

Ralph Joseph Marsh, Jr. “Joey”

January 3, 1966 ~ July 8, 2022

Ralph Joseph Marsh Jr, known to everyone as Joey, passed away peacefully in his sleep on July 8, 2022, in Orem, Utah. He was 56 years old.

Joey was born on January 3, 1966, in Salt Lake City, Utah to Judith Backman and Ralph Joseph Marsh, Sr. He was a beautiful, happy baby, but his development was slow. In December of 1966, just two days before Christmas, a neurologist determined that Joey was seriously mentally and physically handicapped and suggested he would have a difficult and limited life.

Shortly after his diagnosis, he received a blessing from Elder Spencer W. Kimball who promised that Joey would be a blessing to those who cared for and loved him—a promise that has been fulfilled hundreds of times over the years.

Joey attended the Behavior Modification Training Center where he learned basic life skills. He later attended Garfield School for the Handicapped. Each morning Joey would watch for the bus while listening to his dad play the piano. And at the end of the day, when he would hear the garage door open, Joey would excitedly crawl to the stairs, pound the floor with his fists and yell, “Dad’s home! Dad’s home!” That child-like excitement to see his family, most especially his dad, never went away.

Joey found joy in the simplest things—flashes of color as he quickly turned the pages of a magazine (before shredding them into tiny pieces), the repetition of sounds as he played for hours with a FisherPrice See-and-Say, or songs turned up full blast on the radio until the batteries wore out. Later he would enjoy his work—sorting nuts and bolts—so much that he refused to go home at the end of the day.

He was a natural-born tease, and would often ask, “Want an ouch?” before reaching out to tug someone’s hair. He joked about seeing snow in the shower. He invented phrases and made up names of people nobody knew. His laugh was infectious. Anyone who spent time with him quickly grew to love him.

Joey is survived by his father Ralph (Dorothy); five brothers and one sister (and spouses): Robert (Michelle), Daniel (Lisa), Melissa (Shawn), Richard (Sandra), Matthew (Elizabeth), and Jacob (Shalane); and fifteen nephews and nieces. He was preceded in death by his mother, Judith Marsh.

The family expresses their sincerest appreciation and thanks to Karen Root and the angelic staff at Mesa Vista who have loved and helped care for Joey for many years.

A viewing and visitation for family and friends will be held from 9:00 until 9:45 AM on Thursday, July 14, 2022, at Larkin Sunset Lawn located at 2350 E 1300 S, Salt Lake City. A graveside service will follow at 10:00 AM.

For those unable to attend, services will be streamed via Zoom by clicking on the "Watch Services" link above. A free Zoom account is required.