

John Fetzer Bates

April 6, 1938 ~ December 19, 2022

John Fetzer Bates passed away on December 19, 2022 in Salt Lake City, Utah. He was 84 years old.

John was born on April 6, 1938 in Salt Lake City, Utah to his parents Elizabeth Baer Fetzer and Lucian Hinkley Bates. He had five siblings -- Beth, Ed, Doug, Margo, and Dan.

After graduating from East High School, John joined the Marine Corps, began his studies at the University of Utah, and went on his LDS mission to Germany, where he met his bride, Christa, whom he married in September, 1961. Around this time, John developed an exquisite mastery of the German language, which he cultivated throughout his life.

In 1965, John was a Captain in the Marine Corps, commanding a battalion of M50 Ontos as part of the second combat unit to land in Viet Nam. Although he saw heavy combat and was wounded, John was very proud not to have lost a single man from his battalion. He received a Presidential Unit Citation, among other citations and medals. After some months in the military hospital on Okinawa, John was discharged honorably from the Marine Corps due to disability.

After being told by doctors that he would be in a wheelchair for the rest of his life, John began a self-prescribed physical therapy regimen, eventually making a full recovery. He enjoyed skiing, cycling, swimming, tennis, fishing, hiking, and camping. He was also a voracious reader, and enjoyed music.

John had planned to be a career Marine, so his discharge was a change in course. John enrolled in and graduated from the University of Utah College of Law. (He later earned his MBA as well as a Masters in Taxation.) With his law degree, he went to work first for Mountain Fuel, and then for Northwest Pipeline. He also served as general counsel to the Utah Opera board for over a decade.

In the mid 80's, John opened his own practice, focused mainly on business law, where he worked on hundreds of fascinating projects around the globe. He traveled extensively, especially throughout Europe, as well as in Africa and the Middle East. In business, and in life, John was known for his integrity and honesty, and was considered primary advisor and confidante by many, including his children.

John's intelligence, morality, and work ethic were inspiring to all who knew him, and his sense of humor remains legendary. He had a natural way of inspiring trust, and was considered a best friend by many of us.

John is survived by his loving wife, Christa, his children John Bates, Carolyn Jenkins, and Michael Bates, and their families.

He is preceded in death by his parents, his brother Doug, and his son-in-law Gary, all of whom were no doubt awaiting a good joke upon his arrival. God bless his soul, we miss him so.

An open house memorial will be held Saturday, June 24, 2023, from 4:00 - 7:00 PM at the Capitol Theater Rooftop in Salt Lake City. Location to the memorial: https://www.google.com/search?q=capitol+theater+salt+lake+city&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&hl=en-us&client=safari#