

John Melvin Gordon

June 24, 1938 ~ July 26, 2025

How do you write an obituary for a man like John Gordon? They just don't make 'em like John anymore. But alas, we must write an obituary, because John passed away on Saturday, July 26, 2025. John was tough; he survived his parents and all three siblings, Nadine, Adele, and Bill, and outlived his cancer prognosis by a full two years (ultimately, it took two weeks for the combined wallop of three acute illnesses to take him down). John was also funny, friendly, kind, and endlessly willing to help you with any project. He'd call with a boisterous "Hi there! What are you doing today?" and then he'd show up, tools in hand, ready to jump right in.

John Melvin Gordon was born on June 24, 1938, the fourth of four children, to Sarah (Sally) Louisa Pugh and William Donald Gordon. William passed away when John was just 12 years old, and Sally married Virgil Vernon, who cared deeply for his new wife and instant family.

As a boy, John ran somewhat amok in the Sugarhouse neighborhood, and he was delighted to return to live out his final years in the same area. A bit of a whippersnapper in his youth, John talked his mom into signing a document attesting that he was a year older than he actually was, so he could get his driver's license a year early (please don't tell the cops!).

It was in Sugarhouse that John fell in love-at-first-sight with the beautiful and talented Brenda Jacklyn Brown; they were married in 1956 and had four children: Christie, Jackie, Rob, and Bruce. Those kids went on to have kids of their own, etc., etc., so by the time of John's passing he and Brenda had 14 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren, and 5 (+ one on the way) great-great grandchildren (and each one is convinced that *they're* Grandpa's favorite).

Before getting married, John knew he'd need to support his burgeoning family, so he followed in his big brother's footsteps and joined the United States Marine Corps Reserves.

John worked hard. For 33 years, he was a top sales/deliveryman for Continental Baking, waking at 4:00 a.m. every day to deliver delicious, pillowy white Wonder Bread throughout the Salt Lake Valley. The Gordon house was famous for giving out mini loaves of Wonder Bread on Halloween, instead of candy. John's kids fondly remember going for ride-alongs with Dad during summer break, where they would sit on the floor of the delivery van – no seat, no seatbelt, the driver's door fully open (please don't tell the cops!). After retiring from Continental, John spent the next 10 years as a bus driver for Granite School District (obviously, he should be sainted). In addition to John's "regular" jobs, he and Brenda shared an entrepreneurial streak; over the years they sold Amway products, CD-ROMs (remember those?), and soup mixes, and ran a mobile handyman/handywoman service.

Yessir, John was a hard worker, but he played just as hard too – probably even harder, actually. He had Wednesdays off from delivering bread, so when he got off work on Tuesday afternoons he and Brenda would pack the kids into the camper, hitch up the boat, and take off for some nearby waterski-able lake or reservoir.

After the kids grew up and got married, the Gordons were free to travel even farther afield. They visited many states in their motorhome, and ventured to several foreign countries. John was a meat-and-potatoes kind of guy, so he didn't especially appreciate foreign cuisines; nevertheless he was always either going on a trip or planning the next one – in fact, he was packing the motorhome when his heart attack struck in 2020. (His love of travel also translated into a love of buying condo points; give us a call if you're in the market for a timeshare.)

John fulfilled a longtime goal when he and Brenda served, not one, but *four* missions for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – in Tonga, Arizona, Mississippi, and Salt Lake City.

John also had his hobbies, including an impressive model train setup that eventually gave way to an impressive wood shop. He did cut his index finger on a saw once, leaving it permanently crooked; John laughed it off by telling people he was special because he could point around a corner. We all have treasured gifts that John hand-crafted in that deliciously pine-scented room. He's probably already busy building a mansion in heaven for his sweetheart.

Brenda has been John's best friend, co-conspirator, and right-hand-woman for over 70 years. But strokes aren't kind, so when John lost the use of his left arm in 2020, Brenda became his *left*-hand-woman too. One should never underestimate the magical healing powers of Brenda's love.

John is survived by his wife, children, children-in-law (Gary, Ernie, Paula, and Heidi), and all those grand-, great-grand-, and great-great-grandchildren. Every single one of us has treasured memories of laughing, joking, matching wits, camping, traveling, partying, and celebrating milestones with him. He just had a way of making people feel special.

Viewings will be held on Monday, August 4, 2025, from 6:00-8:00 p.m., and on Tuesday, August 5, from 10:00-10:45 a.m., with the funeral service to follow at 11:00 a.m., and a short dedicatory prayer immediately afterward at the gravesite. Special thanks to the American Legion for providing a graveside Honor Guard. All services will be held at Larkin Sunset Gardens, 1950 East 10600 South, Sandy, Utah.

For those unable to attend the service in person, the family invites you to join via Zoom. Please click the Watch Service button above.

After the graveside service, everyone is invited to join with the family to celebrate John's remarkable life over lunch at the Bell Canyon Park pavilion, 11400 South 1700 East, Sandy, Utah.

The family wishes to thank, with every cell of our collective hearts, the many compassionate caregivers (especially when you matched wits with him) who supported John after his heart attack and stroke in 2020, his cancer diagnosis in 2023, and in his difficult but miracle-filled final days.

We love you, Dad, and we'll miss you. Thanks for all of the reminders that you're still watching over us.