

PHILLIP WESLEY RUSSELL
September 10, 1941 – February 16, 2023



The Lord welcomed home Phillip Wesley Russell on Thursday, February 16, 2023. Born on September 10, 1941, in Boise, Idaho, to William Russell and Dorothy (nee Johnson), in his 81 years he maintained a sharp lifelong interest in science, technology and history, with a passion for learning and a strong belief in progress towards a better future. Thus, even though he was three months old when the USA entered the Second World War and in his 20s when he watched the first humans set foot on the Moon, he always kept abreast of the latest new ideas and discoveries, never letting events pass him by, while remaining true to his fundamental values. These, along with deep faith, his love for God, his wife and family and his country, characterize his long, rich life.

Graduating from The College of Idaho in 1963, he married his beloved wife of 59 years, Diana Marie (nee Smith), moved to Southern California where he began his employment with (first) Douglas Aircraft Company/(later) McDonnell Douglas/(and eventually) Boeing, earned his masters degree in applied mathematics from UCLA, and ultimately and permanently settled in Westminster in 1969 when and where he and Diana started growing their family. Always a good man and wonderful father of four, as he grew older, he became an even better man and grandfather of five.

He is survived by his wife Diana, brother Daniel and sister Julie, daughters Tani and Kimberly, sons Craig and Erik, and grandchildren Kailee-Rose and Bliss (Tani), David (Kimberly), and Amber and Ian (Craig). All are proud and consider themselves blessed to call Phil (only his mom ever called him Phillip) husband, brother, Dad and grandpa ("Papa"). His life was a rich and full one, filled with many passionate pursuits and interests.

An elder at Family Christian Church in Costa Mesa, faith was the center of his life. For a time, his faith led him to provide a phone-line for distraught or lonely people to call in and get life advice or even to just have someone to speak with. Always involved in the activities of his children and grandchildren, such as coaching various sports teams and practicing for karate tournaments, assisting in Boy Scouts, staying up late to help his kids with their homework, perhaps closest to his heart was his delight in never missing one of his grandkids' soccer games or musical recitals. He was an avid gardener, always trying new ways to beautify his home. Other interests included a fascination with and involvement in politics (though his personal views will remain private in respect of his own wishes), a great fondness for movies, and a deep love of reading with a large library of books, especially science fiction, Westerns and military history.

After retiring from his 43 years with Douglas/Boeing/etc., and in between attending all of his grandkids' soccer games, he managed to make himself even busier by serving as a member of the Orange County grand jury, volunteering long hours working with HICAP (Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program) for over 12 years, and also a dedicated volunteer as an AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) Tax-Aide helping seniors (and others) prepare their tax returns, and always finding time to contribute his efforts to numerous political campaigns and grassroots organizations. Feeling himself blessed by the Lord and his country, he always felt a strong desire to give back to his community and nation, something which he regarded as a privilege rather than an obligation. We who were blessed to know and love Phil, and miss him terribly, choose now to celebrate his life and look forward to being reunited with him again someday.