



James "Jim" Dale Kirkman

OCT 16, 1936 - JUL 4, 2024



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James “Jim” Dale Kirkman (87) of Salt Lake City, Utah, beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, and “the #1 Leonard” passed away due to congestive heart failure on July 4, 2024. In the days leading up to his passing, he was surrounded by loving family and friends. His passing was one year and 3 days after his beloved wife, Gayle’s graveside service, and her passing was just 2 days after their 67th anniversary.

Born October 16, 1936, to Leo and Virginia Kirkman in Twin Falls, Idaho, he was the youngest of 5 children. His siblings were Anne, Leo, Ralph, and Larry. Jim grew up in the Twin Falls area.

Jim graduated from Twin Falls High School in 1954. After graduating, he attended body and fender school in Pocatello. Later, Jim volunteered for the draft with a couple of friends. Jim and a friend checked the box to join the Army, and the other friend checked the box for the Navy. So of course, the two who selected Army were sent to the Navy, and the one who selected Navy was sent to the Army. Jim went into boot camp in March 1956.

Gayle had asked Jim to a dance February 16, 1951, and as Dad puts it “We’ve been together ever since.” When he was on leave after boot camp, Jim and his high school sweetheart, Lois Gayle Pitcher were sealed together in the Salt Lake Temple on June 14, 1956.

On the day they were married, Gayle was a little irritated that Jim’s parents rode with them on the drive down from Idaho to Salt Lake City, but that turned out to be a good thing. Since Jim was only 19 he was considered “underage” and his parents had to sign permission for him to get married. But Gayle, who was 5 months older, was an adult.

Jim and Gayle lived in Long Beach, California while Dad was in the Navy. Dad was deployed in the West Pacific when Mom was nearing the due date of their first child, so she moved back to her parent's home in Twin Falls to be near family. Their first daughter, Lyn, was born in October of 1957. Dad didn’t get to meet his new daughter until a couple of months later when he finished his



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time in the service in December of 1957. Soon they were blessed with another daughter, Kim in 1958. In 1961 they moved from Pocatello, Idaho to Salt Lake City, Utah, where their family grew again with the addition of two sons, Rian in 1964 and Roger in 1966. Jim studied at the University of Utah and received a BS in Sociology in 1968.

Sometime around 1964 Jim and Gayle started getting together with some friends from the East Millcreek Ward for dinner each month. They called it Supper Club and it had 13 members. It was a cherished tradition that continued for decades. Now, with Jim's passing, there is only 1 Supper Club member remaining.

In 1971 Jim, Gayle, and the kids moved to Bountiful where they raised the family and set down roots for many years. In 2017 they sold their Bountiful home and moved to Taylorsville and lived there until 2022 when they moved to Summit Assisted Living in Salt Lake City. Gayle passed away in June of 2023. While Dad dearly missed her, he said she was getting a little break from him after being together for so many years. He called it "Time off for good behavior".

Dad was a hard worker, too often working even 2 and 3 jobs at a time. He worked at Salt Lake County Pre-Trial Services as a pre-trial screener for 28 years. Many of those years he also worked for the 2 podiatrists that Gayle worked for. Dr. Gold taught Dad how to make orthotics, and he made the orthotics for Dr. Gold and Dr. Jex's practices for many years. In his "spare time" he started a lawn business, R&R Maintenance, with Rian and Roger to bring in a little extra money. They had the lawn business for 5 years, mowing over 20 lawns weekly when at their busiest. They also employed many of the boys' friends over those years. (Steve, Beric, Tim, Kevin, and probably others)

Dad was known for the creative nicknames he had for everyone. Some of the remembered nicknames were: Skeezecks, Turkey Legs, Ignats, Otis, and Swizzle Sticks. When doing yards with the boys, he began using "Leonard" for both of the boys, and they used it for him as well. Rian and Roger could be working side by side and Dad would say "Hey Leonard, can you go grab the rake for me?", and somehow, we'd always know which "Leonard" he was talking to. "Leonard" was the term that really stuck and began to spread to many of the boys' friends and beyond. To be a "Leonard" was a good thing, a term of endearment, and a badge of honor.

He was a loving and devoted husband, father, provider, and faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints where he served in many capacities over the years. The evening,



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he landed in the hospital, he had just returned from teaching the Elder's Quorum lesson in the Summit Assisted Living branch. He had a fall in his apartment resulting in a cut on his head and was sent to the ER to get stitched up. While he was there, he was admitted to the cardiac ICU due to heart failure.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Leo and Virginia Kirkman, his loving wife, Gayle, and all of his siblings, Anne, Leo, Ralph, and Larry. He is survived by daughter, Lyn Kirkman, daughter, Kim (Dusty) Martin, son, Rian (Sue) Kirkman, son, Roger (Julie) Kirkman, 11 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren, and 1 more expected next month.

Dad had a lifelong love of classic cars and hot rods, and he attended many cars shows with his kids, Lyn, Kim, Rian, and Roger, son-in-law, Dusty, and grandsons, Zac, Jacob, and Sam. He raised his kids right and passed on his love of "heavy metal"... cars.

One of the cherished memories from his youngest son, Roger, was when he and Dad were looking at this big old late 70s Lincoln Continental that they had and one of them joked how huge the trunk was. "It's so huge, you could put a rumble seat in it!". That got the gears turning and after some planning, they cut a hole in the trunk, padded the edges, installed a tonneau cover, and built a bench seat for it. One of the first tests of the new rumble seat was a trip down to Provo where Mom and Dad sat up front, and Roger and a friend rode in the rumble seat blasting tunes from a ghetto box and getting lots of looks and smiles from everyone on the road. The best reaction was from a hard-looking biker that we passed. The biker's hard look turned into a huge smile as he nodded and gave them a big thumbs up. The rumble seat definitely wasn't safe, but it sure was fun, and a great memory together with Dad.

The family would like to thank the staff at Summit Assisted Living, the IHC Cardiac ICU team and IHC Hospice team for their kind and thoughtful care.

A graveside service will be held to honor his life on July 13, 2024, at 10:00 am at the Wellsville City Cemetery, 400 N 200 E, Wellsville, UT.

Flowers and messages can be sent directly to the Wellsville City Cemetery the day of the services. No glass vases at the cemetery please.



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Please join us afterward for a light luncheon at the LDS Church at 360 West 3200 South, Nibley, Utah.

The family extends a special thanks to Michelle Egan for coordinating the luncheon.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring James by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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