

Harold Fayerman

We knew this day was coming, but when it happened a couple days ago, we were in a state of shock. It just seemed like so many times before, where dad was sick but rebounded and came home again. But it was not meant to be this time! We had been through the struggles so many times before: I had received a phone call from Uncle Eli in 1993 and jumped on a plane to be by Dad's side when he had a cardiac arrest in Arizona while playing baseball. Miraculously, he pulled through, but for the next fourteen years, Dad endured multiple procedures, surgeries, and arduous stays in the hospital. We suffered right along with him, at every stage of this long and difficult battle. But through it all, Dad's optimism and will to live was unwavering. In between the many crisis's, he continued to travel the world. Dad loved to see the world, and I sincerely feel that the joy he received from his travels with Mom played a major role in keeping him alive.

I still remember Dad's enthusiasm in relaying to us his exciting stories of their trips, and after each trip, he would come home and immediately get to work on a meticulous album. In his old age, Dad wanted to reminisce and share these exciting sights with his grandchildren. The other day, I opened a cupboard to find all the albums neatly stacked in chronological order. You see, one thing I will never forget about Dad was his absolute dedication to detail and order.

Dad was born in 1930 in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. He attended the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, where he received his Bachelor of Science. He graduated in 1955 from the University of Alberta, faculty of dentistry, and soon after moved to Weyburn, Saskatchewan with his blushing young bride Becky. Dad set up his practice in Weyburn, but soon after relocated back to Edmonton for a 30 year tenure as a dentist. Wherever Mom and Dad went, they met former patients of his, and it was confirmed time and time again that dad was admired and respected.

Dad possessed a love for Israel and the Jewish community. In the Jewish religion, generational families come from the ten tribes of Israel, the Cohanim being the leaders. Dad was a Cohen and was certainly a true leader ! In the 1960's, at a young age, he held many leadership roles within the community: president of the Talmud Torah School, president of Jewish Federation, chairman of the State of Israel Bonds, board member of Beth Israel Synagogue and the United Way, and chairman of the United Jewish Appeal campaign. Our phone was always ringing for Dad – especially at dinner time I remember ! When the Edmonton Jewish community had the need for a Jewish Community center, dad stepped up to the plate and was one of the founding ten men committed to investing what was necessary to make the dream of an Edmonton JCC a reality. Dad's keen sense of

leadership and love of community has had an invaluable influence of my life and my career – for this I am grateful.

Dad's greatest love was his family. He wasn't always complimentary, but once in a while Dad would express his deep pride in all of us. Inevitably, you've all heard from him about my daughter Melissa and her achievements. Even the day before he passed, dad wanted to make sure I told Melissa how proud of her he was, and how special she was to him.

He was very much looking forward to going to Vancouver for his grandson David's bar mitzvah in September. Seeing David reading Torah up on the bima was so important to Dad – it would have been such a proud moment for him, and it won't be the same without him. And then there's Dad's other adorable granddaughter, Katherine, who's now 6 years old. He received so much joy from spending time with her and playing card games with her over and over again. Katherine would phone Mom and Dad and when Mom answered, she would immediately say.....is Zaida there – I want to talk to him !! He loved that !

Dad's grandchildren certainly made him very happy – this is more than evident on what Dad liked to call his “wall of fame” in his study – a large collection of photographs with the 3 of them throughout their entire development.

My uncle Aaron Shtabsky recounted an anecdote the day before dad passed. Uncle Aaron had come to visit him at the hospital, and when Uncle Aaron gave Dad's name to the front desk receptionist, she replied, "Oh! Dr. Fayerman! He's such a good man, and such a good dentist. I was a patient of his." The fact that randomly a receptionist had such high accolades for him pretty much sums up my Dad – he was a good man ! Loved by and friendly with so many. Dad was a good man to his patients, his friends, his family, and his community. We will all miss him dearly especially my mother Becky who was married to him for 52 years. Even though the last 14 years have been so incredibly difficult for her, she became a loving and compassionate care giver to him, in particularly during the last six months.

I was so fortunate to have dad in my life for as many years as I have had. I will miss him dearly!