

Paelata (Paul) ‘I Nu’usila Moleni

November 3, 1948 ~ December 19, 2021

Paelata (Paul) ‘I Nu’usila Moleni, “Our Baba,” at the blossoming age of 73, graduated from this life after his battle with cancer. Paelata passed away in his home on December 19, 2021 in Kearns, Utah surrounded by his loving family.

Paelata was born on November 3, 1948 in Vaini, Tonga, where he grew up prior to migrating to Hawaii in his young adult life. While there, he met his ‘ofa’anga, Debbie Nickerson, at BYU Hawaii. In 1973, the couple reunited in Provo, Utah and were married. They settled and started their life in Kearns, Utah. Not long after marrying, Paul took pride in becoming a United States citizen (1978), and in speaking both English and Tongan fluently.

One of Paelata’s greatest accomplishments was being a father to his 9 children (Niki, Ben, Mel, Ron, Tina, Ken, Angel, Crystal and Phil) who made him very proud. Between them, they gave him 35 grandchildren who were his pride and joy. He was seen by his children as their handsome, loto fakatokilalo (humble), and inspired dad. He was their hero. He was always there for them through their ups and downs and taught them to remain close with one another. Paelata emanated the word ‘ofa. His smile and laugh were contagious. He was anga ‘ofa and anga faka’apa’apa. He loved to dance, and had a special love for anyone he met, with a special ability to make everyone feel like they were his best friend. He was known for keeping good relations with family and others, tauhi vaha’a.

Paelata started his own business, Supreme Landscaping, and was able to help his family navigate from the islands to America. He would often tell his children “I work with my hands, so you can learn how to work with your mind.” His humble beginning radiated this in his efforts to support his family and help them pursue their education and careers to support their own families.

Paelata was an avid traveler and loved an adventure. He traveled to the Philippines, Japan, Thailand, Tonga, Guam, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, Fiji, and most of the 50 states in the United States. He had friends all over the globe.

Paelata loved to sing in his choir and served in his callings for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints with a fierce dedication. He was quick to serve and lend a hand to anyone in need. Paelata had the biggest smile and loved to tell stories. He knew his genealogy and could recite how everyone was connected within his family. He loved to attend the Temple regularly, and was devoted to the gospel, which showed in his actions and unconditional love. “Koe tama na’e mamahi’i me’a,” he was an individual who had a zeal for serving others. He was also a power lifter in his early years and won many competitions. He was known by many for his physical, mental, and spiritual strength.

Paelata was preceded in death by his mother, Ana Tekiata Langi, father, Alipate Moleni, sister, Latai, brother, Sione, brother, Te’ia, sister, Lesieli, brother, Sitenili and sister, Tiana Moeaki.

Most recently, on December 25, 2021, his beloved brother, Fisi Moleni graduated this life, and was reunited with Paeleta.

Paelata is survived by his wife, Debbie, nine children, Niki (Vili), Ben, Mel (Phil), Ron (Hea), Tina (Mone), Ken (Kathy), Angel (Vita), Crystal (Kumi) and Phil (Tef), 35 grandchildren, and his two sisters and brother, Ala, Uini, and Siaosi.

A memorial service will be hosted on December 29, 2021 at the Kearns Tongan 13th Ward, located at: 5015 S 4620 W in Kearns, Utah.

Family Program/Viewing will be held from 8-11:30 am. The Bishop’s program will be from 12-1 pm, followed by his burial service at the Memorial Redwood Cemetery located at: 6500 Redwood Road in West Jordan, Utah.