



Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong

April 11, 1939 - April 3, 2026

Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong, age 86, passed away on April 3, 2026, in Santa Clara, Utah. He was born on April 11, 1939, at Swedish Hospital in Seattle, Washington, to Marjorie Jane McGraw and Nils Gustav Emil Sporrong.

Bob's early childhood was spent with his mother and Swedish immigrant father in Washington before their divorce at 4 years old. His mother remarried a WWII veteran and Texan, Floyd Hollinger, and Bob spent the second half of his childhood in rural Texas. In adolescence, he moved with the family to Southern California to be near his grandparents, where he graduated from Poly High School in Riverside, California, in 1957.

An undercurrent in Bob's life was a pull toward independence of spirit and a willingness to lean into discomfort and challenge. As a 20-year-old Californian, he moved to Sweden to experience his father's homeland — sun-starved winters, few friends, and very little money on arrival. In Gothenburg, while living with his aunt and uncle, he worked for 24 cents an hour as an apprentice machinist. He also recalled fondly the backbreaking, unpolished life he lived as a deckhand on a tramp freighter that carried him from Sweden across the Atlantic for months at sea.

In Gothenburg, he waited patiently each week for Time Magazine to arrive and read it from cover to cover — his aunt would remark that his Swedish had

regressed by the next morning. In time, he enrolled in Gothenburg Technical College, where he formed lifelong friendships with classmates. Those friendships, along with the relationships he built with his extended family, endured across decades and continents.

Following graduation from Gothenburg, Bob returned to California where, due to constraints on international degrees at the time, he enrolled at Cal Poly Pomona and received his bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering, followed by his MBA from California State University, San Bernardino.

It was in a student carpool where he met his wife-to-be, Judy Pratt — an all-American girl who was captured by this exotic Swede, sporting worn dyed loafers and wool Scandinavian sweaters, often flanked by a bota bag. She was drawn to the handsome wanderer, and he was drawn to her beauty and sweet kindness. He married Judith Ann Pratt in Riverside, California, on May 1, 1964. Through Judy's family, Bob was introduced to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and held many roles throughout his life, including Elder's Quorum counselor and single adults representative. He and Judy hosted Monday family home evenings and day trips for single members for many years.

Bob launched his career with Mattel Toys, where he designed and patented "Big Jim," a male action figure with smashing karate action and flexing biceps. He later left Mattel to devote himself to the family business, Rapid Data, Inc., a data processing company founded by his mother and family matriarch, where he worked throughout most of the 1970s side-by-side with his brothers Michael and Floyd Jr. (Cowboy) in Redlands, California. Following his departure from Rapid Data, Bob's career spanned multiple global medical manufacturing companies, working in design, management, and quality engineering across South Asia and Europe. After a brief chapter in Erie, Pennsylvania, he eventually settled in Sandy, Utah, in surgical sponge

manufacturing, where he finished his career doing what he loved best — analyzing statistics and combing data to improve surgical sponges. He wrote a book on the topic and affectionately retired with the nickname “Sponge Bob”.

Bob had a love of cars, motorcycles and planes early in his life and was most proud of his 1962 Jaguar E-Type, which he took to car shows before reluctantly retiring it in favor of his Roadtrek RV, in which he and Judy traveled across the country during retirement. Bob would often travel on “WalkABOUTs” alone in his Roadtrek meeting and learning from people along his journey, with his most loved backdrop along the Oregon Coast.

Bob valued community and giving back. He served as a volunteer ski patroller in Park City; played the part of Orson Pratt, an early church settler of St. George, in the "St. George Live" historical tour; volunteered at the Senior Games; remained active in his HOA; and taught computer classes for seniors at the local college.

Bob's life was touched by profound tragedy twice: the death of his middle son, Darren Lee, in a bicycle accident in 1976, and the sudden loss of his oldest son, Robert Jon (B.J.), in 2006. His resilience in the wake of these tragedies was further tested by the diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease which in the twenty years he lived with the condition, he never complained, lamented or was ashamed, and it rarely slowed him down until the final few years.

Headstrong in his youth — “Sweden changed him,” his mother would say — he was known to be resolute to a fault at times, but the years softened him into what he liked to call a Buddhist Mormon, meaning he valued curiosity as a way of life and held any one belief loosely. He had a deep fascination for physics and great admiration for the life and words of the physicist Richard

Feynman. He enjoyed intellectual sparring and tended to reframe most arguments by advocating the opposing side — less from contrarianism than from a genuine desire to sharpen understanding. He was resourceful and frugal, preferring minimalism over material possessions. Practical and linear in his Engineering-trained thinking, he was nonetheless extraordinarily moved by the natural beauty of Utah and the warmth of his friendships. The highlight of his retirement was spent sipping coffee with his friend Leonard, and the breakfast club, at the local gas station, discussing current events.

He is survived by his wife Judith Ann Sporrong, son Jeremy Dane Sporrong (Longo) of Ivins, UT; his grandchildren Jonathan Robert Sporrong (Lauren), Sofia Quinn Sporrong, Jonah Kai Sporrong, brothers Floyd Hollinger, Michael Morland Sporrong (Jacqueline), sister-in-law Jan K. Yant, and many loving family and friends.

The family wishes to extend their deepest gratitude to the hospice nurse and caregivers and the staff of Snow Canyon Retirement Community, whose loving and gentle care brought great comfort during a difficult time.

Memorial will be held on Saturday, April 18, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. at the LDS Chapel in Ivins at 625 E. Center St, Ivins UT 84738. Interment will be held at Ivins City Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider donating to the Michael J. Fox Foundation.

<https://give.michaeljfox.org>

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 18. 10:30 AM (MT)

Ivins 2th Ward LDS Chapel
625 E Center St.
Ivins, UT 84738

Funeral Service

APR 18. 11:00 AM (MT)

Ivins 2th Ward LDS Chapel
625 E Center St.
Ivins, UT 84738

Tribute Wall



“ *Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah created a Zoom Funeral Service Broadcast in memory of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong*



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - April 17 at 01:30 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Funeral Audio Recording*



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - April 20 at 02:56 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Funeral Video Recording Part 2*



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - April 20 at 02:44 PM



“ 1 file added to the album *Funeral Video Recording Part 1*



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - April 20 at 02:23 PM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong.



April 14 at 08:27 PM



“ 1 file added to the album *Tribute Picture Slideshow*



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - April 14 at 11:09 AM



“ Dan, Lina, Ludvig and Victor Irmalm planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong.

Dan, Lina, Ludvig and Victor Irmalm - April 14 at 02:10 AM

DI

“ Dan, Lina, Ludvig and Victor Irmalm purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong.



Dan, Lina, Ludvig and Victor Irmalm - April 14 at 02:10 AM



“ Loving Grace was purchased for the family of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong.



April 13 at 07:38 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong.

April 13 at 07:38 PM

JF

“ Jim & Terry Sporrong and Families purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong.



Jim & Terry Sporrong and Families - April 13 at 11:59 AM

JF

“ Jim & Terry Sporrong and Families planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong.

Jim & Terry Sporrong and Families - April 13 at 11:59 AM

TF

“ I met Bob about 20+ years ago. Upon first meeting him, it seemed that he must have been 3 people because wherever I went he was also there. Hiking or biking or volunteering to help others or just around town.

We enjoyed many things together. Such as biking, group family home evenings, teaching & taking courses at ICL and just chatting at breakfasts or on the telephone. He always had some interesting things to teach me or talk about. As the obit says, he was always looking at the other side. For example, I once was talking about big or large things like sizes of planets or things in space or distances and he soon asked the question of what would be the very smallest (tiniest) thing? Much, much more to talk about then.

Bob was such a good friend to all that he met. He was very smart, talented and willing to share and will be missed.

Tom Flowers

Tom Flowers - April 12 at 09:04 PM



“ Love's Journey was purchased for the family of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrong.



April 12 at 08:32 PM

AJ

“ Our sincere condolences are extended to Judy and her family on the passing of Bob. Bob was our home teacher for many years in the Summit Park Ward in Park City. He was one of the best home teachers we ever had. He was thoughtful on our behalf and we looked forward to his monthly visits. He would often bring Judy with him and we enjoyed our conversations with them both. We will always have fond memories of both Judy and Bob and we are glad they played a small part in our lives. The best to you Judy.

*With great fondness,
John and Anne Jackman*

Anne Jackman - April 12 at 01:23 PM

MI

“ Mikael, Therese and Stefan Irmalm planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrang.

Mikael, Therese and Stefan Irmalm - April 12 at 09:44 AM

MI

“ Mikael, Therese and Stefan Irmalm purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Robert (Bob) Nils Sporrang.



Mikael, Therese and Stefan Irmalm - April 12 at 09:44 AM

CD

“ I have so many great memories of spending time with Bob at his Ivins home, the home in Park City, and the cabin in Kernville. I loved the stories he shared about his jobs. He had such a gentle heart. I remember a dog that his friends Max and Theresa owned who for some reason always barked at Bob! It surprised all of us since he was such a sweet and gentle soul. He also made the best Swedish pancakes with lingonberries. I will miss you Bob!

Christina Dee - April 11 at 12:15 AM

KS

“ Uncle Bob!! So many fond memories visiting with him in St. George and going on hikes. Making Swedish pancakes and laughing at his stories. Most recently, when we visited I got to go to church with Uncle Bob and Aunt Judy. He was truly in his element amongst all his friends and neighbors. He had a big box of oranges he handed out to everyone after church with a big smile on his face :) love you Uncle Bob!

Love Katelyn



katelyn sant - April 10 at 11:24 PM



There was no St George visits without Uncle Bob and Aunt Judy. I never knew someone who loved the outdoors as much as him. I loved going to snow canyon on early morning or late night hikes with him. Overlooking the stars and hearing his tales. Now those adventures get to continue beyond. We love and have so much respect for you Uncle Bob and your family. So much love in your home. Till we meet again.



Emily Allan - April 10 at 11:29 PM