

Milwaukee Community Gathering

Celebrating
the life and
impact of

Jerry
Benjamin ז"ל



July 9, 1951

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May 11, 2019

Dear family and friends,

Thank you for joining us as we gather in celebration of the life of my late father, Jerry Benjamin, may his name be remembered for a blessing. My father did so many things, for so many people, in so many places, and at so many times. He had a large impact on the liberal, progressive, political world beginning in high school and continuing throughout his life. He had an intimate and lasting influence on the Jewish world and was a deeply committed Zionist. He actively promoted the arts and sciences. He advanced Jewish education and was co-founder of the Coalition for Alternatives in Jewish Education (CAJE), relaunched about a decade ago as NewCAJE. (Their conference later this month is dedicated to his memory.) While his broad interests and accomplishments could never be captured in a single gathering, we hope you'll leave here with a smile on your face. You may recall the many personal ways you knew him and perhaps learn of aspects you may not have known before today. On behalf of myself, my mother Cindy, my brother Nadav, my Uncle Sheldon, and my 94-year-old grandmother who could not travel here today, welcome!

Love,
Ariel

Featured members of Team-Jerry

(in order of their appearance)



Rabbi
Marc
Berkson

Rabbi of Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun since 1999. A native of Chicago and a graduate of Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin, Rabbi Berkson was ordained by the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati in 1978. Rabbi Berkson is our host, shepherd, and was the man Jerry lovingly called his personal Rabbi.



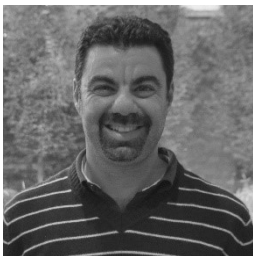
Marvin
Israelow

Met Jerry 40+ years ago while living in Boston. Jerry was his teacher of all things Jewish, except making challah, which he taught Jerry. They consulted with each other and often joined on business and philanthropic ventures. He was Jerry's organizational consultant and Jerry was his marketing consultant. They counseled each other about how to parent and how to be better husbands. They shared their spiritual journeys, admired each other, challenged each other, supported each other and loved each other. They laughed a lot together.



Jason
McKinney

Milwaukee native and graduate of UNCSA Music School, Jason has performed at such prestigious venues as The Kennedy Center, The White House, Preservation Hall in New Orleans, The Semper Opera House in Dresden Germany, The Hamburgische Staatsoper, and many other opera houses and concert halls in North America, Europe, Africa, Israel and Australia. When not on the stage Jason is a guest Cantorial Soloist in synagogues throughout the United States, and is a professional composer of sacred and secular music. He has been a בן בית at the Benjamin home for nearly 40 years always calling Jerry, Abba.



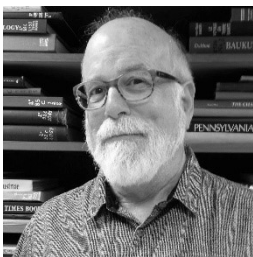
Robert
Joseph

Born under the sign of Pisces and raised in Milwaukee. After excelling in mediocrity at the University of Arizona, returned home and began developing real estate. He and his wife Kami spend as much time as possible with their kids Jacob and Ella. He always enjoys good cigars, operating bulldozers to tear something down and build something new, Seinfeld references, barbecued ribs, tinkering on anything mechanical, and exploring the world. Besides great cigars, he and Jerry shared joy.



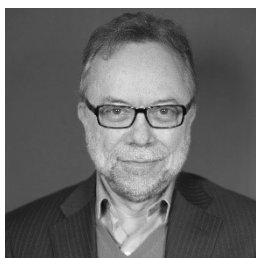
Elsie
Crawford

From the Netherlands, living in Milwaukee with her husband and son. She worked for the Israeli Embassy in The Hague, the Milwaukee Jewish Federation and now manages the Repairing Together project at the Milwaukee Jewish Day School. She and Jerry regularly discussed everything in the world in English, one of the many languages she has mastered.



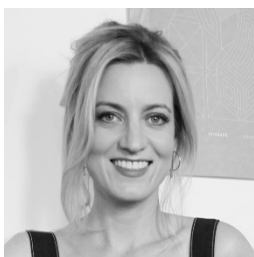
Jody
Hirsh

Director of Judaic Education at the Harry & Rose Samson Family Jewish Community Center. A friend since the second CAJE conference in 1977, Jody became a board member and the coordinator of the first CAJE conference on the West Coast in Irvine CA in 1978. He has lived all over the world including Jerusalem as a Jerusalem Fellow and Hong Kong as the Programme Director of the Hong Kong Jewish Community Centre. He was the recipient of the 2005 Covenant Award for Excellence in Jewish Education. Jody is a musician and playwright; his play "Seeing Double," written in collaboration with the San Francisco Mime Troupe, won the OBIE award in 1989. Jody is the only person in the world who speaks Judeo Cantonese. Jerry adored Jody's smoked brisket.



Sam
Norich

Friend from the early chavurah days. President of the Forward Association. He served as Publisher and CEO of *The Forward* and *The Forverts* for two decades. From 1980 to 1992 he was executive director of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. Kindred spirits who shared a love of Yiddishkeit.



Sara
Huneke

Creative director, copywriter, and editor based in Brooklyn, NY. Jerry's editor who has the task of being the keeper of his writing and thoughts.

Briyder

By *I.L. Peretz*

To the tune of

Ode to Joy

By *Ludvig von Beethoven*

Vayseh, broyneh, shvartseh, gelbeh
misht di farbn oys tzuzamen!
Ale mentshn zaynen briyder...
foon eyn taten, foon eyn mamen!

Oych—eyn goht hoet zey bashafen,
oon—eyn, foterlahnd di velt—
ale mentshn zaynen briyder,
dos iz eynmol festgeshtelt!

Ale mentshyn zaynen briyder,
shvartseh, vayseh, broyneh,
gelbeh...
andersh zaynen nor di farben,
di natur iz—di zelbeh:

Oometoom dos zelbeh frallen,
khob es toyzent mohl gehert!
Oon foon zogen biz tzu trog'n—
iz foon himl biz tzu drehrd!

Ale mentshen zaynen briyder:
gelbeh, broyneh, shvartseh,
vayseh...
Felker, ras'n, oon klimat'n—
s'iz ahn ohsgeklerteh mayseh.

Oometoom der zelber musehr,
oometoom dos zelbeh liygen—
mit'n moyl der gantser oylem,
di politikehr mit shvayg'n!

Ale mentshen zaynen briyder!
Oon—zey shpil'n zikh in flishkes,
di nishomehs zaynen veremlekh—
inem tabehk foon di shishkis...

Hallelujah

By *Leonard Cohen* ל"ד

Translated and adapted by
Daniel Kahn

Geven a nign vi a sod,
Vos Dovid hot geshpilt far Got.
Nor dir volt's nisht geven aza yeshue.
Me zingt azoy: a fa, a sol,
A misheberekh heybt a kol,
Der duler meylekh veht a halleluye...

Dayn emune iz gevorn shvakh,
Basheva bodt zikh afn dakh,
Ir kheyne un di levone dayn refue
Zi nemt dayn guf, zi nemt dayn kop,
Zi shnaydt fun dayne hor a tsop
Un tsit fun moyl arop a halleluye...

O tayere, ikh ken dayn stil,
Ikh bin geshlofn af dayn dil,
Kh'hob keynmol nisht gelebt mit aza
tsnue
Ikh ze dayn shlos,
ikh ze dayn fon,
A harts iz nisht keyn meylekhs tron,
S'iz a kalte un a kalye halleluye...

Oy vi amol, to zog mir oys
Vos tut zikh dortn in dayn shoys?
To vos zhe darfst zikh shemen vi a
bsule?
Nor gedenk vi kh'hob in dir gerut,
Vi di shkhine glut in undzer blut,
Un yeder otem tut a halleluye...

Zol zayn mayn got iz gor nishto
Un libe zol zayn kol-mumro,
A puster troym tsebrokhn un mekhule,
Nisht keyn geveyn in mitn nakht,
Nisht keyn bal-tshuve oyfgevakht,
Nor an elnte kol-koyre haleluye...

An apikoyres rufstu mikh,
Mit shem-havaye lester ikh,
Iz meyle, ikh dervart nisht keyn geule.
Nor s'brent zikh heys in yedn os
Fun alef beys gor bizn sof
Di heylike un kalye haleluye...

Un dos iz alts, s'iz nisht keyn sakh.
Ikh makh dervayle vos ikh makh.
Ikh kum do vi a mentsh,
nisht keyn shiluye.
Khotsh alts farloyrn say vi say
Vel ikh farloybn "Adoynay"
Un shrayen vi l'khayem "haleluye."

Charity

צדקה

As you may know, my father joyfully used gatherings as an opportunity to motivate attendees to give to charity. He regularly quipped that it feels so good to give. Whether a New Year's Eve party or his birthday or any other occasion, it was a worthwhile opportunity for giving. While all charitable giving made him giddy and he would be happy with any charity you choose to support, his two most recent causes were MIAD, which named one of their two fully-funded 4-year scholarships in his name posthumously and the Milwaukee Coalition for Jewish Learning which honored him with a lifetime achievement award. More info at:

abbaupdates.newphaseinnovations.com

