



Sterling Ray Wadley

May 22, 1952 - February 11, 2021

Our beloved husband, father, brother, uncle, friend, teacher, leader, and mentor passed away on February 11th, 2021 in the Utah Valley ICU from complications related to COVID-19.

Sterling was born to Arvil and Helen Wadley in American Fork, Utah. He grew up in the old Wadley family home in Pleasant Grove, where Sterling and his wife, Mary Jane have continued to reside and raise their family.

His early life was spent in constant companionship with his identical twin brother, Stanley Kay Wadley. The two were best friends. They were inseparable and nearly indistinguishable. Together they had a wonderful childhood where they played outside with their large group of neighborhood friends. They frequently went fishing and adventuring outdoors with their father. Their favorite birthday tradition was to picnic at Liberty Park with their family. Their mother would make each twin their own angel food cake, which continued to be Sterling's favorite throughout his life.

Sterling and Stan had a lifetime of people confusing them for each other. When they were young, most people referred to them as "the Wadley twins" because they were always together and were difficult to distinguish. Later in life each brother was frequently approached by enthusiastic strangers mistaking them for the other. They would often "pretend" to be the other twin in brief conversations, treating them as if they were old friends.

Sterling graduated from Pleasant Grove High School in 1970, after which he and Stan attended one year at Ricks College in Idaho. Sterling served a mission to Ireland from 1971-1973.

Upon his return from his mission, Sterling enrolled at Brigham Young University. Always a hard worker, Sterling was employed as a lumberjack in Wyoming during summer breaks. He graduated with a double bachelor's degree in biology and food science, and then went

on to earn two master's degrees in aquaculture and education, all from BYU. Education became a lifelong passion for him.

Sterling met Mary Jane Hegyessy while attending the Timpanogos Stake young adult Sunday school class. After Mary Jane's mission, they met again in a BYU ward. They were married on April 9th, 1982. During this time, Sterling had graduated and begun researching the aquaculture of lobsters in the Caribbean. After their marriage, Sterling and Maryjane moved there for a few years. They lived on the islands of St. Maarten and Anguilla, where they helped to run a tourist diving business in addition to the lobster aquaculture project.

After returning to Utah, they welcomed their two children, Clinton and Katy. Sterling began his teaching career at Springville High School, which spanned 32 years. He was a well-loved teacher who formed close friendships with his colleagues. He taught biology, medical terminology, biotechnology, AP biology, and was the HOSA advisor for many years. He was constantly running into students who would greet him with enthusiasm and love. Even on his very last day, one of his former students assisted with his care.

He was a dedicated servant within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who was always found doing his priesthood duty. He served in many callings, including 1st Counselor in the St. Maarten Branch Presidency (French speaking), Aaronic Priesthood Quorum Advisor, Bishopric Member in a BYU student ward, 1st Counselor in the PG 5th Ward, Bishop of the PG 5th Ward, Counselor in the Stake Presidency in the Pleasant Grove Stake, Young Men's President, High Priest Group Leader, Member of the Mission Presidency in the Nauvoo Historic Sites Mission, and, most recently, the Ward Mission Leader.

Sterling and Mary Jane had the opportunity to serve a mission together to Nauvoo, Illinois from January 2019 to August 2020. This mission was something they planned and looked forward to throughout their married life. Through this mission they made many wonderful friends whom they love dearly.

Sterling was a man of many talents. He was a self-taught home builder and could fix anything. In 1997, he doubled the size of the family home with an addition, mostly by the labor of his own hands. He was a master gardener known for sharing his bounteous produce every summer and fall. He was an avid reader who read thousands of books over the years. He was a devoted father, quietly loving and supporting his children through all their pursuits in life. He was known for his quiet acts of service among his family and friends.

He was beloved by all who knew him and will be sorely missed. We are certain that he was greeted fondly by droves of beloved family and friends and is continuing his hard work and service on the other side of the veil.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Jane Wadley, children Clinton (Amy) Wadley and Katy (Nathan) Ives, five grandchildren, siblings SueZann (Douglas) Kohler, Stanley (Debbie) Wadley, sister-in-law Diane (John) Nichols, and many nieces and nephews.

Preceded in death by his parents Arvil W. and Helen Haslem Wadley, brother Douglas Wadley, and in-laws Harold M. & Phyllis Hegyessy.

Services will be limited to close family only but will be streamed live and may be attended virtually at the following link: [CLICK HERE TO VIEW FUNERAL SERVICE]<https://youtu.be/ydh2Gu-8AkE>

Funeral Services will be held for the family Thursday, February 18th, at 1:00 pm. Interment in American Fork City Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints General Missionary Fund.

Cemetery

American Fork City Cemetery

600 North 100 East

American Fork, UT, 84003

Comments



“ A webcast video has been added.



Utah Valley Mortuary - February 16 at 01:18 PM



“ So sorry to lose a classmate from PGHS Class of 1970
Condolences to all his family and especially Stanley

Jeanne Chorniak McFadden - February 16 at 05:38 PM



“ Brother Sweat and I were serving in Nauvoo while the Wadleys were there. Such a dedicated and sweet couple. Our love and prayers with his family. Ned and Anna Jean Sweat

Ned & Anna Jean Sweat - March 14 at 08:27 PM



“ Mr. Wadley was one of my favorite teachers! He made learning interesting and fun. I enjoyed learning about Punnett squares and ABO+/- Blood Groups/blood typing in his AP Biology class as a sophomore in 1987-88! His support and encouragement were very impactful--he supported me in attending/giving a science presentation at the Intermountain Science and Humanities Symposium and also being selected for the Utah Science Talent Search plus the National Youth Science Camp. His influence inspired me to study Biochemistry at BYU and then Molecular Biology and Genetics for my Ph.D. at UCLA. I dedicated my Ph.D. thesis to Mr. Sterling Wadley (it was about identifying and naming a gene, Hyplip1, that causes elevated cholesterol and triglyceride levels plus liver cancer). I visited him after earning my Ph.D. and gave him a copy of my thesis; it was great to see him again--his classroom and Springville High school was just how I remembered it! Mr. Wadley was an amazing biology teacher and inspired so many students! I remember how he used to have a large snake that the students used to come see when it was fed or shed its skin. So many fond memories in his AP Biology class. My deepest condolences to his wife and family on the loss of such a wonderful man. In Sympathy, Dr. Jackie (Perry) Bodnar SHS Class of '90.

Jackie Bodnar - March 03 at 04:07 PM



“ Brother Wadley was our high council man when we lived in Pleasant Grove. I enjoyed hearing him speak because he always threw in a little science to help teach a spiritual concept. I also knew his brother Stan and their family. In fact the first time I met Sterling, I called him Stan. I am sure this does not surprise you. I admired Sterling and his wife. He will be missed by many. I am sure he is needed on the other side with his talents. Praying for the family.

Sandra Peppin - February 18 at 07:33 PM



“ Sterling was a great friend of mine. We both taught AP Biology and Biotechnology together (he at Springville High and I at Pleasant Grove High). We always carpooled to attend all the same conferences and summer development courses. I taught both of his children AP biology and they were fantastic students.

Sterling and I went back East each summer for ten years and would be roommates while grading AP Biology Tests. We had so many adventures together. One year there was a botanical garden that we would walk past every day. One day we stuffed our backpacks full of catnip from the garden and then went to the local zoo and threw all the catnip into the lion and tiger cages to watch them go crazy.

One of our traditional things to do back east each summer was to climb to the top of our hotel stairwell and see who could drop gobstoppers the farthest down the stairwell.

He taught me everything I know about geocaching and was always telling me to "watch out for Muggles". :)

If you know Sterling, then you know that he always had something to talk about. He had a curious and inquisitive mind. He seemed to know a little bit about everything.

Sterling was by far one of the kindest people I know. He was generous, happy and fun. Always a positive person to be around and made you feel like you were special.

There is a famous poem that states not to send to ask for whom the bells toll, they toll for thee. In other words, don't send to ask who died, because with there

- David van Dijk

David van Dijk - February 18 at 03:25 PM



“ That sent accidently before I finished my thought. In other words, don't send to ask who died, because whoever it was that died, that person was better than you in some way and now you will never have the chance to learn from them again. That is how I feel about Sterling. Sterling made me a better person and I will miss not having more growth through association with him..

David van Dijk - February 18 at 03:29 PM



“ Mr. Wadley was my Anatomy and Physiology teacher and HOSA advisor in high school and was one of the most impactful teachers on my future. It was because of him that I was introduced to HOSA: Future Health Professionals (which gave me SO many experiences and helped me grow as a person) and his class was also the reason I knew I wanted to go into the medical field. I remember winning first place at PSA for HOSA and becoming a HOSA State Officer and Mr. Wadley being so proud of me. He motivated me to want to push myself.

I wanted to do something to honor him but had no idea where I would even start. I then remembered that I still had footage and yearbook pictures from making a retirement video for the Science Department in 2017. And I figured that making a video for students, friends, and family to remember the person he was, was the best way I could commemorate him.



Naomi Storey - February 18 at 12:22 PM



“ We are so grateful that we have been able to get to know President Sterling Wadley! We have known Sister Wadley for a number of years and what a great additional blessing it is to get to know her wonderful husband. He served so faithfully and diligently as a counselor in the Nauvoo Historic Site Presidency. It was fun to get to see his lifelong love for learning and for sharing his knowledge with others. He is so talented and capable and kind. The memory of him and his example will bless us all throughout our lives. Sister Wadley, please know of our love and best wishes for you! With our love, Kris and Steve Green

Kris and Steve Green - February 18 at 11:17 AM



“ Sterling Wadley is one of my most favorite people in all the world. He taught me how to make bricks and so much more in Nauvoo. I love this photo of him playing a donkey in the Christmas pageant at the Community of Christ. We teased him that he looked more like a rabbit.

I loved to watch him whenever MaryJane performed. It was obvious the he loved to listen and that he was so proud of her.

From family to teaching to church service he has had a wide reaching sphere of influence. He has left an example and a legacy that is nothing short of inspiring. I will always love Sterling and MaryJane.

I'll miss you, my friend,
Phil Munoa



Phil Munoa - February 17 at 09:19 PM



“ My condolences to all.He will be missed. Sterling was one of the best neighbors I ever had.

Mary Shirey - February 17 at 03:40 PM



“ I love my uncle Sterling!! We were not super close, but I always felt a closeness to him because he was just like my dad!! We love you and will miss you dearly! We will take good care of little blue for you!! Love, Tara



Tara Wadley Haubner - February 17 at 12:17 AM



“ My love to you all- what an example of service and love!
-Barbara Stratford, Savior of the World, 2019

Barbara Stratford - February 16 at 09:41 PM



“ Sterling help us start fertizing business in a box truck. And he helped my brothers get there fertilizer license so they could take over fertilizer. When he lived next door he would let me come play basketball with Clint . He was always very kind to me and our family. I will miss him. Love kellymarkspencer

kelly spencer - February 16 at 08:27 PM



“ We were blessed to know Sterling and his family for many years. We knew him as a neighbor, ward-member, co-worker, and friend. He was very special to our family. Through his service both as a teacher and in various ecclesiastical roles he touched many lives; through his friendship, he touched our lives.

Fred, Cathy, and Kelly Spencer

Fred Spencer - February 16 at 07:26 PM



“ I'm so sorry to hear of Mr Wadley's passing. I really enjoyed being in his class!
Thoughts and prayers to his family.

Kandice Hoen - February 16 at 04:25 PM



“ I taught in the classroom next to Sterling's for many years. He was always upbeat, thoughtful and kind. I was so sad to hear of his passing. He was a good man.

Bev Burdett - February 16 at 03:54 PM



“ 89 files added to the album Family Photos



Katy Ives - February 16 at 03:32 PM



“ We lived behind the Wadley twins when we were in about the third grade. Jan Carter lived on the corner and the Chipman kids across the street. I'm sure we terrorized our block but we had many great adventures in that couple of summers. It was a great time to be a kid. Sorry to hear of his passing. I ask God's peace for his family.

LaVon Merritt - February 16 at 10:08 AM



“ Even though I am a cousin I could never tell them apart. We only saw them at grandma's or funeral's since we went to different schools. Their parents taught right.

Gary Robinson - February 16 at 04:31 PM



“ Dear MaryJane, Clint and Katie, Words are difficult to express my feelings for all of you right now. But please always know, how deeply you are loved! Thanks for being such a great neighbor just down the road from us, ward member, and friend for so many years. Sterling was such a wonderful Bishop! His Zinnia's in the fall were absolutely gorgeous! Thank you MaryJane for sharing you beautiful voice with so many of us I pray you are recovering well, and feeling better very soon! Love, Linda Tingey and Family

Linda C Tingey - February 18 at 05:33 PM