



Terrance Allen Ward

August 5, 1954 - February 22, 2026

Terrance A. Ward (8/5/54 - 2/22/26)

Terrance Allen "Terry" Ward passed away on February 22, 2026 in Austin, TX surrounded by his family. Terry was the son of A. Vincent Ward, Jr. and Mary Lee Ward of El Paso, TX.

He is survived by his step-children: Jane (Ronsey) Chawla of Austin, TX and John W. Sperry of Portland, OR; and grandchildren Rijik, Leela and Taran Chawla. Terry was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, Judy, his sister Mary Vincent Ward, and his brother Richard Ward.

Born August 5, 1954, Terry grew up with a love of the three R's -- readin', writin' and rithmetic'. He was always reading and ended up in his professional life as a technical writer, a programmer and a statistician.

He attended Rice University for three years but left to pursue a career in computer science. Before leaving he published "A General Theory of Power and Conflict" with Dr. Charles Doran at the John Hopkins University School for Advanced International Studies. This work provided the mathematical underpinning of Power Cycle Theory that is still used today in War and Conflict Studies.

After leaving Rice, Terry worked on a wide range of different computers. He wrote accounting programs in assembly language for tiny Nixdorf Computers. Terry was also responsible for the software used for restaurant inspections and air and water quality monitoring for the Texas Department of Health. Along the way, he decided he should have a degree, so he got a Master of Arts degree in Comparative Religion from the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

Before reaching the pinnacle of his software career at Microsoft in the 1990's, he was the main statistical analyst and user education specialist at Tulsa University and the University of Northern Iowa.

At Microsoft, Terry was instrumental in the development of handwriting and pen-based computing which is now ubiquitous throughout the world. (He wants you to know that he had nothing to do with the annoying "Tip" screen so often seen these days).

Also, while at Microsoft he created the first wholly on-line integrated help and documentation system for programmers. For this work, he was awarded the Microsoft Award for Technical Innovation and the Award of Distinction from the Society for Technical Communications.

By the time he retired from Microsoft in his early 40's he had published 20 books and authored over 45 technical papers in a wide range of subjects including chemistry, political science, theology, statistics and computer science.

After his retirement he spent his time and effort helping his wife, Judith A. Ward, create a cross-curricular music curriculum for Title I schools in El Paso, TX and southern New Mexico.

During this time, he was also the "behind the scenes" statistician in a lawsuit that completely revamped the New Mexico state's teacher evaluation system to make it more fair and equitable.

He spent the last years of his life in Austin, TX with his wife and their grandchildren and was noted for his aphorisms. The most famous perhaps being -- "Keep your wits about you."

Celebration of Life planned for Terry on 3/28/26.