



## Thomas Eldon Hughes

May 4, 1949 - February 14, 2023

Our beloved dad, Thomas Eldon Hughes, returned home to his Heavenly Father on February 14, 2023. He was surrounded by his loving family.

Dad lived a remarkable life, those who knew him won't soon forget him. Large in stature, intimidating at first, his big broad smile and firm handshake were confirmation of his character. Born the fifth of twelve children on May 4, 1949 to Eldon Wesley Hughes and Verde Washburn, he was raised in a small home in Virgin Valley. Dad loved his childhood and learned to find joy in family and simple things. He set records as an athlete, sang in school plays and was student body president. After returning from his mission to Denmark, he married his sweetheart Patti and raised five children in the Hurricane Valley. He played two years of basketball at SUU and started coaching girls' basketball when his oldest child Lisa was in sixth grade. He followed his dad's footsteps and dedicated 36 years to teaching and many years as a high school coach. Dad had a special way of connecting with youth. He made certain that every student and every athlete felt valued and loved. He found ways to push and inspire them to achieve excellence. His belief in them individually had far reaching effects. Dad is one of the most winning coaches in the state of Utah with four state championships and an accumulative winning record of 83%. Dad was in his element on the court and he filled the gym with community members that found joy in watching him leading his team to win after win. Dad coached with strong shoulders and a big smile, he often

said, "If we're going to be here, we might as well be great." Dad has inspired many to choose education and coaching through his positive example. He faced every challenge with optimism and grace, his legacy is a beautiful gift to his family. Dad had an unwavering love and testimony of the gospel and he willingly served in many capacities. High counsel, bishop, scouts and young men's and a second mission with mom in Tennessee. He was a living example of Christ like love. In his later years, you could often find dad reading his scriptures next to a crackling fire in the evening hours or working the soil in his garden under a big rimmed straw hat in the early morning hours. You might find him on a quiet mountain casting out a line while listening to the aspen leaves clapping in the breeze or channeling irrigation water through the fields while everyone else was sleeping. You might find him close by with tears streaming as he humbly listened to mom teach preschool, she was his everything. You might see him holding moms hand as they hustled from one of the grandkids games to the next, you might even hear him call out "get after it" with a giant smile from the stands. We can imagine dad gathering people around him in heaven. His sincerity, confidence and enthusiasm would bring them from afar. We can picture him organizing and encouraging them all to accomplish great things. He might even say, "If we're going to be here, we might as well be great" . . . we love you dad, "get after it."

Dad is survived by his loving wife Patti of 53 years, his sons Scott (Jackie) and Chad (Cassie) and his daughters Lisa Imlay (Wade), Amy Gubler (Cory) and Natalie Carter (Philip). His much loved grandkids Whitney, Boston, Brooklyn, Colby, McKena, Connor, London, Korbin, Cassidee, Cutler, Riley, Kazden, Meg, Scotland, Cael, Karson, Callan, Thailand, Kate, Callie Jo, Chaysen, Zoe and Eva. His great grandkids Maggie, Elliot, Luke, Brandt, Cora and Iris. His brothers Art, Jim, David and Greg. His sisters Verlee, Dixie, Ann, Susan, Halie, Marie and Dot. He was preceded in death by his parents Wesley and Verde Hughes and Patti's parents Hal and Bonnie Goodrich and other family members that he has missed dearly. His life was celebrated and

honored with a family memorial on Saturday February 18. He was laid to rest at the Hurricane Cemetery. At his grandkids request, please send memories and touching stories of dad to [lisaimlay@live.com](mailto:lisaimlay@live.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Hurricane City Cemetery

200 E. 600 N.  
Hurricane, UT 84737

# Previous Events

## Burial

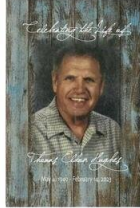
FEB 18. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (MT)

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

# Tribute Wall



“ *Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah created a Tribute Video in memory of Thomas Eldon Hughes* ”



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**Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah** - February 24, 2023 at 02:25 PM

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“ many of my favorite memories of dad include fishing, designing and building aquariums and the process of filling those aquariums with fish. a lot of memories around fish. dad often sought solace in the quiet mountains catching fish during the day and eating tinfoil dinners at night. for many years when i was in elementary school, even up to middle school, dad often tried to sneak up to the mountains for a day or two on his own . . . i recall seeing him loading the truck and i always felt bad that he was going alone. i would drop everything and ask him if i could go with him, even if i didn't really want to go, i just couldn't bare him being alone. i worried he was sad. as i've gotten older, i look back and often get a little chuckle realizing how much dad was really seeking alone time and a quiet camp and how much i believed i was helping the situation by making sure he wasn't alone. he was most likely packing quietly hoping to not draw attention to himself, hoping that just once he might get a quiet fishing trip. i was definitely a chatter box, i can imagine dad cringing and thinking "scott, amy, lisa . . . chad? anyone but nat." he was so patient and loving. i imagine he learned to tune out the sound of my voice at some point to allow himself to get what he needed from his trip. the last few trips, i did finally learn to follow dads lead . . i learned to love the sound of the aspen leaves clacking in the breeze, to love a glassy lake and the light sound of the motor echoing through the valley as we trolled for fish in the early morning light. the sounds of the chipmunks chirping in the trees as we whittled sticks in the afternoon. the sound of a crackling fire as we watched the embers burn late into the evening . . all the sounds of being on the mountain with my dad when i finally learned to listen and not speak.

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natalie carter - February 24, 2023 at 10:41 PM