



Gary Lawrence Poulsen

April 8, 1951 ~ May 22, 2025

On May 22, 2025, Gary Lawrence Poulsen—a proud United States Air Force veteran, devoted husband, loving father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, and friend—peacefully left his earthly body to join the angels. At 74 years old, Gary fought valiantly through extensive medical challenges with strength, humor, and grace.

In his final days, he was surrounded by the love of family and friends—a reflection of the countless lives he touched with his warmth, generosity, and boundless love.

Gary was born on April 8, 1951, to Ted and Gayle Poulsen. He was a beloved brother to Craig (Sandi), Lorin (Sheryl), and Candy (Sean), and Ted Lynn who preceded him in death. A cherished uncle to many nieces and nephews. He maintained strong, loving connections with his extended family—surviving aunts, uncles, cousins, and was affectionately known as an “honorary grandpa” to many more.

To know Gary was to love him. He gave the best bear hugs, loved Dr Pepper and sunsets, and found peace rocking in his chair while admiring the Utah mountains. He was a patriot who proudly flew the flag, loved his country, and honored his time in the Air Force. His laughter was contagious, his smile could light up a room, and his twinkling eyes spoke volumes of the joy he found in life. He loved his 2 little dogs Daisy and Lilly.

He loved all kinds of music, dancing, and could be found cheering at any sporting event, dance competition, and recitals—especially when his children or grandchildren were involved. A fan of both BYU and Utah, he was, above all, a fan of the people he loved. He had a gift for making others feel seen, heard, and supported.

Gary graduated from East High School in 1969. The year before, he attended an LDS Seminary computer dance for East and South High students, where he met the love of his life, Bonnie Jean Stewart. After graduating, Gary enlisted in the U.S. Air Force on July 23, 1969, and completed basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas and transferred for technical training and served at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver, Colorado. While serving, he wrote many heartfelt letters to Bonnie. When he learned that he would be transferred to Hill Air Force Base in the 4677th DSES, Defense Systems Evaluation Squadron, just six months after beginning basic training, on December 23, 1969, Gary shared a flight with his future brother-in-law Larry to Salt Lake City and surprised Bonnie by proposing in his parents' backyard. They were sealed for all time and eternity in the Salt Lake Temple on November 6, 1970.

Gary served in the Air Force until 1972, when he received an honorable medical discharge. He remained deeply proud of his military service and wore that pride every day. He often said, "Aim High...Fly, Fight, Win."

He and Bonnie shared 54 beautiful years of marriage filled with enduring love, faith, and devotion. Together, they raised five children: Jeremy (Sherrie), Stephanie (Paul), Kim, Greg (Melissa), and Brad. Gary was a loving, patient, and dedicated father whose firm hand was always balanced by his kind heart. His greatest joy came from being a grandpa to Shay, Katelynn (Traveller) Austin, Kelsey, Sierra, and Hunter, and he was preceded in death by his granddaughter and tiny angel Kami. He was over the moon excited to meet and hold his first great-grandson, Beau.

Gary had a remarkable way of welcoming others as family. He opened his heart and home to MANY as an honorary grandpa—most notably to Asia Brewster, who spent countless cherished hours camping and being with the family. He also lovingly embraced his son-in law's parents, the late Pete Murray and his wife Sherri. Together, they shared many BBQs and sat side by side, cheering on and supporting their beloved grandchildren—bonded by love, laughter, and pride in their family. The family would also like to acknowledge the steadfast friendship and support of Carol Black, and Warren and Ramona Goodwin whose love and care remained constant through every season of Gary's life.

Gary found immense happiness in camping and fishing at Moon Lake—especially with his in-laws Larry (Maralyn), Stewart and Joyce (Erwin), and their families. He loved the outdoors, road trips in the motorhome, family BBQs, weddings, and long talks by the fire. He volunteered as a scoutmaster sharing that love of nature and offering opportunities to youth who otherwise may not have had them. He was a man of service, empathy, and deep faith.

He proudly worked for Salt Lake County Public Works for 30 years before retiring in 2003. From snowplowing and street sweeping to flood control and garbage routes, Gary worked with integrity, strength, and humility—earning an award for Excellence in Service and membership with the UPEA.

Above all, Gary's legacy is love. He made everyone feel important, worthy, and supported. His unwavering pride in his family was felt deeply and constantly. He loved big, laughed loud, and made life feel a little bit brighter for all who knew him.

Even in death, Gary continued to give. A registered organ donor, he was able to make one final act of love by donating his eyes to restore sight—and hope—through the Utah Lions Eye Bank. His generosity will live on through the gift of vision for others.

Gary is lovingly reunited with his parents Ted and Gayle Poulsen, brother Ted Lynn, granddaughter Kami Poulsen, great-grandniece Ashtyn Poulsen, sister-in-law Sandi Poulsen, in-laws Lawrence and LaRue Stewart, and brother-in-law Erwin Degen.

He is survived by his eternal companion Bonnie Jean, their children and spouses, grandchildren, great-grandson, his siblings and in-laws, and a large, loving extended family, neighbors and close friends. His presence will be deeply missed but forever remembered.

Services will be held on Friday, May 30, 2025, at the LDS Chapel located at 5200 S Glendon Street (700 West), Murray, Utah 84123. A visitation will take place from 10:00-11:30 AM, with the funeral beginning at 12:00 PM. Graveside dedication will follow at Larkin Sunset Gardens, 1950 East Dimple Dell Road (10600 South), Sandy, Utah 84092. The funeral will be livestreamed via Zoom and can be joined by clicking the "Watch Services" button above.

The family wishes to extend heartfelt gratitude to the ICU team at Intermountain Medical Center, TrueNorth Home Healthcare, Dr. Patty and the Wound Care Specialists team, Highland Care Center, and the VA Hospital for their extraordinary care and compassion during Gary's final days. A special thanks to his dear friends, neighbors and

church community who loved and supported him through his trials.

“The legacy he leaves behind is one of unconditional LOVE, faith and kindness.”

While we mourn his passing, we find peace in knowing he is now reunited with those who went before him—smiling, dancing, and finally free from pain and suffering.

Until we meet and dance again.