



Joseph Lynn Lyon M.D.

May 13, 1939 ~ September 19, 2021

I was born of goodly parents on Saturday night, May 13th, 1939 10 minutes after my brother, making me the last of the six sons of Thomas Edgar and Hermana Forsberg Lyon. I grew up in rural East Mill Creek before suburbia encroached, as my city born parents learned to farm. I had a personal association with many weeds, plus apple, cherry and apricot trees, raspberries, peas, corn, strawberries, cows, pigs, chickens and a large St. Bernard dog, and thrived on fresh cow's milk, home grown chicken eggs, and the fruit and vegetables we grew.

I had two of the most wonderful parents in the world who provided me with a foundation of love and support that has blessed my life ever since. I have also had a close and loving relationship all these years with my five older brothers who have each enriched my life.

I managed to make it through the Sherman school, Olympus Junior High School and graduated from Olympus High School in 1957 where I was the starting left tackle on the football team. We finished the season with an unremarkable four wins and two loses, but beat our arch rival Granite High (despite the best efforts of their coach, LaVell Edwards before his BYU glory days.

I served six months in the U.S. Army at Fort Ord, Ft. Chaffee and Ft Carson, and then began the University of Utah. My older brother James encouraged me to write for the student newspaper, The Utah Daily Chronicle, and by some accident I became the news editor, reported on the arrest of the mayor's son who caused a riot on Fraternity row over a parking ticket, and also got the president of the student senate impeached to spice up a slow news day.

I accepted a call to service in the New Zealand North mission in 1959 and spent two years in that beautiful, and rainy place growing to love the Polynesian people. I circled the globe, mostly by boat, to get home from New Zealand. Upon returning I decided try and become a physician rather than a historian like my father.

During the winter quarter 1962 in an LDS Institute class, I was attracted to a young woman, Juneil Fetzer, because of her sweet smile and beautiful eyes, but the attraction grew into love when I discovered she had taken the pre-med physics and chemistry classes I would face the coming fall, and kept all of her notes and tests. I credit her help with getting me into medical school. We were married on July 31, 1964 in the Salt Lake Temple, and have been lovers, companions, and friends ever since. We had six children, Natalee, Joseph, Stephen, Maryanne, Rachael, and Janet and marvel at how different they each are, but love each of them and wish we had had the energy to have a few more.

Because I wanted them to know how to do difficult things, I started each one of them backpacking into the Uintah's at age five. We had wonderful times together as my children learn many things such as the magic of Jolly Rancher candy to go another 200 yards during the difficult parts of the hike.

In a major failing of the admissions process I was admitted to medical school at the University of Utah and graduated in 1967. I spent two of the summers during medical school working as a researcher and extern for Dr. Russell M. Nelson, and it was his example that inspired me to try to become surgeon, but after a year of surgery residency in San Diego I gave it up for epidemiology/public health at Harvard.

We returned to Utah from Boston in October 1970 and have been here ever since, something that neither Juneil or I planned or wished, but the Lord was quite clear about His plans for us. I first worked for the Neighborhood Health Center, driven by my idealism and concern for the poor, and watched it suffer the fate of most government programs for the poor, being taken over by the middle class.

In February 1974 I joined the faculty of School of Medicine where I have worked ever since, and somehow became a tenured professor, the hallmark of the parasite on society. I have taught epidemiology for 40 years to the willing and the unwilling, and am noted for having introduced selected clips from Monty Python into my lectures. On a more serious note, I also documented many of health differences between Mormons and non-Mormons, and stumbled on and documented the harmful effects of radiation from above ground nuclear testing on the citizens of Utah. It was an unanticipated finding but set the path of much my professional career finally resulting in the passage of legislation granting compensation to many in southern Utah.

The LDS church has been the central focus of much of my life as it was of my parents, grandparents and great grandparents. I achieved the LDS equivalent of Nirvana, becoming a Gospel Doctrine teacher for the first time in 1965, and being blessed with that calling many more times, the last in 2009. I also served on the High Councils of the Boston and University 1st Stake and as the branch president of the University 19th Branch, a married student branch located in University Village.

The Church provides us many unusual opportunities such as weeding and sorting the onion crop on our stake farm with my wife and children, next to the world-famous chemist Henry Eyring. One of my most memorable Church assignments was as the designated human pack horse hauling food and games for three Bonneville Stake Young Women's rough camps that my wife led into the High Uintah Wilderness Area. When I retired from the University of Utah I served as a Church Service missionary with the good folks of the Church's Neonatal Resuscitation program. My wife and I have served in the Salt Lake Temple as "Saturday's Warriors" since March 2005. That experience allowed us to associate with some the best people in the best place in the world. Another sweet experience has been the opportunity to return New Zealand and renew friendships with those I first met in 1959-1961.

I have been blessed by the Good Lord in more ways than I can count, and have now begun another great adventure. I look forward to being reunited with my parents and brothers, and finally discovering the answers to such cosmic questions as what Isaiah meant and where did the mate to my socks go when I put them in the laundry.

I am survived by my wife of 57 years Juneil; our six children Natalee Lyon, Joe (Rachel Crook), Stephen (Jan Martini), Maryanne, Rachael (Chris Wheelwright), and Janet (Stephen Elison); our 22 many wonderful grandchildren; and my dear brothers Jamie (Dorothy) and twin Ted (Cheryl). Preceded in death by his parents T. Edgar and Hermana; his brothers David, John, and Laurie; and granddaughter Isabelle.

A viewing will be held, Friday, September 24, 2021, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Larkin Sunset Lawn, 2350 East 1300 South in Salt Lake City. Funeral services will be held Saturday, September 25, 2021, at 12:00 p.m. at the Yalecrest 1st Ward, 1035 South 1800 East. Family and friends may call upon the family from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Interment will follow at 2:30 p.m. at Wasatch Lawn Memorial Park, 3401 South Highland Drive in Millcreek. For those who were unable to attend the services in person, you can watch the recorded service at the following link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/LqAoUHTY4wTP744BO1WIE3nozTasBa9JJ-RyfTnsSKDjJLw8LYGdaPJBW3ntGaOf.h>

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Church of Jesus Christ Humanitarian Aid Fund:

<https://donate.churchofjesuschrist.org/donations/church/humanitarian-services/humanitarian-aid-fund?cde2=475-home&la>

Donations may also be made to the Lyon Research Endowment in Public Health:

<https://ugive.app.utah.edu/designation/430?specialInstructions=Lyon%20Research%20Endowment%20in%20Public%20H>