

James (Jim) H. Nelson

February 22, 1959 ~ December 11, 2023

James (Jim) H. Nelson passed away December 11, 2023 after a nearly six-year battle with Endocrine Pancreatic Cancer. Jim was known as an honorable and generous man; he was a doer, a man of service and giving, constantly looking for ways to help others. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

Jim was born February 22, 1959 to Alan B. Littrell and Beatrice Ann (Stubbs) Littrell at Johnson AFB in Tokyo, Japan. The fourth of five children, he grew up in North Tonawanda, NY raised by his mother and stepfather, Neil Nelson. After High School, Jim joined the U.S. Army and was stationed at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. Within three years he was promoted to Sergeant. He left active duty to serve a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in southern France. Upon returning, he enrolled at Niagara County Community College to study business administration, staying active in the Army Reserves as well as the Army ROTC at Canisius College in Buffalo.

Following his graduation from NCCC, he rode out to California by motorcycle to court his sweetheart, OdaLisa Fackrell, whom he had met right before his mission. They were married for time and eternity in the Salt Lake City, UT temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on November 19, 1983. As neither wished for cold, snow-laden winters, they remained in California, eventually welcoming four children to their family. Jim attended and graduated from California Polytechnic University, Pomona with a bachelor’s in human resources and management. His career began in manufacturing with Frito-Lay, Inc. in Rancho Cucamonga, CA. He soon transitioned to his lifelong career in insurance, starting with Allstate Insurance at the Riverside, CA Sears store. After two years, he opened his own Allstate Insurance Agency in the Woodcrest area. Jim later established Woodcrest Insurance Agency as an independent agent. In 2014, he retired after twenty-five years of building a successful agency with many loyal clients.

Jim was a tremendous father to his four children. He was involved in all their sports and activities. While he could have pursued promotions and gained greater wealth at work, he chose to devote his time to his greatest treasure—his family. He coached many of his children’s little league and basketball teams. Jim and his wife, OdaLisa, both spent many hours volunteering at their children’s schools and were often found in the halls, stages, and sport fields of Castle View Elementary, Earhart Middle, and King High schools. It was very rare not to see him cheering on his children and their friends on the sidelines in all the many sports and extracurriculars they were involved in. Since his office was adjacent to the High School, he would find many opportunities to help whenever called upon. He even became a substitute teacher at King High after his retirement.

Jim was very active and faithful in his church. He continuously served and volunteered with the children and youth organizations. He was called as Bishop of the Perris, CA ward at the young age of 35 and later served as a

counselor in the Riverside, CA Stake Presidency. In those positions he served many individuals and families. He was especially proud of organizing wonderful opportunities for the youth in the church including a Regional Special Olympic track and field meet, building houses for a week in Mexico, and directing the California Inland Empire Youth Dance Festival at the University of Redlands in 2008.

Jim was also an avid scouter, serving nearly 50 years with the Boy Scouts of America. He served as Scoutmaster twice, and as assistant district executive with the Mt. Rubidoux district. Jim earned many scouting awards, including the highest award—the Silver Beaver Award—from the California Inland Empire Council for his service to scouting, his church, and his community.

After retiring and learning of his cancer diagnoses, Jim and OdaLisa relocated to Martinsburg, WV in 2019 to be closer to his daughter and grandchildren. He found great joy in being involved in their lives and helping with many projects on their 100-year-old farm. He was delighted that his son’s family and his youngest daughter also moved to Martinsburg in the last year.

Jim credits the excellent doctors and staff of Veterans Affairs for helping him enjoy six more years with his family and friends after his diagnosis. Their care and wisdom, along with the faith and prayers of all concerned, made his last years fulfilling.

Jim is survived by his wife of 40 years, OdaLisa and his four children: Erica (Joshua) Wheatley of Martinsburg, WV with their children Charles, George, Howard and Theodore; Jonathan (Robin) Nelson of Martinsburg, WV with Peter, Ezra, Henry, and Cora; Christina (Peter) Olson of Waco, TX with James and Daniel; and finally his sweet baby girl, Rebeccah Nelson, who moved home this past year to care for and comfort her parents.

He is also survived by his father, Alan Littrell of Johnston, NY and his siblings: Kathy Russell of Tonawanda, NY; Christy Kohl of Warsaw, NY; Alan Nelson of Niagara Falls, NY; and Jeffrey Nelson of Grand Rapids, MI. He was pre-deceased by his mother, Beatrice Stubbs Nelson, and his stepfather, Neil J. Nelson.

Martinsburg, WV Memorial Services will be at 11:00am on Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1050 Lovelace Way, Martinsburg, WV 25401. A viewing will be held earlier from 9:30-10:30 at Brown Funeral Homes & Cremations, 327 W
King St. To watch Martinsburg service, please follow this link:
https://zoom.us/j/99786712915?pwd=aDFLdFBLUHlNRm42RG5CcGFVcEJMZz09

Utah Memorial Services will be held at 11:00am on Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023, at Larkin Sunset Gardens in Sandy, UT. Graveside service will be at 2:00pm.

To watch a recording of the Utah service, please click on the tab above that says "Watch Service" or follow this link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/hEghulF29uZt92URMbF064zB3NJ47-BrB0EByWp7YazwSRjUTB710oVIfib3a4cY.0Ick

Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to the Martinsburg VA Medical Center:
https://www.va.gov/martinsburg-health-care/work-with-us/volunteer-or-donate/