

Richard George Fairbanks

February 22, 1946 ~ April 17, 2025

Richard George Fairbanks, age 79, passed away peacefully, surrounded by his wife and children on April 17, 2025 in Provo, Utah. While he was an exceptional athlete and had a successful career, he will be remembered mostly as a dedicated disciple of Jesus Christ, husband, father, grandfather, and friend to all. His ability to make everyone feel loved and special, as well as his sincere willingness to lighten people's load through service, will be deeply missed.

Rich was born on February 22,1946 in Salt Lake City to Josephine Wood Fairbanks and Lynn Reed Fairbanks, Jr. and was the 4th of 5 children. When he wasn't playing sports, he spent many hours playing in the gully, playing with his dog Mergy, fishing, hunting, and pulling pranks. With 3 friends named Richard, he went by "Butch" until after college.

"Butch" graduated from East High in 1964. He was an exceptional 3 sport athlete lettering in football and receiving all-state honors in basketball and baseball. He was the first recipient of the prestigious Christensen-Hewlett Award in honor of his buddies Fleming Christensen and Lin Hewlett who died in an automobile accident his senior year. It is still awarded to one senior who has demonstrated outstanding scholarship, leadership, athletic ability and citizenship.

Rich attended Brigham Young University where he was Shortstop, Outfielder, and Captain of the Cougars Baseball team. He led his team in stolen bases two years and is currently #8 in all time Cougar baseball history for average number of triples/game in a career. His team is the only BYU baseball team to ever make it to the College World Series.

Rich served a two and a half year mission in Japan from '65-'67. He grew to love the people of Japan, as well as his fellow missionaries, and was able to see the Church and people grow in meaningful ways.

Rich married his high school sweetheart Nadine Maxfield on June 17, 1968. Nadine was a devoted wife and fan as Rich transitioned from college baseball to the minor leagues for the Detroit Tigers in 1970. After two years he switched to a career at Ford motors. After a transfer from Detroit to St. Paul, MN in 1972, they made White Bear Lake their home the majority of the 34 years they lived in Minnesota. After a couple of years at Ford, Rich started a career with Merrill Lynch and eventually started his own financial advising company, Wealth Strategies Unlimited.

Rich and Nadine were blessed with four wonderful children, Adam, Jon, Doug, and Amy. Rich coached all of the boys in baseball and Amy in basketball. Despite the busyness of all the many sport and musical activities, Rich made time to serve in the Church and touched countless lives while he served as Elder's Quorum President, Counselor in the Minneapolis Mission Presidency, Bishop, seminary teacher, youth leader, teacher, and more. Many felt God's love through his genuine fellowship, selfless service, and testimony of Jesus Christ.

In 2006, Rich and Nadine moved to Highland, Utah to be closer to family. He was a devout cheerleader at his grandchildren's sporting and music events. Rich and Nadine separated in 2023 and later divorced. On Oct. 25, 2024 Rich married Janice Burton, with whom he enjoyed ministering to fellow residents in their community, going to the temple, reading, and going to ball games. We are saddened that their time together was cut so short as Rich started to get ill from the effects of congestive heart failure in December 2024.

Rich had a gift for being a true friend and knowing what to say or do to lighten the heavy loads we carry in life. He spent many, many hours mowing lawns, shoveling sidewalks, ministering and doing anything he thought might help. Rich took seriously the idea that our time and resources are blessings from the Lord so that we can in turn bless others. He did not value luxury or fancy things, but would much rather help someone in need. He was an expert ministering angel during his life, so we are sure it didn't take long for him to say on the other side "What can I do to help?"

Rich was also intentional about making people feel welcome and loved, and would make a point at church and in other settings to warmly greet everyone by name. He will make a wonderful greeter and welcomer on the other side of the veil. We are comforted to know that our Dad, Grandpa, and friend will be waiting on the other side with his loving embrace. We are deeply grateful for Janice's sweet and loving care of our dad during this transition. We are grateful to the exceptionally kind and compassionate staff and residents at the Courtyard at Jamestown as well as Ovation Hospice, particularly the compassionate care of Casey and Natalie.

Rich was preceded in death by his father Lynn Reed, Jr., mother Josephine, brother Lynn (Carol), and sister Pat (Bob). Rich is survived by wife Janice Burton, brother Fred (Carrol), brother Mark (Janice), and children Adam (Melissa), Jon (Deborah), Doug (Jen), Amy (Jeff), 20 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

We encourage you to share any memories you have on the obituary by clicking the "Send a Condolence" button at the top of the page.

Funeral Services will be held on Saturday April 26th at 11:00am at 3511 N. 180 E., Provo, Utah, with a viewing from 9:00-10:30am. A viewing will also be held Friday April 25th from 6:00-8:00pm at the Larkin Sunset Gardens, 1950 E. 10600 S., Sandy, UT 84092. Interment will be at Eastlawn Cemetery following the funeral. The funeral will be livestreamed at this link, https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89682672218