



Sara Lazar

March 25, 1926 - May 24, 2026

It is with deep sadness, and with profound gratitude for a long and remarkable life, that we share the passing of our beloved Sara Lazar on Sunday, May 24, 2026.

Sara was born on March 25, 1926, in Iași, Romania, into a century that would test human beings in unprecedented ways. As a child, she suffered profound hearing loss following illness. She survived the Holocaust, was forced to leave Iași for Bucharest, lived under Communist rule in Romania, and ultimately emigrated from the Eastern Bloc at great personal sacrifice.

She participated in the early years of the young State of Israel, later immigrated to Montreal in search of a foothold in the West, and finally settled in Houston in 1971, where she built the greater part of her life and family.

Sara trained as a chemist and became an expert in textiles and clothing dyes. She later reinvented herself as a laboratory researcher at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal and then at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston where she met her lifelong friend, Dr. Larry Rice. Never content to remain still, she changed course once again and, together with her beloved husband Ben, helped build a successful homebuilding business in Houston, Construction, Science & Engineering. Together, they provided thoughtfully designed homes to hundreds of families across the city. Sara continued her real estate work

until nearly the age of 98 and could still remember, by name and story, the families who purchased homes from CSE.

Yet for all the events through which she lived, those who knew Sara will remember not history first, but character.

She had many opportunities to yield to life's hardships, yet she moved through the world with uncommon determination, curiosity, and vigor.

"Why not?" was her motto.

She refused to believe in defeat and, until her final moments, remained convinced that something new, something better, was always still possible.

Those who loved her will remember her sharp opinions, which she insisted were always offered out of love. They will remember her fierce independence, her devotion to learning, the ever-present book or newspaper in her hands, her appreciation for nature and color, and her extraordinary ability to begin again whenever history demanded it of her.

They will remember above all her devotion to family, to her parents, Eti and Leon Holtman; to her beloved husband, Ben, with whom she shared more than thirty years of marriage; to her daughter, Victoria, whom she encouraged always to pursue her dreams; to her son-in-law, Alex, for whom she had deep affection and respect; and to her grandchildren, Lily and Marz, of whom she was immeasurably proud.

For most of the final quarter of her life, she shared together a home built by Sara and Ben, where three generations lived side by side and built a family together.

And perhaps most remarkably, after careers and obligations had passed, Sara began again.

Not satisfied with already speaking four languages, she began studying Spanish. She returned to the piano after not having played since childhood. She worked with a personal trainer until only weeks before her passing.

Most significantly, she discovered painting through the senior arts program at the Jewish Community Center. What began modestly, became a true vocation. For the next three decades, she painted with joy, discipline, and persistence. Time seemed to disappear when she was in the studio. The walls of our homes now carry evidence of those years: landscapes, flowers, colors, and scenes that continue to speak quietly of her life and spirit.

Sara celebrated her 100th birthday this March. In recognition of both her remarkable life and her place among one of the last surviving generations of Holocaust survivors in the United States, commemorative United States flags flown over the U.S. Capitol were presented in her honor, accompanied by certificates from both the American and German governments.

While many enriched Sara's long life, we wish especially to thank Dr. Martin White, her physician for more than fifty years, his assistant Anne Tondre, and Lorena Catalan, who, after caring for our daughters for two decades, lovingly cared for Sara daily during the final years of her life. We also wish to thank the caring staff at the Medallion and Seven Acres Jewish Senior Care Services.

The family will be having a private burial. A memorial service will be held at 3:30 pm on Wednesday, May 27, 2026, at Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism, 801 Bering Dr., Houston, Texas, 77057.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Sara's memory may be made to the Jewish

Community Center senior arts program, which brought her immense meaning, companionship, and joy in the final chapter of her life. Donations made in the name of Sara Lazar will be directed toward support of the senior arts community she cherished so deeply. <https://giving.gofundme.com/campaign/600137/donate>

We mourn Sara's passing deeply. But we also give thanks for the improbable fullness of her hundred years, and for the enduring inspiration of a life lived with courage, reinvention, resilience, and love.

With gratitude for your friendship and remembrance,

The Lazar Family

Upcoming Events

Memorial Service

MAY 27. 3:30 PM (CT)

Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism (HCRJ)

801 Bering Drive

Houston, TX 77057

<https://hcrj.org>