

**SUPERSTEIN, Jake  
C.M., L.L.D., KHM  
HUMANITARIAN, PHILANTHROPIST  
AND BUSINESSMAN**

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our much beloved husband, father, brother and grandfather, Jake Superstein was born on April 8th, 1915 in Pinsk, Poland and died on September 25, 2005 after a difficult battle with Alzheimer's.



He was predeceased by his parents Leyzer and Chana Superstein and brothers Eddie, Max and Jack. He will be fondly remembered by his wife of 61 years Ruth, daughters Shelley (Wes) Alexander, Marlene (Melvyn) Hershfield and son Donny Superstein, grandchildren Daniel and Shana Alexander, Michael, Lauren and Alexis Hershfield, Joey Superstein and brothers Larry and Albert.

Jake Superstein gave endlessly of himself to countless charities and individuals regardless of faith or race; some of the charities include The Marlan Center, Edmonton General Hospital, Grey Nuns, Ronald McDonald House, St. Mary's Salesians School, Salvation Army, Bissell Center, the University of Alberta, and the Beth Israel Synagogue. Throughout a life that has spanned close to 91 years, he has been honoured for his charitable work with the Order of Canada, the Medal of Merit from the Knights of Hospitaller Order of St. John, The City of Edmonton Silver Ribbon Award, and an Honorary Doctorate of Law from the University of Alberta. Jake Superstein will be remembered as a man who was kind, generous, and thoughtful. He will be deeply missed by his family and his many friends in his beloved Canada.

The family wishes to express its sincerest thanks to the staff at McConnell Place West and to Anna Sherman for her loving and selfless care throughout Jake's illness.

Donations can be made in Jake's honour to any of the following: The Alzheimer's Society of Alberta, The Edmonton Jewish Community Charitable Foundation or The Edmonton Community Foundation. Funeral Services will be held on Tuesday, September 27 at 11:00 A.M. at the Beth Israel Synagogue, 131 Wolf Willow Road Edmonton, Alberta.

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JAKE SUPERSTEIN, 1915-2005

# Entrepreneur invested in companies – and people

JEFF HOLUBITSKY  
*Journal Staff Writer*  
EDMONTON

A chapter in Edmonton history ended Sunday morning when colourful businessman and philanthropist Jake Superstein died in his sleep.



Superstein

The Order of Canada winner and longtime orphanage patron, who often attracted both praise and criticism, had suffered from Alzheimer's disease for more than five years.

"He was a controversial guy," his son Donny Superstein said. "He helped a lot of people and he got involved. At 90 years old, you go through a lot in life."

Jake Superstein was born in Pinsk, Poland in 1915, during a time of politi-

cal unrest and open prejudice against Jews. In 1923, his parents brought him and his four brothers to Edmonton, where they lived in the Boyle Street area, a hub for many immigrants.

"One of dad's memories of Canada was that they didn't have bars on the windows at night and he could sleep better," Donny said.

As a boy, the young Superstein began his career as a pedlar with the family, buying chickens and eggs from farmers and reselling them in town.

"He sold newspapers on the street and did anything he could to survive," he said.

In 1937, Mr. Superstein started the Edmonton Produce Company, which grew into one of the largest wholesale poultry companies in Canada.

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## Award honoured contributions to city's quality of life

### SUPERSTEIN

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During the war, the company supplied powdered eggs to Canadian troops in Europe and Mr. Superstein was the Alberta representative of the Canadian Produce Council and an adviser to the federal government's stabilization board.

After the war, Mr. Superstein began to diversify. "Back in the 1950s and 1960s he loved the oil business and started to buy leases," his son said, adding his father started Alexandra Petroleum Ltd. 45 years ago.

As his wealth grew, he also began a long interest in charity and community work.

For 27 years, he served on the board of directors for the St. Mary's Salesian School after he started donating produce to the school in the mid-1950s. He also served on various boards, including the Edmonton General Hospital, the Boyle Street Co-op, the Salvation Army and the University of Alberta.

In November 1995, the university awarded Mr. Superstein an honorary doctorate of laws in recognition of his humanitarian work. "This is my university, my city, my province, my country. I love Canada with all my heart," he said at the time.

Previously, in 1986, Mr. Superstein had won the city's Silver Hibbon Award for improving Edmonton's quality of life. A year later, he was awarded the Order of Canada.

Over the years he also had dealings with his share of big business people. Donny said Col. Harland Sanders of Kentucky Fried Chicken fame once came to the family home on St. George's Crescent to pro-

pose a business deal, but was turned away because Mr. Superstein didn't believe in takeout chicken.

The Ghermezian family remembers Mr. Superstein as a friend they could count on when they moved to Edmonton. "He was a very good man," Raphael Ghermezian said from New York City.

Denver Broncos owner Pat Bowlen was saddened to hear of Mr. Superstein's death. His family was close to the Superstein family when he was growing up in Edmonton. "I liked Jake and he gave me a little advice and it was often very well founded," Bowlen said from Denver. "He was a pillar of the Jewish community in my mind and I had a good respect for him and his brothers."

Retired newspaper columnist Eddie Keen remembers Mr. Superstein as a complex and brilliant man. Although they occasionally socialized, "I knew him and I didn't know him," he said.

And though he never had to ask, he always felt he could go to Mr. Superstein for help, said Keen. Lawyer Gary Cooper was Mr. Superstein's friend for nearly 40 years. "He was a remarkably good man and he was an absolute character," he said from Newport Beach, Calif. "He came from a very difficult circumstance at a time when it wasn't easy for a Jewish person.

"I think he may have made a few enemies, but I think he made a lot more friends than enemies on his way through."

Mr. Superstein is survived by Ruth, his wife of 61 years, son Donny, and daughters Shelley and Marlene and their families. A funeral will be held at Beth Israel Synagogue Tuesday at 11 a.m.

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