

Gilbert J. Walker

September 29, 1939 ~ May 2, 2023

Gilbert J Walker, our loving father, husband, grandpa, uncle, brother, and friend to all, peacefully passed away May 2nd, 2023, in South Jordan, Utah at the age of 83 after complications of Parkinson's disease.

Gil was born at the family home in Lyman Wyoming on September 29th, 1939. He weighed in at 12 pounds and it was told that the birth on the kitchen table was very swift. He was the 8th of 9 children born to Iva Eardley and Vernon John Walker. Gil learned early in life the value of hard work as he was given great responsibility as a young boy to work on the family farm.

In high school, he excelled in basketball and most of the track events. Gil set two records in a Wyoming track meet that stood for years. His recognition in these sports led to offers of athletic scholarships from BYU and Utah State. He chose the latter and fortunately met the love of his life, Virginia Welling, on the first day on campus. They eloped the next year in November, defying her parents' wishes, but were sealed in the Logan Temple the following year. Her parents soon grew to love him like the son they never had.

Gil and Virginia became parents to three children, Gregory J and Blair McKay while still attending Utah State in Logan. Upon graduation, they moved to Grace, Idaho for a year and both taught in the high school there. With the encouragement of friends, they decided to move to Concord, California in the East Bay to continue raising their family and working as teachers. Their daughter, Julie, was born there, making their family complete.

Gil primarily taught business courses in his 35-year career in California, with accounting being the main focus. He also taught many night classes, driver's training, and coached several sports after school. Somehow, he also managed to fit in many, many rounds of golf with his friends.

During this busy time of his life, he received an award from the California organization of CPA's as having the best high school accounting program in the state. Because of his own struggles as he first studied accounting, he felt

there had to be a better method of teaching the subject than the one he had encountered. So he found it, and his students reaped the benefits.

Gil became a leader in whatever organization or group he joined. His natural ability to help gain consensus or bring levity to a tense situation became obvious to those who worked with him. His faculty peers often sought his wisdom and his students loved him. As a result he was recognized on several occasions as Favorite Teacher of the Year.

Gil knew early on that he didn't have any musical talent at all. but it didn't stop him from singing “Happy Birthday” to his family members over the phone. His version was unique to say the least, and it strayed very far from the original lyrics and melody. He embellished it with words of praise about the person to whom he was singing and usually asked them at the end, "I'm getting better, aren't I? I've really been practicing." One of his grandchildren put the

recording of him singing on FaceBook. It got over 1O thousand hits and we're quite sure, a lot of laughs. One of the viewers responded with, "Oh, I wish I had a grandpa like that!"

Gil and Virginia served as leaders for two years in the church's 12-step program and loved it. They thought of it as their mission together. Gil had an uncanny ability to see people and love them for who they were, and because of this gift, he had a positive influence on so many lives.

In February of 2023, Lyman High School honored Gil as an inductee into their Hall of Fame and he received the award in person to a standing ovation from the large audience in their new gymnasium. It was a real highlight for him to be remembered for his accomplishments as an outstanding athlete and coach.

During an unwise basketball scrimmage at age 73, Gil had a fall that brought on Parkinson's. Due to excellent health up to that point, the disease progressed very slowly, but after almost nine years, it was obvious that the Walkers would need to move near family members for more support. He didn't want to leave California after 59 wonderful years there, and he hated the snow, so it was a major effort to convince him to make the move to Utah. When Barbara Williams,

Sandy Leininger, (pronounced Une.ih.gur) and Kathy Sorenson told Virginia about all the advantages of Sagewood, Gil and Virginia sold their home in Concord and moved to South Jordan in April of 2022. Gil was informed by several residents that they hardly ever get any snow here in the winter.

The Walkers have loved their year here and know that it was the best move possible. They love the people, the surroundings, and the spirit of Sagewood. Thanks to all of you for your kindness to Grandpa and Grandma. You have even made up for the unexpected and seldom experienced snowfall.

Gilbert Walker was preceded in death by his parents, 6 siblings, two grandsons, Bradley and Andrew, and foster daughter, Peggy. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, 3 children, 13 grandchildren, and ALMOST 24 great grandchildren.

His passing has left a hole in all of our hearts, but our faith keeps us going, knowing we will see him again when the time is right. And we're pretty sure he will still have his wonderful sense of humor.

Funeral services for Gil will be held at 11AM on Saturday, May 6, 2023 at Sagewood at Daybreak, 11289 South Oakmond Road, South Jordan, Utah. There will be no public visitation. Interment will follow in the Logan City Cemetery in Logan, Utah.