



## Darrell Otis Thompson

February 10, 1935 - October 8, 2023

Darrell Otis Thompson, 88 years old, of Murray, Utah, died at home from a heart attack on October 8th 2023. He was spending time in the garden, drinking his “whisky” (Pepsi), and talking about the Jazz preseason game set to play that evening. His loving heart gave out, quickly, and pain free, just the way he was hoping. To love someone so greatly, makes losing them just as hard. But with each great love comes a lifetime of memories and here are some of those.

He was born in Windsor, Wisconsin in 1935 to Irene and Otis Thompson, who cherished their only son. His eldest sister, Donna [Chuck] Colby and younger sister Debbie [Terry] Nelson challenged Darrell to be the best version of himself through their example. The family lived together as a family until Darrell went to college at St. Olaf to study Norwegian history and literature and then Madison University to study criminal justice and play on every athletic team he could. Little did Darrell know he met the love of his life, Carol Sparks, in grade school while playing ball, in Deforest Wisconsin. After a long courtship, the two were excited to start their new lives together, and married in Madison WI in January of 1957. Like many relationships, theirs had ups and downs, but was without a doubt a true love story, leaning on each other for their strengths and building 70 years of memories. On October 8th of this year they were reunited again, something Darrell had been longing for 6 interminable years. Darrell and Carol couldn't wait to start a family of their

own. The family moved around the country thanks to Darrell's job, placing them in Madison WI, Buffalo NY, St. Louis MO, and then finally to Sandy UT in 1983, where the family expanded. Their children, Brad [Mary] Thompson, Deanna (Kelly Anne) Thompson-Ward meant the world to them, and led a life that made Carol and Darrell proud. Darrell loved spending time with his children at family dinners, road trips, and completing home maintenance tasks. In Carol and Darrell's home hung a sign that read "My grandchildren are the reason I didn't kill my own children", though it was a joke, there was some truth behind those words. They lived for their grandchildren Erin and Leah, and they mastered the role of being the most loving and supportive grandparents around. Even when the girls' softball games drug them out into 100 degree weather or cold theater auditoriums. Darrell had a soft spot for his furry grand-dogs, Jax and Daysha, two Yorkies that were always thrilled to see Darrell arrive because that meant getting treats and pets. His grand puppy Boomer, an Australian Shepherd, took advantage of Darrell and his innate desire to throw a ball. Darrell worked for 36 years as a life insurance salesman for Lutheran Brotherhood. The story goes, he had schooling to become a border control officer and was packing the family up to move from Madison to Texas. When a Lutheran Brotherhood agent knocked on their front door and imprinted their hearts. That day, Darrell was sold (a life insurance policy) and a long time career in sales. He was able to flex his skills, practice his passion and frequently reminisced of all the people he met along the way. Speaking of people who imprinted in Darrell's life, it goes without mention that the kind people of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church did just that in the church softball team, choir, and congregation.

There are so many people who were involved in Darrell Thompson's life in some way. He was a people-person; people gave him life, and a reason to shine. Darrell never ceased to be amazed at how civilization was changing (like people having different colored hair or how much traffic was in the valley) and always treated others with respect (no matter their background). His inquisitiveness kept him learning, growing, and connecting through a lifetime.

Anyone who knew Darrell, knew how much he loved athletics. Going to school at St. Olaf college allowed him to be a triathlete, playing basketball, football, and baseball. Darrell dedicated his life to sport and believed that staying active could cure the worst ailes. He golfed (without using a golf cart) at courses all over the country, played softball even if it meant riding his motorcycle from St. Louis to Madison, and skied into his 80's (because it was free of course). Darrell will always be remembered for his salesman chipperness, generous hospitality, and the way that he always showed up for the people he loved. We'll always imagine hearing him say "Have you had your knuckle sandwich, from elbow bend?" one more time. We couldn't have asked for a better brother/father/grandpa/teammate/friend, and we will miss Darrell every day. His memory will live on in the hearts of all those who loved him, every Jazz game played, and with every "Sigurslid Special" or peanut butter toast made.

He is survived by Deanna Thompson-Ward (Kelly Anne), Brad Thompson (Mary), Donna Colby, Debbie Nelson, Erin (Philipp Hoog) Thompson, Leah (Chris Landes) Thompson.

Darrel was preceded in death by Carol Thompson [wife], Terry Nelson [brother-in-law], Chuck Colby [brother-in-law].

A celebration of life will be held Friday November 3rd at Zion Lutheran church ELCA, 1070 Foothill Dr. Salt Lake City Utah 84108, at 4:00pm, with dinner to follow. Darrell would love for your attendance, as seeing the people he cared about is what warmed his heart most. Donations to Zion Church, a charity of your choice, or simply spending time being active, in lieu of flowers, would be appreciated by Darrell and his family. Thank you.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

NOV 3. 4:00 PM (MT)

Zion Lutheran Church Elca  
1070 Foothill Drive  
Salt Lake City, UT 84108