



Lila G. Kaplan

July 18, 1942 - April 21, 2026

Lila Kaplan, 83, passed away peacefully in her sleep at home on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, in Houston, Texas. She was born on July 18, 1942, in Yonkers, New York, to Albert and Daisy Glossman.

After graduating from high school in 1959, Lila attended the Georgia Institute of Technology, where she earned her undergraduate degree, and later received her master's degree from Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Following her studies, she moved to Houston, Texas, and built a long and rewarding career as a professor of Spanish at the University of Houston, sharing her love of languages and learning with generations of students.

Lila was first married to Michael Friedberg in 1961, and the two later divorced in 1976. She married her second husband, Mitchell Kaplan, in 1979; they divorced in 2020, later reconciling amicably as friends in 2022 and remaining companions until her passing.

Teaching was one of the great joys of Lila's life, and she was known for her warmth, patience, and genuine interest in her students' success. Away from the classroom, she was a passionate advocate for animals, generously giving her time and resources to help pets in need and always sharing her home with beloved animal companions, especially cats. Above all, she cherished her

grandsons, Austin and Dalton, with whom she shared a close and loving bond; spending time with them, celebrating their milestones, and watching them grow into young men brought deep joy and meaning to her later years and is the legacy of love she leaves behind. She took great pride in the people they are becoming and always wished for them a future filled with happiness, purpose, and opportunity. In the spirit of the verse, “בני בנינים עטרת זקנים” (B’nei vanim ateret zekeinim – “Grandchildren are the crown of the aged”), Austin and Dalton were truly the crown and light of her life.

Lila was preceded in death by her brother, Norton Glossman. She is survived by her former spouse and friend, Mitchell Kaplan; her daughter, Lorraine Coats; her former son-in-law, Scott Coats; her grandsons, Austin Coats and Dalton Coats; her cousins, Christopher and Eva Alten, David and Lori Alten, Sydney and Stella Begic, and Michelle Alten, along with many other loving cousins and extended family. She is also survived by her goddaughter, Shana Merritt, and her husband, Justin Merritt; her best friend, Deborah Heilbrun, and her husband, Lance Heilbrun; and many other cherished friends and colleagues who will miss her deeply.

A graveside service will take place on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 2:00 pm at Beth Israel Memorial Garden, 1101 Antoine Drive, Houston, Texas 77055.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial donations be made to the Houston SPCA, 7007 Old Katy Road, Houston, Texas 77024, or online at www.houstonspca.org, in Lila’s honor.

Cemetery Details

Beth Israel Memorial Garden

1101 Antoine Dr.
Houston, TX 77055

Previous Events

Graveside Service

APR **23**. 2:00 PM (CT)

Beth Israel Memorial Garden
1101 Antoine Dr.
Houston, TX 77055

Tribute Wall

HC

“ Heilbrun C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Lila G. Kaplan.

Heilbrun C. - April 23 at 03:23 PM