

James Vier Kesler Jr

October 21, 1927 ~ December 12, 2021

James Vier Kesler, Jr., beloved father, grandfather, great-grandfather and friend, passed away on December 12, 2021. Jim was born in Seattle, Washington on October 21, 1927, to James Vier, Sr., and Ferrol Christina (Lawrence) Kesler. He had one living older sibling, Lucy. Jim grew up in the tough city streets of Seattle and Tacoma and the wilds of the Puget Sound, and was a true son of the 20th Century, educated under the tutelage of the aftermath of World War I, the poverty of the Great Depression and the tragedies of World War II. He was called up in the final stages of World War II but was declared 4F because he was so malnourished.

With his mother he moved to Utah, his ancestral home, shortly after the end of World War II and was among the first group from Utah drafted into the Korean War. Initially placed in intelligence and reconnaissance and scheduled to ship out with the first waves, his life was likely saved by a note from his mother's doctor requesting that he remain in the states. As a sergeant in the 11th Armored Division of the US Army, Company C, Battery B, he trained soldiers "how to use rifles - including the BAR - and pistols," because he had "learned how to shoot" while hunting as a teenager. "To the Right of the Line". While at Camp Carson, Colorado, Jim met Mary Catherine Hammon of Ogden, and proposed after knowing her for one week. After 17 years they finally had one child, Christina, and were eventually divorced. After the war he attended the University of Utah on the GI bill and was one term short of graduation - he hated biology.

Jim had an acute mind and an eye for detail, value, and numbers, and became a very successful assessor. For a number of years, he was the Director of Personal Property for the Utah State Tax Commission, before striking out on his own and accumulating a number of a very profitable clients. He was well regarded and respected among his peers. He was committed to serving his community and valued the time he spent as a volunteer in organizations including Utah Boys Ranch, Boys and Girls Club, The Salvation Army and Kiwanis. He was a founding member of The University Club and ran with what would be considered the "Mad Men" generation of 1950's Salt Lake, taking weekend trips to Vegas when it was nothing but a desert with a casino. Even into his 80's he was still playing Gin Rummy at the Alta Club with his friends. Ironically, he was a lifelong member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and believed in a God that loves us.

Jim loved his family, nature, gardening, and history. He could give anyone a lesson in "civics". He was a great cook and enjoyed feeding those he loved. He had a soft spot for animals, his grandkids, and those in need. He is survived by his daughter, Christina; his son-in-law, Michael E. Day; his grandchildren, Jane Elizabeth (Seth Dixon), Daniel Jedediah (Kailee), Ian James, and Anna Morgan; one great-grandson, James Sanford Dixon; and his longtime friend and companion, Yvonne Paterson. Jim was preceded in death by his parents and sister. He will be remembered fondly by all who knew him.