

Robert James Gardner

May 5, 1955 ~ August 27, 2024

Robert James Gardner died at his home with his children by his side on August 27, 2024 from natural causes. Rob was born on May 5, 1955 to James H. Gardner and Mary Anne Palmer in Boston, Massachusetts. He graduated from Barrington High School in Barrington, Illinois, then decided to move west due to his love of the outdoors. Rob graduated from the University of Utah (a third-generation Ute!) and was a member of the Kappa Sigma fraternity. He met numerous friends at both Barrington High and the Kappa Sig house, and he maintained these friendships throughout his life.

The most important person Rob met at the “U” was Lori Bates, and they were married on March 29, 1980 in Salt Lake City. Rob and Lori had two children, Matt and Katie, and also cared for their nephews, Andy and Kyle. Rob loved his family. He was a wonderful husband, father and uncle, and enjoyed leading the family on outdoor adventures, coaching little league, being a ballet-dad, and leading projects at the family cabin and his house on 19th East in Sugarhouse. He was a fine fly fisherman and cherished his fishing trips with friends and family.

Aside from his family and catching fish, Rob’s other passion was teaching. He began his career at Brockbank Jr. High, and had lengthy stays at Hunter High School and Highland High School, primarily focusing on U.S. and World History classes. He finished his career at Judge Memorial High School. Rob loved teaching history, challenging his students’ critical thinking, and seeing kids grow and develop. He was recognized as the Salt Lake City School District’s Teacher of the Year for 2011. But more rewarding to Rob were the letters, notes, cards, phone calls, and comments he received from former students expressing how much they enjoyed his classes. He positively influenced many lives.

Rob is survived by his son Matthew (Maha and grandchildren Amelia and Zachary) of Chicago, IL; daughter Kathryn (Chris and grandchildren Cannon and Cooper) of Salt Lake; nephew Andrew of Salt Lake; nephew Kyle (Kaylee and grandchildren Penny and Isla) of Salt Lake; brother William (Kathleen) of Ottawa, Canada; and sister Amy (John) of Vancouver, WA. He was preceded in death by Lori and his parents.

Services will be held on Friday, September 6th at 1:00 p.m. at Wasatch Presbyterian Church (1700 S./1700 E.) in Salt Lake where he was a member.