



# Darwin Jay Hanning

January 4, 1946 - April 3, 2020

## Early Life:

Darwin was born in Trenton, Ut, on January 4, 1946. His parents were Melva June Haslam (d. 2000) and Stephan Eugene Hanning (d. 1994). He was the oldest of three children with younger siblings, Tim (deceased), and Carolyn. Darwin lived with his beloved grandparents, Mary and William Haslam, for 6 years in Jerome, Idaho. There began his great love of outdoor activities as he learned much from traipsing after his Grandpa and young uncles Bob and Howard on their fishing trips, farming, and other activities.

After his time in Idaho, his family moved to Maine and then to New Hampshire. His young years in New Hampshire were marked by the hard work of being a paperboy, delivering papers even through the harsh, snowy winters to earn his pocket money. During his senior year of high school they moved to Fremont, CA where he happily found a thriving young men's and youth activities program. He graduated from high school in 1964.

## Early Marriage and Military:

Darwin joined the Air Force in Oakland, CA in 1965. After attending the Air Force Academy in Colorado he was assigned to Adair Air Force Base in Corvallis, OR. Less than a year later, he met Sherry Leah Babione while on a double date. Although Sherry was not HIS date, they had eyes only for each other, and soon after--they made it official. They were

married 6 months later on September 15, 1967 in Corvallis, Oregon. The next few months were "...the best of times, [and they were] the worst of times" ( A Tale of Two Cities; by Charles Dickens.) as they strove to fit as much living and life into the time they had together--knowing that soon Darwin would be deployed overseas and into an uncertain future. They were able to experience the first joys of impending parenthood as a couple until he was sent to Vietnam in August of 1968. Knowing that their baby was due in November, he was completely surprised to find out (through the post) that they were actually having twins. It took three long weeks after their birth in November ('68) to finally receive word that Sherry had delivered two healthy identical girls, Cindy Rae and Michelle Kay. He returned home the next August (1969) to a busy young family of toddlers, double strollers, binkies and bottles. Nine harried years later, the twins were old enough that Darwin and Sherry began to consider adding to their family. Mandie Lee was born in 1977, followed three short years later by Michael William (1980). These two were doted on and loved by their older sisters (who were once known to say that, "Now they would finally have someone they could 'boss' around.") as well as their parents. Michael's birth also denoted the beginning of the family's continued membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Darwin's 12 months in Vietnam were spent with him working in Supply and also teaching English to the Vietnamese. "[Darwin] said he always felt blessed to have been able to get that teaching position, which shielded him from most of the intense fighting that took place on the front lines."(A Tribute To Grandpa; by David Lewis; 2014.) He was further protected during a number of close calls involving bombs and grenades detonating on base and also when areas of Saigon were attacked.

#### Schooling, Employment, and Community Service:

Darwin's employment after leaving the Air Force made use of his good work ethic and many, varied skills. He spent some years at a sawmill, gas station, and on the factory line at General Motors. Soon thereafter, he

found that he flourished in the new and growing industry of Computers (!). He was self taught and grew in knowledge during this era of room-sized computers with blinking lights and spit-out punch cards. He spent many years in this evolving field until he then took the brave step to continue his education later in life. He began at Linn Benton Community College and then received his BS in Political Science from OSU. After which, he worked until he retired, from the Oregon Department of Revenue in Salem. He had a lively interest in politics, ran one year for the Benton County Commissioner position, and served a number of years on the Philomath City Council, and other civic committees.

#### Church Service:

Over the years Darwin served in many callings in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A favorite calling that he and his wife shared together was the 3 ½ years he and Sherry served as missionaries for the LDS Addiction Recovery Program in Corvallis and Newport. His best service, however, was in his family where he led with a strong testimony of Jesus Christ. He was a great example of growth, change, forgiveness, and perseverance. He was a loyal friend.

#### Family Memories:

Darwin is survived by his wife, Sherry and his sister, Carolyn; his children: Cindy Lewis (Jeff), Michelle Elton (Mark), Mandie Murk (Sam), and Michael Hanning (Ashley). In addition, he has a mass of very loved grandchildren numbering at 23, and 7.5 great grandchildren.

Dad, Grandpa, Great-Grandpa is remembered for his hard work and creativity. Over the years he has been known to build by hand or create: a backyard zipline, a very tall log swing set, a teeter-totter (that circled around as well as went up and down), tire swings, a large backyard wall for graffiti, spiky spiders with googly eyes that hung from the

ceiling, oil paintings, wood carvings, cement fish yard decor, as well as good Halloween costumes. He always enjoyed a good joke and had a lively sense of humor.

He went hunting, enjoyed numerous fishing and camping trips and took grandkids fossil hunting. Grandpa had a high regard for, and encouraged learning. He loved documentaries, science, and was always ready to share "an old Indian trick." He enjoyed opening our eyes to the wonders of geology, pulleys (science fair project), inventions (like a hover bike), and "The Hobbit." He enjoyed time talking with and getting to know the troubles and successes of individual grandkids. He knew how to get out slivers, when stitches were needed (or not) and how to make delicious silver-dollar pancakes.

Darwin, Dad, Grandpa, Great-Grandpa has left us with a legacy of integrity, hard work, and enduring love that supersedes the illness and physical restrictions of his last years. On April 4, 2020, his last "walk" at the Lebanon Veterans Home, was an Honor Walk. His body was wheeled out, draped with the American flag that symbolized his patriotism and his sacrifices, as he was brought to the transport vehicle. We believe that his spirit walked beside us that day, upright, strong, and smiling his loving smile--once again, the father we knew in our younger years.

# Tribute Wall

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**Craig** - May 05, 2020 at 02:08 PM