



Elvin Lee Worthington

December 17, 1943 - January 20, 2015

Elvin Lee Worthington, renegade cowboy, avid BYU fan, and down-to-earth John Wayne wannabe, died at his home front in South Jordan, UT on January 20, 2015 while hog-tied by family.

Elvin was conceived, born (December 17, 1943) and reared in the Union Fort area. His childhood was marked with much suffering, having endured the constant blows -- or “love taps” -- from his older brother, Larry, and the incessant torturing of his younger sister, Nita. Not to mention the fact that his father, Merl Ison Worthington, a former marine who spent much time on the shores of Iwa Jima during World War II, often forgot that the war was over. His mother, Doris Stradley, did much of the nurturing. Bucking family tradition and defying all expectations of him, he served a two-and-half year mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Netherlands Mission. This experience was life changing, as it cultivated a deeper love of the Gospel and tulips (as only found in Holland).

He was not only a family man, but a lady’s man as well -- as he ended up marrying two of the four women that he ever dated. (In baseball talk, he batted five hundred.) He fathered five lovely, self-determined and equally hardheaded children with his high school sweetheart, “Joanie”, and reared three compassionate, self-motivated, and driven children with his second wife, Edie, with whom he also fathered two adorable, surprise-we-thought-we-were-

done children. (Yes, for a grand total of 10 kids!)

He loved get-togethers at the home front, and was renowned for his annual Pioneer Day hoedown, which always ended in a spectacular display of fireworks. He loved people, except those that he did not like (including Democrats, liberals, and Ute fans). His personality was quite charming and likeable, which was problematic for those who disagreed with him. He was a self-made jokester, reciting the same jokes again and again with equal conviction (case and point, Snotty Ol' Flinnegan). His laughter filled the air and was infectious.

He excelled at building breathtaking rock walls, constructing lavish green yards, and designing dazzling flowerbeds with an array of colors, textures and smells. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science from Brigham Young University and enjoyed a successful career in landscape architecture and design. It was with this medium (ie, Nature) that his creativity and brilliance flourished. He was a bona fide artist, though he would never admit to this -- for he was a very proud man.

He had a life-long relationship with the kitchen, where he mastered his culinary skills in making heavenly homemade ice cream, chocolate chip cookies, Indonesian rice with a generous amount of hot sambal sauce, Sunday evening meatloaf, ebelskivers, and a breakfast fit for a tired wrangler with fresh eggs, hash browns, and crispy bacon. Every recipe required just a dash of pepper -- that is, take-the-top-off-the-pepper-shaker and pour.

Perhaps the greatest irony in his life was his love of scouting. While never an Eagle scout himself (nor were most of his boys), he was responsible for helping countless young men achieve this prestigious award. He loved the outdoors. A perfect October weekend for him included time in the mountains with the boys "hunting" -- also known as poker.

His life was punctuated with a deep spirituality; he walked the talk. There was no facade or pretense -- as context or circumstance could not change his core values or principles. He was the same person whether standing behind the pulpit delivering a talk or riding his Kubota tractor on a job or sitting on the banks of Strawberry Reservoir casting a line into the water.

He is survived by his wife, Edith Wardle, and 9 children, including Denny (Cecylia), Bret (Alisha), Shane (Michelle), Bart (April), DeAnna (Teresa), Coulter (Jenn), Crystal (Ben), Suzanna (Michael), Cheryse (Scott), and 28 grandchildren with two on their way. Those awaiting him with open arms on the other side were his late wife (Joan Nunley), son (Ty), brother (Larry), parents (Merl and Doris), and many other family and friends.

Funeral services will be held 11:00 a.m. Saturday, January 24, 2015 at Riverview LDS 9th Ward 11400 South 700 West South Jordan, Utah. A viewing for family and friends will be held Friday evening from 6-8:00 p.m. at the Riverview LDS 9th Ward and on Saturday from 9:45 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. Burial will follow at Larkins Sunset Garden.

The family would like to express their gratitude to family, friends, neighbors and members of the Riverview Stake for the outpouring of love and support which has been extended over the past two months.

Cemetery Details

Larkin Sunset Gardens

1950 East 10600 South
Sandy, UT 84092

Previous Events

Viewing

JAN **23**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (MT)

Riverview LDS 9th Ward
11400 South 700 West
South Jordan, UT

Viewing

JAN **24**. 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM (MT)

Riverview LDS 9th Ward
11400 South 700 West
South Jordan, UT

Funeral Service

JAN **24**. 11:00 AM (MT)

Riverview LDS 9th Ward
11400 South 700 West
South Jordan, UT

Tribute Wall



“ *Bodhi looks soooo much like the Worthington side. Miss you*

Addy - February 18, 2025 at 11:50 PM



“ *BYU's had a pretty good season, bet you're loving it*

Addison - November 24, 2024 at 05:50 AM



“ *Happy birthday yesterday, grandpa. Miss you everyday!*

Addison Rollins - December 18, 2023 at 11:36 AM



“ *Elvin Lee Worthington*

October 05, 2023 at 07:49 PM



“ *Hi grandpa,
Watched Hondo. Made me think of you and the grit that you and
John Wayne share.
Love and miss you*

Addison Worthington - January 21, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ *You have another great granddaughter(:(put her hair in pigtails
today, just for you. Miss you*

addy rollins - January 21, 2023 at 11:30 PM

AR

“ Hi grandpa,
It's been 8 years. Miss you everyday

addy rollins - January 21, 2023 at 11:29 PM



“ Although I only met Brother Elvin Lee Worthington once I will always remember he was waiting there at the finish line for Bart and I to come in (respectively) at the 2007 Salt Lake Marathon. Even though altitude took its toll, taking Bart 4 hours and me 4.5 to finish, Elvin was there seeing us through and making sure we got in safe.

Barry Jerome Dick

Barry Jerome - January 25, 2015 at 06:32 PM

DE

“ To all the Worthington and Mason Family, I am so deeply saddened to know of Elvin's passing. What a wonderful man. He was both reverent and irreverent, sometimes at the same time, which is quite a gift. I remember going to a BYU game with him and Suzy, and had the most fun time! He has a really tremendous heart. My love and prayers for all of you.

Denise Escoto-Jarquin - January 24, 2015 at 11:38 AM

SW

I still have that picture in my keepsake box! ~Suzy

Suzanna Worthington - January 28, 2015 at 01:14 PM

AW

Missing you today, grandpa

Addy Worthington - November 02, 2021 at 11:48 PM

RA

“ So sorry for your loss. I have so many wonderful memories of Elvin when we all worked so hard for Hillcrest-Union WBBA. He was truly a great guy who was so proud of his family. May God grant you comfort in this dark hour.

Rick Arambula - January 24, 2015 at 11:18 AM

CB

“ Suzy and family. I am so sorry about the passing of your father. My heart goes out to all. Thinking of you. Carol Borich

Carol Borich - January 23, 2015 at 02:21 PM

SN

“ Edie, I am so sorry about the passing of Elvin. He was always so nice to me and whenever he saw me he would always say hello. I remember when he brought to our family some apple juice that he had bought us especially for Christmas. I loved the visit I had with him then. He was our hometeacher and I loved having him in our home. May you be blessed with every good thing. You have had so much to deal with lately. God bless you. Sandy Nickell

Sandy Nickell - January 23, 2015 at 02:15 PM

KW

“ Karen Williamson sent a virtual gift in memory of Elvin Lee Worthington



karen williamson - January 23, 2015 at 01:30 PM

PM

“ Deanna,
I am truly sorry to hear of the loss of your father. Please accept my condolences, you are in my prayers.

Pareen Mehta

Pareen Mehta - January 23, 2015 at 01:00 PM

JN

“ *I will always remember Elvin and his fun loving ways. How he'd tease the kids and make them laugh. His beautiful smile kind words and all that made him the wonderful man he is.*

Jerry Ann Nunley - January 23, 2015 at 10:24 AM

JZ

“ Deanna,
My thoughts and prayers are with you.

Jennifer Zellmer

Jennifer Zellmer - January 23, 2015 at 10:23 AM



“ I don't have one specific memory about Elvin. I have a lot of life experiences watching him as I grew up. Elvin gave me my first summer job. He taught me how to work hard by watching him and his sons. I watched him hire homeless people that needed money and talk to them with real respect. I watched him buy us breakfast, lunch, and dinner on every out of town job. I watched him let me in his home like I was his son. I don't think there was a family function that I wasn't invited to. He was a great balance of hard work, toughness, giver, and family man. He was a great blueprint of a man when I was growing up. I'm thankful for the time he gave me and I'll never forget him or his family.

John Jr. Vigil - January 23, 2015 at 04:19 AM

NT

“ On countless Sundays after dinner my parents would hear the familiar question, “Can I go next door to the Worthington’s?” After all, it seemed like Sunday night was cards night at the Worthington home. The favorite card game was Worthington Rook. There was nothing like it.

Elvin would shuffle what seemed like 10 decks of Rook cards and pull out a hand written list of the hands to be played. As he would deal the familiar “een, twee, drie, vier, vijf, zeszeven, acht, negen, tien, elf” was heard as he counted out the cards. He was competitive, but fun as we played. The game was filled with heckling from everyone and I don’t think a game went by that when a player was taking too long to play their card Elvin would remind them in his very specific way (all who played know the phrase he used) to get the game moving again. Though he probably had said it hundreds of time before, it always made me laugh.

Elvin made sure to encourage us to play smart and would call us out when we made a mistake or inadvertently (or sometimes on purpose) helped another player with a discard. He had a distinct look of victory each hand that he would go out and was openly disappointed when he had to count points on a stack of card left in his hand.

It was also common during play that Elvin would recite a random line of poetry similar to, “Your hair reminds me of a song..... A Rag Mop. Your eyes remind me of pools..... Cesspools.”

I will always think back to the Rook Nights, Utah Lake target practice trips, Beaver Creek Fathers and Sons breakfasts, Pioneer day firework extravaganzas, and countless other memories of Elvin with fondness, love, and gratitude.

My love and prayers go out to the Worthington family.

Nate Tanner - January 22, 2015 at 11:43 PM

JM

“ Going to miss you Uncle Elvin.. I loved coming up to Utah for Christmas when Grandma Nunley was still alive and always going to your house during our trips up there.. You will be forever missed and never forgotten.. Love always Jennifer Nunley-Mingl

jennifer mingl - January 22, 2015 at 10:02 PM

SE

“ I got to know Elvin through Bret, when Bret and I were in the 8th grade...shortly after his Elvin's first wife passed. At that young age, I was struck by how hard-working and loving he was to his children and how he always found time to attend sporting events.

Elvin hired me to work for him doing odd jobs when I was in high school...and always did so with a great attitude, in spite of how much Bret and I goofed off. haha.

Elvin went to high school with my dad at Jordan...and my dad spoke highly of him as well.

Elvin, if you're out there, thank you for being a great example to me at a young age.

Sean Elder - January 22, 2015 at 08:55 PM

RN

“ Thirty-five years ago I was called to be bishop of the ward where the Worthingtons lived. Ours was a new ward, created from a ward division. It was December and there was much work to be done -- organize and make callings, complete tithing settlement, and meet with ward members to set a budget to finance the ward operations. However, I first needed an executive secretary who would be responsible for making the necessary appointments and keep me organized. There was no doubt who this person would be -- Elvin.

Even though he was working out of town, he continually kept in touch with me and made certain that all of the necessary arrangements and appointments were made. I will always be grateful to Elvin for his help during that challenging period.

Shauna and I had the privilege of being close to Elvin during the period when Joan was ill. We enjoyed the blessing of having Suzzie in our home after Joan's passing and while Elvin was working.

Elvin was always offering me BYU football tickets, trying to convince me to change my color from "red" to "blue", but he never succeeded in this endeavor.

It was a sad day for us when the Worthingtons sold their home on Winchester and moved from the ward. And now, with Elvin's passing, we feel a void as a true friend has completed his mortal life and is happily reunited with loved ones who preceded him.

We extend our faith and love to the Worthingtons, and know that like us, the memories of Elvin will always remain with you and bring a smile to your face and warmth in your heart.

Bob Newman

Robert Newman - January 22, 2015 at 08:19 PM

DC

“ I am so sorry to read of Elvin's passing. I was very saddened by the events in November and cannot even begin to imagine the pain that he and all of you have been suffering. I was in Holland and Belgium with him more than 50 years ago, and there were few other missionaries as likeable as he was, and no one with his personality and genuine honesty with no pretensions.

I will never forget two days after Christmas in 1963 when he and Marvin Van Dam were taking an elder to the Brussels airport to send him off to his home. It was foggy, and Elvin was driving and did not see the large traffic circle in time, hit the guard rail, and flipped the VW van end over end, totaling the van. No one was significantly injured, so he and Van Dam borrowed a scooter and came straight to Antwerp that day and stayed with us that night. The next morning he was stiff and sore, but typical of his great attitude, he just said, "Van Dam has to contact the president and tell him about the van, but I can't change anything, so I might as well get back to work. Can I go tracting with you?" That was the way he was, and we spent the day working and knocking on doors.

I certainly appreciated all the work and effort that he expended in organizing the mission reunions in the past few years. They would never have happened without his having done that, and it was great seeing him and all the others. It only reminded me that I wished that I lived closer and might have had more opportunity to associate with a great guy.

Please accept our sympathy at this difficult time. In my memory, he will always be remembered and loved. I hope and pray that you may find comfort in remembering the life that he lived.

David Coppin - January 22, 2015 at 06:01 PM