



## Dr. Raymond Levin

November 18, 1933 - January 17, 2021

Raymond Coleman Levin passed away at home at the age of 87. He will be remembered as a husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, brother-in-law, uncle, great uncle, cousin, friend, and doctor, who loved life and had a way of inspiring others around him with his wonderful sense of humor, warmth, intelligence, and kind nature.

Ray was the beloved husband of Sylvia Levin, the loving father to Cheryl (John) Susman, Michelle (Larry) Alexander, and Cynthia (David) Portugal, and the dear brother of the late Bert (the late Claire) Levin and the late Hart (the late Marilyn) Levin.

He was the cherished grandfather to Nathan, Eli and Leah Susman, Ryan, Nicole, and Josh and Kristen Alexander, and Rachel and Dan (Alexander) Boxer, and Sarah, Ben, and Daniel Portugal, a great-grandfather to Kate and Ellie Alexander and Evan and Hannah Boxer, and an adored uncle to many nieces and nephews.

Ray grew up in the small town of Winnipegosis, Canada, 250 miles north of Winnipeg, where his parents had settled after escaping Jewish persecution in Russia. The youngest of their three sons, Ray lived above his family's general store with no plumbing or electricity. His parent's goal was to earn enough of a living to send their three boys to University.

At age 14, Ray's parents sent him from Winnipegosis by train, traveling on his own for several days to Toronto, to attend Forest Hills High School. He moved in with his elder brother and sister-in-law until his parents arrived.

After graduating from the University of Toronto Medical School he became a family practitioner. He loved living and practicing in Toronto. He became interested in jazz and all music and read about and studied jazz and classical artists.

Ray met the love of his life, Sylvia, at a hostess party, that his medical fraternity was giving, a common practice at the time. Sylvia's name, among others, was given to Ray on a list, making it Ray's responsibility to take Sylvia to and from the party safely. It so happened that Sylvia was reading a book about jazz. They were married in 1956 and for 64 ½ years until his passing.

Ray's interest in art led him back to the University of Toronto night school to study art. Years after these classes, it was common to find Ray reading an art history book for pleasure with a highlighter in hand. He befriended and encouraged many local Toronto artists, several who became family friends. Ray also reviewed art books in Toronto's Art Magazine, where he had his own column. Art Magazine recognized Ray by sending him to Expo '67, the commemoration of Canada's 100th birthday.

A passionate listener who cared deeply about people, Ray became the doctor and a devoted fundraiser for The Harold King Farm, a Rehabilitation Center for previously incarcerated men founded by one of his patients.

In 1978, Ray left Toronto for Houston where he continued to practice medicine for another 22 years, at one time serving as Chief of Staff at Katy Community Hospital before retiring in December 2000.

Ray continued his passion for art as a senior docent at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston for 14 years and received the honorarium title Docent Emeritus. Also for 14 years, Ray served as a docent at the Houston Holocaust Museum, leading students on tours, and served as a committee member there to select exhibits. He was President of the Retired Physicians Organization for two years, and among his other responsibilities, he organized art lectures and tours of various collections of art for the organization.

Ray, along with his wife Sylvia, shared a love of travel, exploring different countries by car on their own. They were active snow skiers and tennis players and were avid sports fans. Most of all, he loved their 14 grandchildren who called him Zadie, but he called himself "Da Cool Swingin' Zade," using the lingo of the jazz musicians of the 50's, which his grandkids fondly adopted.

The family would like to thank Ray's caregivers for their warmhearted dedication and devoted care.

A private service was officiated by Rabbi David Lyon and Rabbi Adrienne Scott of Beth Israel. In lieu of customary remembrances, memorial contributions in Ray's memory may be directed to The Houston Holocaust Museum (713-527-1626, [www.hmh.org](http://www.hmh.org)), the Friends of the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) (713-955-0225, [www.fidf.org](http://www.fidf.org)), or The American Heart Association (832-918-4000, [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)).

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99922357596?pwd=MWIDbUpaay9FcCtCL0xGdmxvamlkZz09>

Meeting ID: 999 2235 7596

Passcode: 898793