

Robert Herman DeVries

July 27, 1931 ~ January 16, 2026

Bob DeVries was born on July 27, 1931, to Herman and Francina Catharina Neerings DeVries at home in a little house at 183 ‘Q” Street in Salt Lake City. He followed three sisters who were quite a bit older than he. By the time he was twelve, they had all left home. His parents had immigrated from Holland in their youth, and Bob had a very strong Dutch background.

He spent his youth in three different homes and areas and graduated from South High School in 1948. In 1951, he entered the Netherlands Mission, receiving special permission to serve providing he enlisted in the military as soon as he came home as this was the time of the Korean War. He returned from his mission in December 1953, and immediately enlisted in the army. He was on a troop ship on its way to Korea when they docked in Hawaii and took twelve of the soldiers off the ship. Thus, he became part of the Military Police in Hawaii and always said he fought the battle of Waikiki. He loved his service there and said he had a great assignment as Mail Clerk, so everyone was always happy to see him.

Following the great experience in Hawaii he enrolled at BYU. Soon after he met a young woman at church. He and Carolyn Davis started dating and married on March 16, 1956, in the Salt Lake Temple. They were fortunate to become Head Residents at Heritage Halls. This income and free rent helped with the GI Bill to get through college. Their first son, Kelly, was born a year later.

Bob graduated in 1958, and they were on their way to his first job as an accountant in California. They soon decided to return to Utah where he quickly found a job. He was not happy with accounting and wished for a change. That happened when he heard the Salt Lake School District was short of math teachers. He applied and was hired as a math teacher at Highland High School with no educational training or experience. He had found something he loved, and this started a great career. He quickly obtained a teaching certificate, then certification for counseling. He started working on a Master’s Degree and was hired as Assistant Principal at Southeast Junior High. He went from there to Assistant Principal at Highland, then East High. By that time, he had completed his Doctorate in Educational Psychology-Counseling and Guidance and was soon Principal at East High from 1976 to 1982.

Along this pathway three more children joined their family, Cherie in 1959, Juneanne in 1961, and Garth in 1963. Also there was a break when he had an opportunity to return to his dear Hawaii for two years as an Assistant Professor of Education at what was then the Church College of Hawaii.

He completed his career by working as a math and science supervisor for Salt Lake School District, retiring in 1993. By November, 1994 he and Carolyn were on their way to serve a mission in Kyiv, Ukraine, which was a dear and sweet blessing for them both. They loved Ukraine and the Ukrainian people and left many dear friends when they

returned in 1996.

Bob tapped into his career later by working part time administering standardized tests and correcting writing and reading tests throughout Salt Lake School District. Bob always loved being a spectator of sports. He loved reading about and visiting historical areas especially battle grounds. He had the great experience of visiting Europe with his son, Kelly, every summer for nearly a decade. His hobby was putting together intricate models.

He is survived by his wife, and three of his four children, Kelly, Cherie Maxfield (Brent), and Garth. Juneanne passed away in 1989. He is also survived by twelve grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Private graveside rites will be held on Tuesday, January 20, at 1 p.m. at Larkin Sunset Lawn. A link to watch the services will be available on Larkin’s website.