an honorary member of every Polar Bear Club he encountered. He deeply loved his children and grandchildren. He prayed for them nightly and cherished them daily. He and ‚ÄòMother Mer' gathered their family to their home and pasture where they hosted countless gatherings, cookouts, games, and challenges. Two favorite events were the annual Memorial and Labor Day sleepovers with midnight cereal parties and breakfast pancakes ‚Äòas big as your face.' The young couple that started with nothing gave everything.

Our dad loved poetry, quotes, and the great thoughts and words of others. He constantly sought greatness in his life. He developed his own ‚Äòsystem' for memorization. Once, upon being asked how long it would take to say all the things committed to memory he shared that it was his goal to be able to recite from sunrise to sunset. He inspired a generation with his favorite stories and poems, including: The Touch of the Master's Hand, The Five Dollar Job, I'm Glad I Rubbed Shoulders With You, Invictus, Reply to Invictus, The Stonecutter, The Champion, The Torchbearer, and Les Miserable. He has left us a legacy of this world's best thought. Word-by-word, day-by-day, and deed-by-deed he became the words and prose that meant so much to him.

Dad will be forever remembered as the boy who chose to wear nurses shoes rather than miss going to church; the boy who spent hours cleaning the kitchen and scrubbing piles of dishes for his mom and ‚Äòdid it for love'; the boy who wanted to pray on Thanksgiving Day and lost his appetite when prayer was neglected; the boy who bought a Bible with the only nickel he had long before he could read because it made him ‚Äòfeel good' doing what he felt God would want him to do. Of all the wonderful things said about him the thing that meant the most was being told he was ‚Äòa good boy' because that's what his mom expected of him.

Dad adored his Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son whom he found, loved, and trusted with all his heart. He lived his life according to the two great commandments,Äîlove of God and love of others. He cherished all scripture

but especially the Book of Mormon, which he read anew every year of his life. He was known as a ‚ÄòChampion of Youth.' He loved the Lord's anointed servants,ÄîThe Brethren with whom he served, with all his heart. They are kindred spirits and he will honor and love them forever. He was ever humbled to even be in their midst.

He lived his life with zest, enthusiasm, heart, vision, and love. The three words of scripture that define him best are "charity never faileth." He was born humble and he left us humble. The hallmark of his life was his humility. We will always remember our beloved father as ‚Äòendlessly, foolishly, incredibly merciful.'

Elder Featherstone's employment for 26 years was in the grocery business,Äîan industry requiring hard work and a commitment to service,Äîboth of which he was well qualified. He began as a produce stocker and rose to the executive level as Corporate Training Manager for Albertsons Inc. He served as Chairman of the National Produce Executive Committee for Supermarket Institute.

Prior to being called to the Presiding Bishopric of the LDS Church in 1972 he served as scoutmaster twice, explorer leader, high councilor four times, in a ward bishopric, and as Stake President of the Boise North Stake. In 1956 he was called to serve as the Priest Quorum Advisor to 23 young men in the Boise 9th Ward. Like Helaman, he called them sons and he loved and maintained contact with them throughout his life. In his words, ‚Äòthere is a sacred bond between us.'

He served on the Young Men's General Board and the Priesthood Missionary Committee. In 1976 he was called to serve in the First Quorum of the Seventy and was simultaneously assigned to preside over the Texas San Antonio Mission, a blessing for which he will always be grateful. The missionaries of the TSAM are dear to the heart of their shepherd president who will cherish their friendship forever.

While serving in the Seventy, Elder Featherstone served as the General Church Young Mens President and as President of six areas, including: Southeast, Caribbean, Utah South, North East, Philippines/Micronesia, Pacific Islands, Australia/New Zealand. He also served as Logan Temple President from 2002 , 2005.

Elder Featherstone always had a deep love for young men. His experience with the Boy Scouts of America began as a young boy lying belly-down on the grass watching the local troop meet through the basement window of the old Richards Ward building. In time, he earned his Eagle rank on the way to serving on the Boy Scouts of America National Board, as Advisory Council Chairman of the National Camping Committee, and Chairman of the Philmont Scout Ranch Committee. During his lifetime of service he was awarded the Silver Beaver, Silver Antelope, Silver Buffalo, Distinguished Eagle Scout Award, and Spurgeon Award for exploring. He served as the National Jamboree Commissary Chairman where they served a million meals over 10 days and raised $335, 000 worth of food in kind. He served as Chaplain General at a National Scout Jamboree and as National Chaplain at a World Jamboree in Australia. In 1974 he was awarded the Utah Father of the year award. He also received the Patriotic Award from BYU Military relations and was recipient of the Freedom Festival Award in Provo in 2008.

Elder Featherstone was preceded in death by his brothers, Ron, Kenny, and Steve; his oldest son, Ronald Vaughn Featherstone, his beloved mother, Emma, and Bear,Äîthe golden retriever that loved them. One of the last things said to him in this life was our mom whispering in his ear to go and be with his mother for Mothers Day,Äîa final request that was honored.

He is survived by David James Featherstone (Laura), Joseph M. Featherstone (Marianne), Jeffery Scott Featherstone (Lori), Lawrence Featherstone (Laurel), Jill Featherstone Taylor (Brian), and Paul Thomas Featherstone (Meredith).

The family wishes to thank the dear doctors and nurses of Aspen Healthcare, Rocky Mountain Personal Care, and DMBA. From the first day to the last they cared for our father as the Savior would. We are indebted to them for the kindness, respect, and goodness.

In lieu of flowers and gifts, our dad would want you to spend time with your families. He would tell us to love the people we love as much as we can while we can. He is our hero. He will ever remain larger than life to us. Lastly, he would say: "If I could choose from every woman who breathes on this earth, the face I would most love, the smile, the touch, the voice, the heart, the laugh, the soul itself, every detail and feature to the smallest strand of hair,Äîthey would all be Merlene's."

There will be a viewing at Larkin Mortuary, 260 E. South Temple from 6:30 p.m. , 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 17, 2018. There will also be a viewing from 10:00 a.m. , 11:15 a.m. at the Bountiful Regional Center at 835 N. 400 E, North Salt Lake, prior to the funeral, which will begin at 12:00 p.m. on Friday, May 18, 2018.