

John Heber Reese III

June 22, 1939 ~ September 15, 2023

John Heber Reese III, age 84, passed peacefully surrounded by his family into the next life on September 15, 2023 after several years of difficult health struggles. In the eyes of his family, he was a giant among men and one of the greatest people anyone ever knew. A man who dedicated his life to his family, his wife, his children, and the grandchildren that he absolutely adored. John was a faithful and devout member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and served his family and his fellow man with such devotion that few in this world have ever matched.

John was born June 22, 1939 in Salt Lake City, Utah to his mother Sara Langton Reese, and his father John Heber Reese II. He grew up in Salt Lake City in their family home on Michigan Avenue with his older sister Pamela and his younger twin brothers Rick and Rob. John attended Uintah Elementary School, Roosevelt Junior High School, and finally East High School. He loved his brothers and sister and often spoke of cherished family stories and wonderful memories of those years while growing up in Salt Lake. Of his parents he wrote:

“I want all to know that my parents were without a doubt the most wonderful parents a child and a man could have.”

During those early school years he worked his first job at Payless Drug Store, and later at Salt Lake Hardware, and Sears. He bought his first car during this time, a 1951 Ford 2-Door.

The day he graduated from East High School he joined the United States Army and left for Ford Ord in California for basic training. He shared that his basic training was hard, but it taught him the importance of education and hard work in life. After his basic training he went to the heavy truck driving school where he achieved the highest score in his class and eventually was sent to the heavy truck company. After his honorable discharge from the Army, he spent another 6 years in the Army Reserves.

In January of 1958, he enrolled at the University of Utah where he studied electrical engineering and graduated in 1962 with his Bachelor’s of Science. During those years at the University of Utah, he worked during the summers at the White Sands Missile Range, Hill Air Force Base, Boyles Drilling Company in Alaska, and for Utah Power and Light installing microwave communication systems. After his graduation in 1962, he took a job with Sylvania and moved for a short time to Mountain View, California before heading back to the White Sands Missile Range as a Sylvania employee working on missile jamming systems.

In 1963, he met his future wife, Janet Beaman and proposed several months later. They were married in the Los Angeles Temple on September 24, 1964 and sealed for time and eternity. They eventually settled in Saratoga, California and during this time, they had 4 sons; John, David, Alan and Craig. They suffered the heartbreaking loss of their second son David when he was just a few months old.

John had a long career working closely with the United States military and intelligence agencies to help protect the nation that he deeply loved. He worked in many roles and held many different titles over the course of his career; he managed the Intelligence Studies and Analysis team at Sylvania, he was the Director of Strategic Planning and the Senior Technologist at GTE Government Systems in the Electronic Defense Sector. Later, he moved to TRW Systems where he was the Director of Business Development, Director of Strategic Planning, Director of Special Electronic Systems and the Director of Advanced Technology Systems and Studies. In addition to his work in these areas, John continued to serve his country as a member of the National Security Agency Advisory Board and served on the National Research Council, Army Labs Survivability and Lethality Panel and his favorite position, as Director of the Army Science Board.

As much as he loved his work and the people he worked with, it simply paled in comparison to his real focus in life: the love he had for his family, friends, and others. Few people have lived on this earth who have been more charitable, compassionate, generous, and Christlike than John. He spent his entire life looking for ways to lighten other people's burdens and make sure they knew that they were loved. He served in multiple callings at church and blessed the lives of countless youth, and later in life, he and Janet served as senior missionaries and as temple workers.

He was a remarkable husband who absolutely loved his wife Janet with his entire heart during the 59 years they were married. He was the consummate protector of his family, and when Janet fell ill and spent months in the intensive care unit, it was John who never left her bedside and patiently and compassionately nursed her back to health.

It would be hard to imagine a more dedicated and loving father, who loved coaching his boys' soccer and baseball little league teams when they were younger, and serving as a Scout Master. He spent every free minute he had taking his boys on adventures to places close to home or even around the world. When his sons married, he treated his new daughters like his own children. He never introduced them as daughter-in-laws, but rather as his daughters. He was deeply loved, respected, and admired by his children. Of being a father he wrote:

"All happiness comes from loving and being loved, nothing else can ever provide the joy, the feeling of accomplishment and the pure delight of raising children, this indeed is a very happy experience."

And perhaps his most perfect role in life was that of grandfather. His grandchildren had no idea when they were each born that they hit the grandpa jackpot. They were his pride and joy, and everyone knew it. Their memories of their grandpa include him buying a 15-passenger van to carry them on daily and weekly adventures, where toys burst from under all of the seats. He took his grandkids everywhere from Hawaii to Santa Cruz, San Francisco, Disneyland, the national parks multiple times, cruises, the Caribbean, and many other places. There was nowhere John's grandchildren did not get to explore, thanks to the love of their grandfather.

At home, John was at every game and event in their lives. All of the other parents knew him, especially the coaches. He was their biggest fan and number one supporter. He arranged lessons and found things to build their confidence such as swim teams, competitive diving, and voice lessons to name only a few.

His love for others did not stop with his immediate family; anyone who really knew John knew how much he loved to serve those around him that might need a helping hand. We have spent a lifetime watching him serve others; the broken hearted, the grieving, and the less fortunate. He has served widows who desperately needed help, he has visited kids in jail who made one too many mistakes and were left alone, he cared for his best friend's elderly mother until her last day after her son passed away, and he has served complete strangers when they needed someone who cared.

If you know him, you have almost certainly received one of the hundreds of thousands of postcards he sent to people just to let them know he was thinking about them. He has helped those struggling financially, those who had lost a loved one and were at their lowest point, shared countless stuffed animals with children who he thought might need a pick me up, he would call out of blue to check in, he was the first one to your rescue if you had car trouble, or any other kind of trouble. He could be found with those that others had totally forgotten about and he would show

up at your front door with a car full of groceries if he thought it might ease your burden a little bit, and so many other things that most people will never know about.

Through all of it he never sought credit, and if you weren't paying close attention, you may have never even seen what he was doing. However, for those of us who knew him best, we saw it all of the time. He was the most generous and compassionate person we have ever known and the greatest example of Christlike discipleship. His faith in God and in his Savior Jesus Christ was at the root of his desire to serve.

He is survived by his wife: Janet Reese of Sandy, Utah; his siblings: Pamela Jones of Sandy, Utah and Robert Reese (Sharon) of Salt Lake City, Utah; his children: John Reese (Mary) of Santa Clara, California; Alan Reese (Laura) of Sandy, Utah; Craig Reese (Lisa) of Asheville, North Carolina; his brother and sister-in-law :Charles (Irene) of Fort Scott Kansas ;his grandchildren Lindsey, Andrew, Jacob (Emily), Cali, Sydney and Hailey and his adopted grandchildren Michelle, Andy, Melissa, Megan and Nick.

He was preceded in death by his parents: Sara and John Heber Reese II and Catherine Reese, his son David Hugh Reese, his brother Rick Reese, his grandson James Allan Saxon Reese, his brother-in-law Evert Jones, and his nephews Mike Jones and Seth Reese.

The funeral service will be held Saturday September 23, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints building located at 9880 South 3100 East, Sandy, Utah. A viewing will be held both Friday evening September 22nd from 6:00 to 8:00 pm and prior to the service on Saturday from 10 to 10:30 a.m. at the same location. Interment will take place at the Salt Lake City Cemetery following the service.

Those wishing to view the COMPLETED services via Zoom can click "Watch Services" or follow the link: https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/y57M41WRf_w-62_aGV44jcuQuM785663DB6pYuWWxqCBd_tGLMF4-LIPEqLBrwFE