



Alfred Friedlander

September 9, 1931 - November 23, 2018

Alfred Friedlander

1931-2018

Alfred Friedlander, 87, devoted family man, business executive and community leader passed away peacefully on November 23, 2018. He is survived by his loving wife, Paula Levy Friedlander, as well as his adoring three children and their spouses, seven grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, two sisters-in-law, many nieces and nephews, and countless individuals whose lives he so profoundly influenced.

Alfred, along with his brother-in-law Joel Levy, was instrumental in expanding Rice Blvd. Food Market --a small family grocery founded by his father-in-law, William H. Levy --to what became Rice Epicurean Markets, an upscale chain that at its peak consisted of 45 locations. Alfred and Joel remained partners and close friends as they formed many successful ventures together. One such business, RPI Management Co., owned and operated neighborhood retail shopping centers. Alfred served as President of both companies, and later, with Joel, became Co-Chairman Emeritus.

Although he lived and worked most of his life in his beloved, adopted hometown of Houston, Alfred was born to Silas Sr. and Nona Friedlander on September 9, 1931 in Tyler, TX, and raised during its oil boom. He graduated from Tyler High School and then attended the University of Texas at Austin.

While his parents encouraged him to capitalize on "oil fever" and study petroleum engineering, Alfred quickly realized he was better suited for business and finance. He graduated, earning a Bachelor's of Business Administration degree in 1952, and in 1953, proudly served in the army, reaching the rank of sergeant.

He met Paula Levy -- the love of his life -- on a trip to Houston. Knowing that Paula shared his passion for U.T. football, Alfred invited her to the annual University of Texas vs. Oklahoma University football game. They became engaged only months later, on Christmas Day in 1954, and married in June, 1955. On their honeymoon, they drove first to Las Vegas and then to Anaheim, CA, where they attended the grand opening of Disneyland. In the later years of their long and devoted marriage, Alfred reflected, "I can truly say that after all these years together, we still feel the same happiness-- just being together, going places, talking about everything under the sun. Our relationship, friendship and marriage over the years has always seemed to me to be like Disneyland itself -- always fun, interesting, exciting and completely magical."

Alfred had a tremendous zest for life and a unique sense of humor. His closest friends and family understood that his teasing was a testament to how much he cared for them. Wishing the best for everyone, Alfred had a gift for conveying his unwavering support and admiration for those he loved.

Even with a wide range of hobbies and interests, family was Alfred's top priority and greatest joy. He cherished taking them on vacation, observing holidays together, accompanying them to University of Texas football and Houston Astros baseball games, managing their little league teams and attending any events involving his children or grandchildren. He was an athlete who enjoyed golf, tennis, racket ball, handball, ping pong and more. Furthermore, he had an extraordinary appreciation for opera and Broadway

musicals. A natural horticulturist, he built his own greenhouse, and developed a large collection of bromeliads and orchids from just a few original plants. His love for travel prompted he and Paula to enjoy trips all over the world together.

Alfred also strongly believed in giving back to his community, continuing a family tradition that started with Paula's father. In addition to contributing to numerous charities, Alfred served on various Boards of Directors including the Houston Retail Grocery Association, the Development Board of The University of Texas Health Science Center, The University of Texas Dental School, The University of Texas Chancellor's Council, the Anti-Defamation League and Seven Acres.

Perhaps no organization was closer to Alfred's heart than his beloved synagogue, Congregation Beth Israel, where he served on several important committees, and as its Board President for 3 years. One of his proudest achievements was helping to convince his dear friend, Rabbi Samuel Karff, to reside in Houston and serve as Beth Israel's Rabbi.

Without warning, Alfred suffered a massive heart attack at only 44 years old. From that point on, there were a great deal of unscheduled emergency room visits, scares and setbacks. In 2010, his committed team of doctors surgically implanted a Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD), a battery-operated, mechanical pump used for patients who have reached end-stage heart failure. The work of many dedicated, skilled medical professionals combined with Alfred's own tenacious will to live, contributed to over 4 decades of ongoing recovery, allowing him to enjoy an active, happy and full life.

Alfred is survived by his wife, Paula Levy Friedlander; children, Gary and Fredda Friedlander, Tommy and Lisa Friedlander, and Lori and Phil Cohen; grandchildren, Allison and Freddy Feldman, Steven and Lauren Friedlander,

Michael and Lisa Friedlander, Josh Friedlander, Lindsay and Matt Gregg, Alyssa Cohen and Amanda Cohen; great grandchildren, Millie, Grant and Liv Feldman, Riley and Johnny Gregg, and Max Friedlander; nieces and nephews, Julie and Scott Silverman, Joanne and Bruce Levy, Billy and Whitley Levy, Kris and Cameron Smith, Kim Levy, Ellen Rottersmann, Nancy and Russell Ducoff and Susan Brochstein; and sisters-in-law, Bernice Friedlander and Kay Levy. Alfred was preceded in death by his mother and father, Nona and Silas Sr. Friedlander; mother-in-law and father-in-law, Edna and William H. Levy; brother, Silas Jr. Friedlander; brother-in-law, Joel Levy; and nephew, Kirk Bergman.

The family extends its utmost appreciation to Dr. James Willerson and his very special assistant and friend of the family, Mae Thomas; Dr. O.H. "Bud" Frazier, Dr. Roberta Bogaev, Dr. Edward Massin, Dr. David Ott and the incredible Dr. Selby Oberton, all of whom greatly contributed to the extension of Alfred's life. Alfred's family will remain forever grateful to his caregivers, Rick Majano, Carlos Barrios, Melvin Barrios and Dr. Manuel Villerreal, who became his best friends.

A memorial service will be held on Sunday, November 25, 2018, at 4 p.m., in the sanctuary at Congregation Beth Israel, 5600 North Braeswood Blvd., in Houston. Senior Rabbi David A. Lyon, Associate Rabbi Adrienne P. Scott and Cantor Star A. Trompeter will officiate. Immediately following the service, all are invited to greet the family during a reception in the adjacent Wolff-Toomim Hall. Prior to the service, the family will have gathered for a private internment at Congregation Beth Israel Memorial Garden Cemetery in Houston. In lieu of customary remembrances, memorial contributions may be directed to Congregation Beth Israel or a charity of one's choice.

Tribute Wall

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“ *I never knew Poppy but I do know that he raised the most wonderful family of people I have ever met ! You did good Poppy thanks for the Friedlanders ! :)*

Netali Tamuz - November 26, 2018 at 04:32 PM