

Gaylon Burdett Smith

May 30, 1940 ~ April 4, 2023

Our beloved Gaylon Burdett Smith passed away on April 4, 2023, in Salt Lake City, Utah, at the age of 82. Born in St. Anthony, Idaho, to Joseph and Margaret Smith, he was the eleventh of thirteen children with seven brothers and five sisters.

After graduating from South Fremont High School, he served a full-time mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Northern States Mission (covering Wisconsin, Illinois and Iowa) from 1960 to 1962.

Gaylon served in the United States Army two separate times: stationed in Hanau, Germany, from 1963 until 1966 with the 516th Panel Bridge Company as a driver, and stationed at a missile site near Rockenhausen, Germany, from 1975 to 1978 as a guard.

Gaylon married Peggy Jean Penman at the Salt Lake Temple in November 1978. They had three children, the oldest two of which passed away in early childhood. Gaylon was a devoted father and husband, always putting the needs of his family first.

Peggy and Gaylon attended the Riverside First Ward for over 30 years and enjoyed serving in and magnifying their various church callings. For years, Gaylon participated in weekly, early-morning temple sessions at the Salt Lake Temple. They both did extensive research on their personal genealogies and Gaylon spent much of his free time doing family history work for others. He was awarded an exceptional service certificate from the Church for his contributions to indexing.

Gaylon earned an associate’s degree in architectural drafting and worked as a draftsman and reprographics specialist for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for 26 years. He was excited to work on many temple construction projects as well as the Church Conference Center, built across the street from his office in downtown Salt Lake City in 1997.

After retiring, Gaylon served for five years as a senior service missionary. His assignment included assisting special-needs service missionaries in planting and maintaining the beautiful gardens on Temple Square.

Gaylon was an avid gardener with a talent for growing delicious fruits and vegetables and beautiful flowers. Over the years he won ribbons for his roses at the Utah State Fair. Gaylon kept himself busy with many hobbies and interests, including painting landscapes, sewing blankets to give away to others, woodworking, fishing, admiring sunrises and sunsets, and sitting on his porch swing to watch the birds that loved to feed in his front yard. He was always fascinated with the weather and often mentioned wanting to be a meteorologist. Gaylon loved learning about many different topics like nature, history, science, geography and technology.

Gaylon served in leadership roles with the Boy Scouts of America, including 15 years with a special-needs scout troop. He loved scouting, helped many boys advance to Eagle Scout, attended countless scouting events,

completed the Wood Badge program, and received a Silver Beaver Award in 2007. He exemplified the Scout Law – being trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent.

Gaylon was thoughtful, pleasant, generous, faithful, humble and service-oriented with a strong and unwavering testimony of the truth of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. He loved studying the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon, and had a special sense for spiritual matters. He was quick to apologize and quick to forgive, smiled often and laughed easily, and seemed to be able to make friends with everybody.

He is preceded in death by a son (Charles Smith), daughter (Sarah Smith), and several siblings (Iola Headlee, Melden Smith, Duane Smith, Nilan Smith, Margaret Pelton, Lydia Richards, Clair Smith, Armond Smith, Kendall Smith, Kyle Smith, and Sherry Baumgartner).

He is survived by his wife (Peggy Smith), daughter (Julie Carter), sister (Rita Nagle), daughter (Laurie Oster), son (Kevin Oleson), son (Russell Oleson), daughter (Amy Gonzalez), several grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

A special thanks to the staff of both Cottonwood Creek Assisted Living and Elevation Hospice – the excellent care and concern provided to Gaylon during the final months of his life are greatly appreciated.

Funeral services will be held Friday, April 14, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. in the Riverside First Ward church building located at 1148 West 500 North, Salt Lake City, UT 84116. There will also be a viewing for friends and family from 10-10:45 a.m. preceding the funeral services. A graveside service will be held at the Salt Lake City Cemetery at 12:30 p.m. The funeral service will be livestreamed via Zoom for those unable to attend in person at the following link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85291267854. You must have a Zoom account and be logged in to join.