



Spencer Decker Adams

February 25, 1935 - August 22, 2025

Spencer Decker Adams passed away on August 22, 2025, at the age of 90. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

Spencer was born on February 25, 1935, to Elizabeth Gertrude Decker Adams and Ancel James Adams in Parowan, Utah. Spencer described Parowan as a small town where “everybody knew too much about everybody else,” but also as a place with “good people” who “looked after each other.” His family lived on the edge of town, which he thought was “an ideal spot for a boy to grow up in.” This provided him easy access to open fields for hunting, mountain lakes for fishing, and foothills for winter sledding and skiing.

Born as the eighth of ten children in his family, he had five brothers and four sisters. He described some of his older brothers as “the kind of fellows that little boys idolized, and mothers didn't want them to particularly be around too much,” but he looked up to them and often tagged along on weekend fishing trips. He loved his entire family and spoke highly of them all of his life.

Spencer’s dad taught him to drive when he was in the second grade, “so that when we were hauling hay, I could drive the truck up and down the field and the big boys could pitch the hay and load the truck.” Sometimes he would drive around town before he was old enough to get his license, but his dad was the city marshal and his cousin was the local highway patrolman, so he

wasn't too worried about getting caught and he knew how to avoid them.

Spencer learned how to work at a young age, a trait he had throughout his life. He delivered the Deseret News from the 2nd grade through the 11th grade, and he also worked for farmers in the Parowan valley where he "learned their language." When asked why all the farmers cussed and swore, he responded, "They had a lot of things to cuss about; cattle, broken down equipment, water getting away and animals not doing what they were supposed to do." Spencer's mother, however, was opposed to his farmer's dialect and tried to cure him of it by putting red pepper on his tongue.

After graduating from high school, Spencer attended the College of Southern Utah (now SUU) in Cedar City where he earned an associate's degree. He then attended Utah State University where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Education and Mathematics. He was the first in his family to graduate from college. He then continued his education at Brigham Young University where he earned a Master of Science in Industrial Education and Educational Administration.

While still attending college in Cedar City, Spencer was called to serve as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in northern California and southern Oregon. He was surprised at the time because the draft was still on and only a limited number of missionaries were permitted to be sent out. He described himself as "kind of a reluctant missionary to begin with," but his experiences during his mission ultimately formed a foundation that would become the cornerstone of his commitment to his faith. He served in many church callings including in the Young Men's Organization, Scouting, High Priests Group Leader, and as a Temple Ordinance Worker. He was a faithful hometeacher and dedicated to visiting his families. He would remain active in the church and firm in his beliefs throughout the rest of his life.

Shortly after returning home from his mission, Spencer was encouraged by a friend to join the National Guard. He completed his basic training at Fort Ord in California and then he was sent to Fort Chaffee in Arkansas for artillery training. He then went to artillery school at Fort Sill in Oklahoma for basic officers' artillery training. He became an Artillery Battery Commander in Ogden, Utah, in a battalion that was a part of the select reserve force that was required to pass a combat readiness test. At the time, they expected to be called up to Vietnam, but they never were. Spencer enjoyed being in the military; he ended up serving for over 30 years in both the National Guard and Army Reserves. He retired from the Army Reserves as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1987.

Spencer met his future wife, Reta Marie Payne, at a dance in Salt Lake City. He recalled seeing an "attractive brunette" and wanting to become acquainted with her, so he asked her to dance and drove her home. He was a teacher at Kaysville Jr. High, and she was a teacher at Bountiful High. They soon started dating, and seven months later they were married in the Idaho Falls temple on May 16, 1964. Together they raised three children, a daughter, Sydna, and two sons, Rulan and Verl. They were married for over 61 years.

Spencer taught Industrial Arts (shop) and math classes at Kaysville Jr. High School from 1961-1969. He was a counselor at Clearfield High School and then Bountiful High School from 1969-1974. He also sold real estate for a few years, but he eventually decided to move back to southern Utah and become a business owner and operator of the Chalet Motel in St. George from 1977 to 2000. He always described the neverending work of running a small motel as "worse than taking care of a herd of cows." One advantage to the business was the opportunity to meet a lot of interesting people from around the world. After selling the motel and retiring, Spencer and Reta moved to Lava Bluff in Hurricane, Utah, where they have enjoyed living for the past 25 years. They

spent many of those years visiting children and grandchildren and other family members in Utah and nearby states.

Spencer had many talents. He was a craftsman, and he was known to always have the right tool in his workshop to make or fix just about anything. He enjoyed woodworking and leather tooling and created many beautiful works.

He loved eating ice cream (Make it a big scoop!), having a truck to drive, listening to country/western music (circa 1970's Hee Haw), working with his Shopsmith, reading church books, reminiscing about Parowan, eating out (especially for breakfast), and wearing a ballcap. He especially loved the gospel and his family.

Preceded in death by his son, Rulan Adams. Survived by his spouse, Reta Adams, children Sydna Graf (Curtis), Verl Adams (Sanae) and sister, Sharon Cupp (Gary). He was the proud grandfather of seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He will be greatly missed.

Funeral Services will be held on Friday, August 29, 2025, in the Hurricane 30th Ward Relief Society room, 320 N 3400 W., Hurricane, Utah. A viewing will be at 10:00 am followed by a memorial service at 11:00 am. Interment to follow in the Hurricane City Cemetery.

The family would like to express gratitude to Spencer and Reta's neighbors, friends, relatives and church members who have been so supportive over the years (especially in recent months).

Please share your memories and condolences at www.serenitystg.com.

Cemetery Details

Hurricane City Cemetery

200 E. 600 N.
Hurricane, UT 84737

Previous Events

Viewing

AUG **29**. 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM (MT)

Hurricane 30th ward
320 N. 3400 W.
Hurricane, UT 84737

Funeral Service

AUG **29**. 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM (MT)

Hurricane 30th ward
320 N. 3400 W.
Hurricane, UT 84737

Burial

AUG **29** (MT)

Hurricane City Cemetery
200 E. 600 N.
Hurricane, UT 84737

Tribute Wall

RB

“ The Retiree Affairs Office Staff at Hill AFB would like to express our deepest sympathy to you. May you find comfort in your grief and the courage to face the days ahead. If you need help locating military or veterans offices to initiate or finalize benefits, please contact us at 801-777-5735, Monday to Friday, 10:00-2:00 pm. We are available to refer and assist you, HillRAO@gmail.com.

RAO Hill Air Force Base - September 02, 2025 at 02:16 PM

RB

“ I never met Brother Adams, but the person who wrote his obituary made him “come alive” for me. What a wonderful man and a great life. I hope I’ll meet him when I get over there.

Rand Beacham - August 30, 2025 at 01:18 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Funeral Audio Recording



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - August 29, 2025 at 05:38 PM

SR

“ Shawn R. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Spencer Decker Adams.

Shawn R. - August 28, 2025 at 09:50 PM

DC

“ Debra C. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Spencer Decker Adams.

Debra C. - August 28, 2025 at 03:17 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Spencer Decker Adams.



August 28, 2025 at 09:28 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Spencer Decker Adams.

August 28, 2025 at 09:28 AM

RI

“ Sending condolences, well wishes, and prayers of solace and peace to Sydna and Curtis at this tender and sacred time with the loss of her beloved father. I never knew Spencer, but I knew Sydna and Curt as Elder and Sister Graf through their service with the Inner City Mission in our Second Ward in Salt Lake City. Sydna and Curt beautifully demonstrated the same remarkable, admirable, and loving traits attributed to Spencer through their exemplary service in our ward — and to Kathy and me. I thank God for His Plan of Salvation, the Savior making it possible, and for your loving and living for it. Rich

Rich - August 27, 2025 at 10:56 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Spencer Decker Adams.*



August 27, 2025 at 03:07 PM



“ *Uncle Spencer was always a big tease when I was young. Once while we were visiting - I was watching him milk a cow - he squirted me as I was standing there. As one of the younger uncles, he was always poking us, teasing us and making us laugh. He will be missed! Love you, Uncle Spencer!*

Nancy Frank - August 27, 2025 at 03:00 PM



“ *Love, Tim & Missy Taylor purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Spencer Decker Adams.*



Love, Tim & Missy Taylor - August 27, 2025 at 01:39 PM