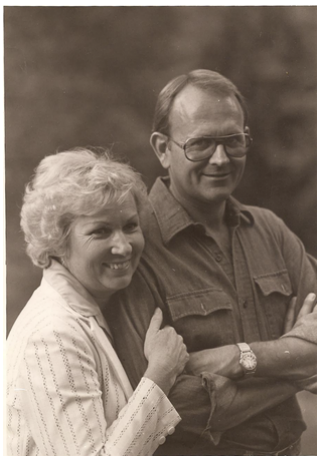

Fredric Theodore Wunderli

March 15, 1935 ~ December 17, 2025

Fredric Theodore Wunderli passed away at the age of 90, on December 17, 2025, in Salt Lake City. It was a peaceful passing with all his children present and Berni waiting impatiently on the porch of Heaven. Each of us felt that reunion deeply and know that God had orchestrated the farewell and granted final wishes.

Fred was born on March 15, 1935, and named after his father who had emigrated to Utah in his early twenties from Switzerland to unite with his brothers who had joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Fritz and Blanche Wunderli had six children, including Fred, Earl, John, Rick, Lida and Nancy. Fred loved and played most sports and graduated from East High School. He took a shortcut to win the school run that jogged up Emigration canyon to the zoo. It was the only shortcut he ever took in life. Most of his childhood was spent fending for himself – working odd jobs at an early age stuffing newspapers at the Salt Lake Tribune warehouse and paying his way through college where he graduated in Accounting from the University of Utah. He married Bernardine Lyman and upon graduation and shortly after the birth of Fredric the third, they packed up an old Volkswagen Beetle that required a gentle throttle and constant radiator replenishment to make it to San Francisco. Sixty-six years later, their California neighbor wrote: “Fred and Berni were the kind of young parents we all looked up to, devoted to their kids and to each other.” To be a friend of Fred’s was to be a friend for life. He served in his own way, always with a sense of humor, a quick helping hand and a forgive-and-forget attitude.

Fred and Berni returned to Salt Lake with another child, Stephen, who was born in Oakland when nervous Fred made a wrong turn on the freeway and pulled into an unfamiliar hospital staffed by an unknown doctor. “It all worked out,” Fred recalls. “It always does.” David and James were born next to round out what Fred called the Wunderli starting five. Those were busy days establishing a CPA practice, coaching little league, serving in Bishoprics and returning yearly to Laguna where the kids made fun of him for wearing socks and sneakers on the beach. Each of the boys had their dad as a coach. He was legendary for bringing out the best in boys. Freddy’s team won multiple championships in baseball, David’s team won multiple basketball tournaments, James’ team won trophies in baseball. Steve’s teams, not so much.

And then, the household was knocked out of orbit by the birth of a Wunderli girl. After fifteen years of boyhood bliss, Susan Elizabeth came into the world and immediately became the center of the universe. Boxes of baseballs were replaced with buttons and bows. Johnny Cash was tossed aside for the Annie soundtrack. Fred became the consummate girl father going to daddy-daughter dances, recitals and funding sorority soirées. The former basketball player and youth coach now spent his time in the gym decorating for dances. Of his own high school days, a girl wrote in his yearbook: “Fred, all I can say, is that you are perfect in every way!” Susie would concur. “I had the perfect dad, the perfect mom.” Fred and Berni were together in all ways, a match for the ages. They loved

easily and took care of each other; Berni nursing Fred back to health after heart surgery and Fred seeing to Berni's every need after her stroke. "We had two Cardinal rules in our house," David relates. "Don't disappoint dad and never make mom cry."

As Fred grew in the Church, he took on more responsibility. He served as a bishop and wrote upon his release "the calling of Bishop is the most challenging and rewarding of any calling I have ever had – excepting of course, the calling of being a father." He served as a counselor in the Stake Presidency, and at seventy-five, the Young Men's President. At age eighty he was asked why he and Kevin Watts were the ones cleaning out a widower's garage. Wasn't there someone younger? "We are the young ones," Fred said. "The widower is ninety-two." By then the grandkids had filled out the family tree. And shortly thereafter, great-grandkids. And that meant more games to attend. The University of Utah season tickets were sold to make time for Softball, baseball, basketball, track, wrestling, soccer, rugby, and dance recitals. "Our family has always been of foremost importance," Fred recited in a Stake Conference talk. "We were blessed with four sons and then Susie came into our lives and we felt like we won the lottery." In another talk Fred relates: "A father's final recorded message to his son Helaman cannot but cause the reader to reflect and ponder those things that would be most important to give as final counsel to a son or daughter. Three times Alma counseled Helaman: 'inasmuch as ye shall keep the commandments of God ye shall prosper in the land.'" When prosperity was returned to Job it was measured in posterity. For the lanky, bespectacled highschooler who became the center of our world, that promise is self-evident. He kept the commandments and taught us to do the same. There are now nearly 79 of us in the Fred and Berni clan. No donkeys or sheep, but an abundance of spiritual inheritance. "God lives," Fred wrote in his journal. "Jesus Christ is the living creator of this earth and of this restored church. The Holy Ghost influences our daily lives, and we are led by a living prophet." Until we meet again.

Viewing at LDS meeting house: 2080 East 5165 South, 29th December 6:00 – 8:00pm and December 30th 9:30 – 10:30am. Funeral service December 30th 11:00am.

In lieu of flowers, Fred has asked that donations be made to Primary Children's Hospital.

https://give.primarychildrenshospital.org/give/f6409204/#!/donation/checkout