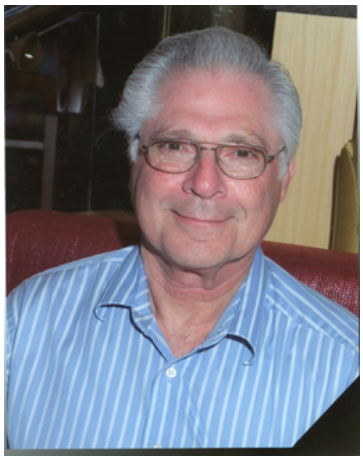


Nelson Terry Dinerstein

March 20, 1939 ~ August 12, 2022

Nelson Terry Dinerstein was born March 20, 1939, in Springfield, Massachusetts. Nelson died August 12, 2022, at home in Riverton, Utah. Nelson isolated vigorously during the pandemic, managing to avoid an illness he feared would cost him his life, only to suffer a brief but intense bout with cancer.

Nelson married his sweetheart, Kendra Sorenson, in Gunnison, Utah, on December 30, 1964, after being engaged for 3 days. They were sealed on August 18, 1965, in the Manti Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Nelson grew up in a non-observant Jewish family, although his grandparents and great-grandparents were observant Orthodox Jews. Both sets of grandparents immigrated from Russia before his parents were born. Both of his grandmothers harbored the wish that he would follow the family tradition and become a rabbi. Instead, Nelson became a Bishop in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Nelson spent his young years in a yeshiva, first in Springfield, Massachusetts, and then in New York City. He finished in public school, and often described that he caught up in mathematics, and dived into algebra in a matter of days in the middle of his 9th grade year.

Nelson spent 6 years in the Air Force as a linguist, speaking Russian. In that capacity, Nelson spent time in Texas, Japan and Turkey.

Following military service, Nelson completed a BS and an MS in Mathematics from the University of Massachusetts. He then finished a PhD in Mathematics from the University of Utah, and a few years later completed a post-doc in Computer Science from the University of Utah.

Nelson and Kendra lost count of their roaming at 22 moves, changing from industry to education and back again, and eventually teaching at 5 different universities. Their 6 children were born in 5 different states. When Nelson moved to Cache Valley to teach at Utah State University, the family did a ritual “burning of the moving boxes” in the garden. Nelson taught Computer Science at USU for 30 years. During these years, Nelson miraculously survived stage 4 non-Hodgkins lymphoma. To keep himself distracted from chemo and its challenges, he wrote 13 books dealing with programming languages and database techniques. He is famous for the rule with his own kids that you could not use a mathematical theorem unless you could prove it, and you had better use a decent database design. Among his children you will find doctorates and masters in Computer Science, an engineer and a USA Today best-selling author and nurse. The interests and educations among his 18 grandchildren range even more widely.

Nelson served as a stake missionary when he lived in California in the late 60s. However, Nelson long wished for the chance to serve a full-time mission. Nelson and Kendra served a senior mission in Belgium Brussels Netherlands mission (2006 - 2007). One of his responsibilities was apartment leases, some written in French and

some in Dutch. Nelson became a staunch user of a GPS, to find his way around yet another European city which was laid out very much like a spider’s web.

His other church service includes high council, early morning Seminary teacher, Primary teacher and, perhaps the best, Nursery teacher.

Nelson loved to read. He came to that quite naturally when as a child his mother told him he didn’t have to do chores if he were reading. That lasted for his entire life. Nelson was famous for his “Pop jokes”. Such jokes are classic dad jokes, but since he was dubbed “Pop” by his first grandson, his family enjoyed “Pop jokes” for years and years. Nelson enjoyed nothing more than what was known as an “The Indian Death-lock Tickle Hold.” The classic response became, “if you wrestle with Dad/Pop you are on your own.” No one would come to your rescue readily when you were being tickled.

Nelson had many interests, one being Tae Kwon Do. He moved through all the ranks with a great deal of training and earned his 3rd degree black belt after he became a grandfather.

Nelson is predeceased by his only sibling, his sister Barbara (Julius) Resnick, and also his parents, George Dinerstein and Esther Rose Pollack Dinerstein.

He is survived by his wife Kendra, and their 6 children: Kristin (Mark) Holt, Joshua (Shelly), Karyn Baxter, Jonathan (Bethanne), Jared (Meg) and Sabra. He is survived by 18 well-loved grandchildren: Jason (Elizabeth), Elise, Lauren (Chris), Whitney (Austin), Katie, Jacob, Chloe, Mikaili, Noah, Aidan, Lincoln, Kent, Clark, Claire, Nelson, TJ, Evelyn, and Charlotte. He also likes to claim his sister’s children, and numerous other nieces and nephews.

Though there were turbulent times, Nelson truly loved his family, of whom he was most proud. They were truly the most valued treasures of his life. They gave him more joy than he could have imagined before they joined his family. He was known to say that he didn’t know how he could be so incredibly lucky and that “grandkids are the frosting on life.” He is already very much missed, but the happy memories of him will live on.

Nelson’s funeral is scheduled for Saturday, August 20, at 11 AM, in the LDS chapel at 2750 West 13400 South, Riverton, UT, with a viewing on August 19 from 6 - 8 PM and August 20, 9:30 - 10:30 AM at the same location.

To watch the services online, please click on the blue "Watch Services" box shown above. You will be prompted to sign-in to your Zoom account. To sign-up for your own free account, visit the Zoom sign-up page and enter your email address. You will receive an email from Zoom. In the email, click "Activate Account".