

George Kelner

July 21, 1950 ~ December 18, 2024

George Kelner died peacefully at home at the age of 74 this December 2024 after 23 years of resolutely fighting a relentless cancer. George was born in the US, two weeks after his family arrived from Germany, having been forced from their home in Latvia at the end of World War II. His parents, William and Anastasia Kelner, and brother Alexis then moved to their permanent home in Salt Lake City. George was an outgoing, active, athletic kid and easily made many lifetime friends growing up in the new culture of America. His home life was enriched by the family's heritage, their linguistic skills (Latvian, Russian, German, & English), and their European cuisine.

George attended public schools growing up in the Salt Lake area, where he excelled in many sports: basketball, football, tennis, golf, skiing, and fly-fishing. George was an exceptional skier on any terrain or in any weather and was a dedicated and accomplished fly fisherman up until this last year of life. Golf too was his passion, and it competed with his time fly-fishing.

George started and finished his long academic career at the University of Utah, receiving his bachelor's degree in 1972, and then went on to complete both a master's degree and his doctorate degree, a PhD in Educational Psychology. George spent much of his professional career in service of others, both working at the Salt Lake County Mental Health and the State of Utah's Department of Human Services. Before his retirement, George served as Division Director for Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) for the state of Utah.

George and his wife, Cathy Larson Kelner, married in 1982. They have been the true meaning of a loving couple, not only to one another but also to all their friends and families. They have been each other's champion, always supporting the other's interests and projects.

They have lived in and restored several historic homes on the east bench of Salt Lake City, becoming master craftspeople in the process. They loved collecting artwork as well as arts & crafts, ceramics, and furniture. George loved travelling to Europe & the UK with Cathy, enjoying memorable moments like running the Paris Marathon, biking in Austria, or sailing with friends in the Caribbean.

Together they have supported the same causes, ideals, and goals and, as such, have been activists in many community efforts of historic preservation, city, state, and national politics, theater arts, and fine dining. They have

been in the same dinner club for over 25 years, outdoing one another with international cuisine, meeting six times a year.

George was preceded in death by his parents, and his sister-in-law. He leaves behind his wife of 42 years, Cathy; his son Andrew (Lauren); his grandson, Avi; his brother, Alexis; his nephew, Eric; and his many friends and extended family. The family would like to thank Dr. Scott Samuelson of Cancer Specialists; and Rachael Reynolds, his hospice nurse, for the wonderful sustaining care that George received in treating his cancer. A celebration of life will be held in early 2025.