

# Dennis L. Brunetti

*September 4, 1945 ~ November 15, 2024*

Salt Lake City, UT – Our DLB left this world peacefully and with dignity on November 15, 2024 surrounded by his family at the University of Utah Hospital.

Dennis was born on Sept. 4, 1945, at the Roseland Community Hospital on the South Side of Chicago to Elio Brunetti and Anita Lucadello. He was reared with his sister Rinagaye in a proud Italian-American neighborhood where family, baseball, good food, and a fair amount of mischief were prized. He was especially close to his Uncle Tony Lucadello and Aunt Elda Brunetti.

Dennis graduated from Mendel Boys Catholic High School and was soon drafted into the Army, serving in Vietnam as a communications specialist and radio operator. Upon his return, he joined the Chicago Police Department and was the owner of a tavern with his family, The Drift Inn, before meeting his wife, Joanne. Dennis & Joanne were married in 1975 at St. Barnabas and they started their new life with an adventure West, hitching their pop-up camper to the powder-blue LUV truck, ultimately settling in Salt Lake City. It was here they started a family, learned to ski, camp, and sail, all the while making new friends and taking in the beauty of Utah. Dennis loved Joanne! He was her protector –her first and only love.

His greatest success in life was being a husband and father. He loved being a dad to Nick and was so proud of the man he became. Dennis “adopted” many kids in his life who brought him so much joy & gave him an opportunity to mentor. His nieces Emily, Jackie, nephew Matthew, family friends Stacy, Bryan, Vanessa, Tara and Grace, to mention a few, were bright spots.

Dennis also had a very special relationship with his sister-in-law, Diane. She could always count on his love and stability. He was delighted when Diane married Dennis, his stellar brother-in-law affectionately known as ‘Dennis the Younger’. Together Dennis, Joanne, Nick & Diane traveled & made many beautiful memories in Europe especially with his family in Gualdo Tadino and Milan, Italy. He was so proud of our extended Italian heritage consisting of the Allegrucci, Mammoli, Monacelli and Colombo families.

Throughout his life, he had many professional accomplishments and was very adept at sales and owning his own business. For over 40 years, he honed his craft as a building inspector and premise liability expert. He enjoyed learning from lawyers and was a self-described building code junkie. His outgoing personality, attention to detail, continuous learning and research skills attributed to his success. He particularly advocated for plaintiff’s work, supporting those most at risk or injured.

Anyone who got to know Dennis knew he was a character. He acquired many nicknames (Buddy Boy, Jack LaLanne, Mr. Hollywood, Shane) but also cleverly assigned them to those he loved most. Dennis was a self-taught man who had many interests and passions. In High School, he caddied at a country club in Chicago, quickly picked

up the sport and was an avid golfer throughout his life. On the Great Salt Lake of all places, he was introduced to sailing & was hooked! He bought a boat and taught Joanne, Nick, and many friends the joy of being ‘powered by the wind’. He loved the coastal ocean waters off Northern California best. Tennis, biking, yoga, and eating well gave him the quality of life he so enjoyed.

Dennis was community-minded and never hesitated to reach out and lend a hand. He survived Stage 3 colon cancer in 2000 giving him a second chance in life. He became a chaplain at Primary Children’s Hospital where he learned the true meaning of compassion for those less fortunate.

Our deepest gratitude to the team of Doctors, Nurses, CNAs, and Chaplains at the University of Utah Intensive Care Neuro Unit along with the outstanding Palliative and Hospice team who lovingly guided Dennis, his family and close friends through the end of his life. We will never forget you.

A visitation will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 3rd from 6-8 pm at Larkin Sunset Lawn located at 2350 East 1300 South, Salt Lake City. A private graveside service will be held at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 4th.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Red Cross, Special Olympics or The Utah Food Bank, charities close to Dennis’ heart.