



Matthew Stephen Gunn

June 10, 1976 - October 18, 2020

With a heavy heart, we announce the passing of Matthew Stephen Gunn on October 18, 2020. He was born June 10, 1976, to Spencer & Christine Gunn. Matt had a heart full of concern for his fellow man. He looked for and believed in the best in others. So many benefitted from his kind, giving ways. The most significant portion of his heart, though, was reserved for his children. They were his life and greatest concern. He cherished time with them and strove to make their moments together special. His children are a blessing that came to his life through his marriage to Danika Larsen Gunn. They were later divorced. Matt was a humanitarian who served others, even when it meant sacrificing his comfort and ease. This love of serving began on his mission to the people of Ecuador for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints from 1995-97 and is what he held onto from that experience. He devoted his life to teaching and helping those who were not as fortunate as him. He spent many years teaching elementary and Spanish in Ogden, Logan, and St. George, Utah. He found joy in seeing others improve their circumstances. This desire was at the core of who he was and led to his work developing and providing self-sustaining living solutions, including building an orphanage in Haiti after the earthquake devastations of 2010 and later helped with rebuilding hogans for the people of Monument Valley. Matt was constantly and quietly serving others throughout his adult life.

The second of eight children, Matt was a beloved son and brother. He took that role seriously and often included his family in his adventures through life,

and the life of Matt Gunn was certainly full of adventure. He was always going/doing and fit so much LIFE into his 44 years. He began exploring the outdoors with his father at a very young age, and it wasn't long before Matt was hooked. You name it -- hunting, fishing, camping, biking, hiking, trail running, climbing, skiing -- they became his passion. His exploration of the Utah backcountry was extensive and is where he found peace in life. He loved to share his knowledge and experience with anyone who dared try to keep up with him. This led to his competing in and producing several ultra-marathons. He established the Grand Circle Trail Series, which offered ultramarathon competitions purposely staged in or near some of Utah's most breathtaking scenery, specifically Zion, Bryce, Antelope Canyon, Monument Valley, Grand Canyon, Capitol Reef, the Tushars mountain range, and culminated with Trailfest. These races allowed him to share his passion for Utah's majesty and beauty with thousands of athletes from around the world and led to many cherished friendships. It also led him to meet his companion in love and adventure, Toby Langmann Gunn, in 2016. After Matt and Toby spent time with the Tarahumara people of Mexico, Matt's dream was to be married in the Copper Canyon with the people they came to love. His dream came true, and they were married on March 2, 2017, and experienced a whirlwind of adventures in their life together.

Matt is survived by his children Abraham, Lia, Hazel & Olive Gunn, his wife Toby and stepchildren Paileigh and Taden, his mother and stepfather Chris and Rand Beacham, his siblings Josh (Heidi), Rachelle (Curtis) Koch, Ben (Katie), Mark (Allie), Zack (Ashlee), Adam (Samantha), and Sarah (Adam) Bishop, as well as 31 adoring nieces and nephews. Matt was preceded in death by his father, Spencer H. Gunn.

Funeral services will be held Monday, October 26, 2020, at 11:00 am at the chapel at 1706 Desert Dawn Drive, Santa Clara, UT. Social distancing and masks required.

The funeral service will be live streamed via Zoom.

<https://zoom.us/j/94663602924?pwd=akRmQkhYdFJ3MHZaTzFBdjR4ZWRI>

z09

Meeting ID: 946 6360 2924

Passcode: 889760

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT **26**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (MT)

Santa Clara LDS Chapel
1706 Desert Dawn Drive
Santa Clara, UT

Tribute Wall



“ *Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah created a Tribute Video in memory of Matthew Stephen Gunn*



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - October 24, 2020 at 10:57 PM



“ *Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah created a Recording of Funeral Service in memory of Matthew Stephen Gunn*



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - October 21, 2020 at 11:13 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Sandy Ferrell - October 26, 2020 at 02:20 PM

SF

“ I can remember, even twenty plus years later, where Matt sat in my classroom at Dixie High. It was on the left side, second seat from the front. I’m not sure why I remember this insignificant detail except that Matt was not an insignificant student. He was the kind of student who graced the class with a quiet but powerful presence. He was well-liked and a part of things but also not a part of things in that I felt he had a wisdom and ability to look past the uncertainty and awkwardness of adolescence and connect with people in kind and genuine ways.

I taught Biology and a class called “Writing About the Land”. I think that’s how I came into Matt’s orbit. He loved the outdoors and my class was focused on exploring our relationship with the land and how our lives have been shaped and formed by the places we live and love. Matt went with me on field trips around St. George, backpacking into Havasupai in the Grand Canyon and to the Color Country Natural Resource Camp. He was at home in nature. When we were outdoors, I saw a side of him I didn’t see in the classroom.

I’ve looked through my pictures from this time and found a photo of Matt and Greg performing a “talent” for the camp talent show. I remember quite a bit of hoopla about their upcoming performance. They came onto the stage, and we all expected something big and amazing. Instead they lifted their shirts and sucked in their stomachs to reveal ribs and a concave stomach that a basketball could fit in. They are both smiling. We cheered.

There are other things I remember. A trip to Havasupai where Matt’s dad came as a chaperone and his younger brother came along as well. Matt quietly hiking through the desert. Matt hanging out with friends at the campfire. Matt swimming in rivers. I know that later in life he organized ultra races through the beautiful canyons of southern Utah. I realize I was just seeing the beginning of a lifelong passion for the outdoors.

The last time I saw Matt was when he interviewed for a job teaching

PE at my school. He had just come back from building an orphanage in Haiti. The emotions of that experience were still raw. He got emotional in the interview, and it was apparent that his love for the children had made it very hard to leave. The job at my school didn't work out, but I so wanted him to be there. I knew the students at my school would benefit from being associated with him. His previous principal called him a "kid magnet". I can see how that would be true.

After reading his obituary, I am so proud of him for building a life that was authentic and reflected his love for people, his great kindness and his love for the natural world. Not everyone has the courage to walk that path. He has given his own children the gift of beautiful memories and a deep and abiding love.

My life was blessed by having him in my class and spending time outdoors with him and my other students. I'm so sorry I didn't stay more connected, but I want his family, and especially his children, to know that in my eyes, Matt was a unique, passionate, true human being. I will miss knowing that he is out there somewhere running trails, fishing rivers, exploring new places, helping people and caring about children. But maybe that's exactly what he is doing.

*Sandy Ferrell
Teacher*

Sandy Ferrell - October 26, 2020 at 01:08 PM

SS

“ Matt, you were one of the world's cutest kids. You are loved and missed. Uncle Steve

Steven Smith - October 26, 2020 at 12:26 AM

TH

“ Matt introduced me to Zebra Slot Canyon off Hole-in-the-Rock road in the Escalante area. He told me it was fabulous and urged me to explore it. Labor Day weekend, solely on Matt’s recommendation, my daughter, son, a niece, a nephew and I explored Zebra. Matt was SPOT ON! It was fabulous. The water was 3 feet deep in places and, it seemed, the walls were 3 inches apart in places. It was adventure with a capital A and all thanks to Matt. I will be forever grateful to him for introducing me to that incredible place. Thank you Matt. Thank you. May you continue to explore great places and share them with others! Love YOU my friend!!!!

Teresa Hislop - October 24, 2020 at 06:57 PM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Matthew Stephen Gunn.



October 23, 2020 at 09:43 PM



“ Tender Tribute was purchased for the family of Matthew Stephen Gunn.



October 23, 2020 at 12:49 PM



“ *Sentimental Dreams was purchased for the family of Matthew Stephen Gunn.*



October 23, 2020 at 12:08 PM

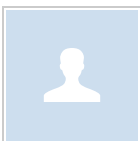


“ *Matthew you will be missed greatly at Ogden Preparatory Academy. You have touched so many hearts, minds and people. I'm so grateful I was able to know you and be co workers. Many prayers and blessing to Matthew's family.*

I saw this video of you and your special wedding. It was good to hear you talk and interact with others.



Christy - October 22, 2020 at 03:57 PM



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Matthew Stephen Gunn.*



October 22, 2020 at 12:54 PM

TG

“ *Every memory I have for four years involves you and I love you miss you terribly!* ”



Toby Ann L Gunn - October 22, 2020 at 09:43 AM

KP

“ *So honored to have worked with Matt back in the beginning days of OPA. Rest in Peace Senior Gunn. ❤️* ”

Karole Pickett - October 22, 2020 at 09:05 AM

SO

“ *I so enjoyed working with Matt. He had such a passion for adventure-and he shared that passion with his students. He will be greatly missed.* ”

Sonnet - October 22, 2020 at 12:53 AM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Matthew Stephen Gunn.* ”



October 22, 2020 at 12:06 AM