



Steven Michael Appel

June 29, 1949 - March 2, 2018

Steven Appel
1949-2018

On Friday, March 2, 2018, Steven Appel of Washington, DC, and Chestertown, MD, formerly of Niskayuna, NY, died suddenly.

Steve was born on June 29, 1949 in Brooklyn, NY, to Ralph Appel and Rose Drogin Appel. He was 68 years old.

Steve's abiding passion was music. At the age of 15, he bought a Gibson electric guitar and then played in a band throughout the 60's. After he met his wife Kathy, he expanded to the piano. During the past few years, Steve started taking jazz guitar lessons from a masterful musician, attended jazz guitar camps, and had an arch top guitar made to his specifications. He wrote his first song this year, and enjoyed a guitar lesson on his last full day before his death.

Steve was also an avid hockey player, and started the Brooklyn College club hockey team. He was looking forward to going back to playing in his "old timer" league as his latest injury had just healed. Delighted to pass on his passion and continuing a family tradition, he introduced his daughter, Carolyn, to skating when she was four years old.

He was a patient teacher, a daily reader of the New York Times, knew something about almost everything, and felt that family was of the utmost importance. He was also a strong supporter of Israel.

Steve did his undergraduate work at Brooklyn College and received his MBA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY. His work on political campaigns while in high school and college led to a multi-year career in public policy and polling. While working for the NYS Senate Minority, he was most proud of the work that he did to forestall, but unfortunately not prevent, the purchase of the Bank of New York by the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (the BCCI scandal – one of the biggest banking scandals of the 1980's). After leaving the Senate, Steve focused on marketing research and became an early member of the Qualitative Research Consultants Association.

Steve has left behind his beloved wife of over 38 years, Kathryn Kuhmerker Appel; his “wonderful daughter,” Carolyn Appel; his sister, Susan Honeyman (Len); many nieces, nephews and cousins; and untold numbers of life-long and newly-made friends. He is already missed.

A service will be held on Thursday, March 8, 2018, at 11:00 am at Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home, 130 Speer Road, Chestertown, MD, where relatives and friends may call one hour prior (10-11am).

Interment will be in Crumpton Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to radio station WAMC in Albany, NY (www.wamc.org ,1-800-323-9262), or to the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York (www.jewishfednyny.org).

Kathy's Eulogy for Steve:

Steve Appel – June 29, 1949 – March 2, 2018

I met Steve in October 1976. We were introduced by mutual friends who thought we might like each other since we were both from NYC and were Jewish. It was a pretty inauspicious beginning. We were totally disinterested in one another. We stood outside Betsy and John's apartment after dinner and, being a feminist and seeing no move on Steve's part, I finally asked him for his number. He gave it to me and then felt obligated to ask for mine. Betsy and John followed up with us – Have you called Kathy? Have you heard from Steve? No. Finally, Steve, who had been working on some political campaign, called me after the election – I guess John really kept bugging him. In the interim, I'd seriously sprained my ankle and was in a cast and on crutches, in the hopes that I wouldn't need surgery (which I didn't, but it is still a bit weak today). We worked near each other, so we decided to go to lunch at a restaurant called The Camelot which was in the basement of the office building, literally across the street. Maybe 150 steps, round trip. Being vain, I decided not to wear gloves for that short walk and I had blisters on my hands for about three weeks. I was embarrassed at myself.

But something happened at that lunch. Steve began to tell me about himself. I distinctly remember him telling me about, and my touching, his separated shoulder, which had resulted from an untimely-treated hockey injury. And I started to be hooked.

We had several other dates -- going to a hockey game, heading out to a small neighboring speed-trap of a town to fight the ticket Steve had gotten, things like that. By the way, Steve beat the speeding ticket because the police didn't show up. When he showed the local justice how the town's speed limit signs didn't meet State requirements (which was HIS reason for his acquittal), the justice made it clear that they weren't changing a thing.

In late December, I introduced Steve to my parents. We were visiting them because my brother was engaged to his first wife and the two sets of parents were meeting for the first time as well. By then, I was pretty sure that this was the man I wanted to marry. But Steve let me know that he dated many women simultaneously – one on Friday, another on Saturday, etc. I took a deep breath and, shaking inside, said that that that wasn't quite how I was made. I was willing to try it, but if it turned out that I wasn't OK, I would just stop seeing him. I don't believe he ever went out with anyone else after that.

By the spring, we were spending three nights in my apartment and four in Steve's. I suggested that we might want to move in together. Steve said no, and it was clear that I shouldn't bring it up again. Several months later, his apartment complex announced that they were going to reduce their rents but require tenants to pay for their own electricity. (If you don't remember, we were having energy crisis after energy crisis in the 70's.) I started reading the apartment listing (remember those?), helping him to look for a one-bedroom apartment. He said "Why are you looking at a one bedroom apartment? We need a two-bedroom apartment." And so that was settled. Except for telling his parents.

Steve chose the reception at the bar mitzvah of one of our Boston relatives to tell his mother, knowing that she wouldn't make a scene in public. She did warn me about cows and free milk though. But she was wrong, and we got married on September 2, 1979.

When we decided to get married, we apparently didn't understand the "required timeline" and we had very different ideas of how this should be handled. Steve wanted 250 people for a sit-down dinner and I wanted 30 people for a dinner which I'd cook. And I'd be happy wearing a pair of jeans. We compromised on 150 people – 50 for his family, 50 for my family, and 50

for our friends. And I said I wanted a dress. Why not just rent one, Steve asked (that was NOT the thing in 1979). I responded “if you get 150 people for the wedding, I get a dress.” And so we went out shopping. Not my mother and me. Not my women friends and me. No, I took my best friend and the person with the best sense of style I knew – Steve. And not 1 ½ years in advance. In the middle of June, late on a Saturday afternoon, when we were getting married on Labor Day weekend. That SAME year.

It was so late (the small bridal salons we were going to closed at 5) that, after several episodes of traipsing up the stairs to put the dress on, and down the stairs to show it to Steve -- which was COMPLETELY inappropriate in and of itself, of course -- I finally suggested to the woman helping me that I thought we could use our time better if he came up into the dressing room and, in just a glance, without being all buttoned and pinned up, Steve could give me a yay or nay. I noted that he'd seen all this before. Suddenly, there were no more white dresses. Really? I said? Really. So I said that I guessed I couldn't shop there. We walked out the door, around the corner to the other bridal salon, and decided on the very first dress I tried on. It took about 25 minutes, and we were done by 4:45.

We're not great planners, either. We had scheduled three weeks off work for the wedding and honeymoon, but had no honeymoon plans since we had no idea how much money we'd have. We'd already bought a house and had lots of bills, so we didn't want to be spendthrift. We decided that what we would do and where we would go would depend on how much money we got. This much and we pay off the couch, this much and we go to the Poconos, this much and we go to Europe. We counted the money on Monday, made reservations on Tuesday, and were off to Europe on Wednesday. No reservations, no plans, no research. And it was wonderful.

Steve was kind and caring. And a great friend. He has friends from

elementary and middle schools, from college, from work, from hockey, and from music. Over the years, most of them have also become MY friends. All of them are devastated by his loss. They all tried to get here, and many did, but a combination of weather, already being out of town and unable to get back, and their own health has kept many of them away today. Those who aren't here are so sad that they are not joining us. Steve would be so touched at the outpouring I have gotten from them. Maybe even surprised. But I'm not.

And then, there is family. Perhaps the most abiding characteristic of Steve was his love for family and his belief that family is so important. That must have been one of the things that made us fall in love and stay in love. When we got married, we hadn't met our Rabbi before, so we had to tell him about ourselves. When the Rabbi spoke at our wedding, he said that we were the first couple who, when asked about themselves, started out talking about their families. It had seemed like the most logical thing to us, but apparently, it wasn't.

Family being important wasn't just a phrase. It meant doing things and being there. And it meant his family AND mine.

When my mother was dying of brain cancer in 1997/98, as Carolyn was preparing for her Bat Mitzvah, where was I? 50% of the time in Cambridge, MA, with my mother. With absolutely no predictability at all. And no email. And no texting. There is no doubt that that is where I should have been. But not once – NOT ONCE -- in SIX months – did he say that I needed to come home to take care of him and Carolyn. I don't even know if he thought it quietly to himself.

And when my father was progressively deteriorating, and he hadn't always been warm and fuzzy in the best of times, who took my father to the doctor or to the CVS or the Safeway when neither my brother nor I could because we

were working? Steve. He did complain intermittently – not that he'd been asked to do it, just that it was pretty taxing.

Who drove down to NYC when his mother, who died in 1995, called and said she needed him? Steve. Did he say anything when she said, after he had driven for four hours, "I just wanted you to take me to the grocery store?" You know the answer to that – nothing to her, although he did express some frustration to me. He wasn't a saint.

We saw a lot more of his sister, Sue, her husband, Len, and their three wonderful daughters when we were all younger. We used to go down to New Haven for Passover Seders, and Steve must have covered for me because no one yelled at me when I went upstairs and fell asleep before the end of the second half. Now that Sue and Len have grandchildren, and they are having Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, we're getting to see them more regularly again.

Steve also completely embraced my large extended family, going to our annual family reunions on the east or west coast, depending on the year. Back when Steve and I first became involved, we had lots of older Viennese relatives and they could be tough. New arrivals to the family got real scrutiny and you didn't bring someone to the reunion unless you were p-r-e-t-t-y sure that they were a keeper. Steve won them over and has gone to every reunion, every year, for the last 40 years. This year the reunion is going to be right here in Chestertown, and we will all miss him.

Most of you probably know that, outside of his family, Steve's greatest passion was his music. He bought his first guitar – a red, Gibson "Les Paul style" electric guitar --at the age of 15, from snow-shoveling money. It is an absolute classic at this point. For many years, he played in a band. I understand that his band once was the opening act for the Cowsills. And I guess they traveled

around the NYC doing gigs. One gig was in the Bronx. Despite its geographic undesirability, this was a sweet 16 party for a girl named Vivian Degani who went to Hunter College High School, an all girls' school in Manhattan. There were undoubtedly going to be a lot of girls there, so who cared about the travel time. But Vivian only invited girls with boyfriends, so yours truly wasn't invited. Because, as you've undoubtedly surmised, I was a classmate of Vivian's. We discovered this at my 10th high school reunion when Steve re-met Vivian after all those years.

Steve played his guitar for years, completely without lessons and without being able to read music. About three years ago, however, we found this wonderful music venue on the Eastern Shore of Maryland called The Mainstay. Tom McHugh, its Executive Director at the time, encouraged Steve to join a workshop being given by one of the best jazz guitarists in the county, Frank Vignola. That was the start of a wonderful journey for Steve. He went to several guitar camps.

And then he started taking lessons from a masterful musician whom we had first heard at the Mainstay, Steve Herberman. The music you heard earlier today is Steve Herberman on the guitar and Lena Seikely is the vocalist, both magnificent local (DC) musicians. Steve can't be here today, but I understand that Rabbi Hyman is going to read some memories he shared with me earlier this week.

With lessons, Steve's playing, his understanding of music and its structure began to change. It was a delight for me to see him so happy and so engaged. He bought a Taylor acoustic guitar. He then decided to have an arch-top jazz guitar custom-made for him. After a year's research and many visits to luthiers in the northeast – most of which I accompanied him on – he decided. He picked Comins, the same Philadelphia-based luthier who had built his teacher's guitar. He worked through detailed specifications; I helped

with the design, and 14 months later he had his guitar. Oh how he loved that guitar. It is here today, and I am so glad that he got so much pleasure from playing it, even for the short time he had it.

Many of you also know that he loved sharing his music. He has his own fake book of more than 600 songs which he sent off to friends. He introduced his friends to music and musicians, often calling them up and asking them to come to this place or another to hear someone sing or play. He wanted everyone to feel as good about music as he did. He also played and sang, pretty much whenever asked. He started doing the music for the Havurah's Hanukkah parties several years ago, and then moved on to doing songs for our Purim play. On New Year's Eve last year, our City Vista party ended up in our apartment, with all of us singing and Steve playing and singing into the wee hours.

How can I have gone so long in this eulogy without talking about Carolyn? The light of our lives. A someone so special to Steve and she to him. But you know that already. She's told you such wonderful stories about them. From the first sonogram, they had a relationship. When she was born, he just beamed (and never stopped).

We did have a scare once. Carolyn's middle name is Jordana and once, when she was 2 ½, we took a ski trip to the Alps and left her home with her babysitter. We went into a store to rent skis and there was a 15-year old named Jordana from California who was just being impossible. We looked at each other and it was clear we were pretty scared we might have made a big mistake. We shouldn't have worried.

Steve, with his inborn radar system, was her ever-present navigator. When Carolyn graduated from high school, we let her use our vacant apartment in Cambridge, MA, for a short vacation with friends. When Carolyn tried to drive

home, she got lost – of course she did: everyone got lost in Cambridge before they invented GPS. She called home. When Steve asked what signs were around her, she said that there was a sign to Logan Airport. “So you just decided to park the car and fly home?” he said. “Can I?” she replied plaintively. “Absolutely not,” and he directed her back to the Mass Pike. When she was in London for a semester abroad, he kept a London map by the phone. And, needless to say, she did call him for directions, at least once.

Their relationship changed and grew over the years. But however old Carolyn was, they shared experiences and perspectives. He was proud of her skating when she was younger and used to video tape all her performances. He was SO proud of her becoming a lawyer, and he knew that she appreciated from the bottom of her heart all the work HE put into her career. He loved that she wanted his advice and input and was always ready with responses like: “I have friends coming to town. Where should we go in NYC that not everyone knows about?” Or, walking home from work at the ungodly hour that first year associates consider the end of the day, she would give him a call and talk about whatever the personal, political or other news of the day was. But most importantly, he wanted her to be happy. I know she will be happy again soon.

Finally, Steve loved hockey. It’s the only way he liked water – frozen. When I first met him, I used to get calls after his games saying he would be a bit later than he had planned: he was making his regular run to the ER. One day, however, one of his teammates got slashed in the face and almost lost an eye. The whole team came back with full face masks before the next game, and I was very relieved. \When we moved to Washington, DC he was blown away by the change in the locker room conversation: instead of firemen and policemen talking about hunting, his teammates were evaluating the pros and cons of international monetary policies. He loved that his hockey and his political lives melded a bit more seamlessly here in DC.

We tried ice dancing together for a few weeks. Steve was going to an Executive MBA course that consumed almost every non-work waking hour he had for two years. This was an hour each week that he carved out for me. He had understandable trouble shifting from hockey skates to figure skates, so we sometimes argued on the ice. One day, we were particularly annoyed with one another and then we got into our separate cars and drove off. The coach thought we were getting divorced: we weren't; we were going home in two cars because Steve was coming from his class and I was coming from home. The next week we just joked about our therapy sessions.

No one could have asked for a more supportive, loving husband. Maybe one who liked to dance? Or one who ate more than "in earth tones," as my grandmother once said. Maybe one who saw the dust bunnies with greater acuity?

But I know that whatever success I have had in my life – personal or professional – it is so a function of Steve's support. I once had a job that was just killing me psychologically. He held me every night for three months one summer, as I cried myself to sleep, because there was nothing else he could do except to make sure that I knew that I was loved at home. When I was offered the opportunity to interview to be NY's Medicaid Director, I said I couldn't do THAT job. He looked me straight in the eye and said, with absolutely no hesitation, "You have been preparing for this job for the last 25 years. NO ONE can do this better than you can. Of COURSE you should take this job." That job was the hardest, the most rewarding, the most exciting 6 ¼ years I've ever had.

He was never jealous of my success or my drive or my awkward work/life balance. Instead, he beamed that I was doing so well. And I always knew, and still know, that so much of my success was having a thoughtful, caring, loving,

contributing cheering squad helping me.

Steve never wavered in his love for me. I know he would have stayed longer if he could have. I will miss his love, support, friendship, and guidance for longer than I can imagine.

Carolyn's Eulogy:

I always knew I had a special relationship with my dad. But I didn't know that everyone else could see it. So I just want to tell you all a couple of my favorite stories about him.

When I was little, my dad would read to me. He was the only one who could do it. My mom tried once, and I told her she was ok, but dad was really better at it. My dad would read me this one book over and over again, called the Baby Unicorn. The book started out, "In the middle of a deep, dark forest there lived a baby unicorn named Star." The book was about how Star didn't have her horn yet, but she had to save her parents from dragons and all without the magic in her horn, which of course she got just in time to save the day. But sometimes my dad would get tired and would fall asleep in the middle of reading the book which would lead to some unintentionally funny stories. He would start to say, "In the middle of a deep, dark forest there lived a baby Unicorn named Star." And she had hockey skates on, which was hard for a unicorn. And there was a fish, which was a little problematic because they were all on a hockey rink in the forest and there was no water for the fish. And I would pick up my head from where I was lying in the crook of my dad's neck and bang on his arm and say, "Daddy, wake up! Daddy, that's not how the story goes!" And he would wake up suddenly, not really realizing he'd been asleep, and say ahh ok, now where were we? .

Sometimes I would ask him that instead of reading to me if he would tell me a story about him when he was my age. So he told me about how he got lost on a bus and how his sister had a cat she named "honey" but he, as the younger brother, nicknamed the cat Ivan the Terrible because it used to get into fights with other cats in the neighborhood. I never got lost on a bus or had a sister or a cat, but he would always bring the story back to me. He continued to always relate stories back to me as I got older, even when the connection was pretty tenuous. And when I would tell him that he would say, "Oh well, you know how I always like to bring it back to you."

Now, most if not all of you know that I am not a morning person. And my dad definitely knew that. So when I was young he had this teddy bear puppet he would tickle me with to wake me up. And he'd sing this song by Irving Berlin, "You've gotta get up, you've gotta get up, you've gotta get up in the morning." And depending on how long it took me to wake up, he might come back in and do the next verse, "Someday I'm going to murder the bugler, some day they're going to find him dead, I'll amputate his reveille and step upon it heavily and spend the rest of my life in bed!" Even before he died I would still hear him sing to me in the morning that "you've gotta get up you've gotta get up you've gotta get up in the morning."

He also loved to share things with me and see things through my eyes. So he took me to see "his New York" and we saw the place where his father took him to get kosher wine, a place called "Shapiro's wine" where my dad told me he got to sample the wine when he was way too young to drink. And he took me to see Coney Island and the original Nathan's. When we were getting a ticket to park at Coney Island, we were talking to the parking attendant about how this wasn't a great day to see it because it was grey and overcast. But the parking attendant said, in this great, thick New York accent, "Yeah, but you're wit your daughter." My dad just beamed. And every so often he would repeat that line to me when we were together, "Yeah, but you're wit your daughter."

He was always supporting me. Many of you know I was a figure skater and he would sometimes come into the rink when I was practicing and say, "Gimme a scratch spin, gimme an axle!" And I would go out and try whatever he said I should do. I'm pretty sure my layback spin was so good because he said he was always so in awe of people who could do that and would love it if I could do it too. I always wanted to make him happy, and at least in this, it wasn't hard.

He also loved that I got into politics. My dad was a political pollster and my mom worked in public policy but when I was a kid, I wanted none of that. I wasn't even really into politics during college and I went to an ultra-liberal activist school at the University of Wisconsin. But when I started to work for Senator Herb Kohl from Wisconsin, I really started to get into that world. He was so happy I worked in the Senate. And so happy I worked for a Jewish Senator. I think part of it was that his family were immigrants and he was so excited that his daughter was seemingly sharing in the American dream and working to make sure others could to. He used to read me this book called *The Streets Are Paved With Gold*. It was a book about a Jewish girl around my age growing up in Brooklyn in 1922. And it turned out the streets were paved with asphalt or concrete or something else, and she and her family faced discrimination because they were Jewish. But in the end, the family was able to find their way and what they found was that there really was opportunity for them. And that was when my dad would start to cry. I didn't know why at the time, but I do now.

He always wanted the best for me. More recently and I'm not sure how this started, but he helped me study for my law school exams and the bar exam. And if any of you know anything about law school, you know this studying is not easy. We did one to two days for each exam, and between four and six

hours a day, each day. I would make an outline and he would read it and then say, tell me about this case or that concept. And I think he only fell asleep once when I was “teaching” it to him. (I’ve been giggling about this now but at the time I was so mad)

He would often say he was so honored to have me ask him to help me, and I was never really sure why he said that. Maybe it was because I was an adult and kids don’t ask their parents for help as much when they get older, or maybe it was because he told me that at some point in his adult life he felt like he had intellectually surpassed his parents because they didn’t go to college. And he was so happy to be able to help me in this way. And I would always tell him that the fact that he didn’t know the specifics about what we were talking about was a good thing, because he could tell me if I wasn’t make sense. And anyway, he knew a lot more about a lot of things than he often gave himself credit for. He also had weird quirky stories that he would tell me that would make it easier for me to remember certain legal concepts. Like how in property law – which I hated – almost every part of the text book also related to owning our house in upstate New York, from the trees which really were on our property and not our neighbors, to mowing the lawn up to a certain point so our other neighbors, the Whites, couldn’t claim adverse possession. He always wanted me to succeed and do well, no matter what.

But that didn’t mean he wasn’t frustrated with me and with studying at certain times. When I was studying will, trusts, and estates, and I’m telling this story not because we’re at a funeral but because it shows my dad’s sarcastic sense of humor, if you die without a will there is a standard way your assets get distributed, based on degrees of separation. First goes to the spouse, if no spouse then to the kids, if no kids then to the parents, if no parents then to the siblings...And you may be impressed that I can do this off the top of my head but it wasn’t always this way. I couldn’t get the order and I would make my dad go back and recite this over and over again. And finally, he got so fed up he

cut me off and said, “And on the sixth degree of separation it all goes to Kevin Bacon!” And he slammed the book shut and said “We’re taking a break.” And I burst out laughing and then told him I thought that was a good idea, because Kevin Bacon had been swindled in the Bernie Madoff scandal and he could use the money.

My dad always wanted to see things through my eyes, and I was happy to let him. I want to preface this story with the fact that the Wisconsin football stadium holds over 80,000 people and that Wisconsin and Ohio State’s colors are both red and white. It was my freshman year and I was at a football game and we had just beat Ohio State from their 19 game winning streak from the year before. And I called my dad after we had won and he was watching the game – and this was pretty unusual because we were not a football household. Baseball, yes, but not football. But he was watching because he knew his daughter would be there. And I said, “Dad, we won and I think we’re going to rush the field!” And he said, “I know, I’m watching on TV!” And then I said -- and remember the stadium holds over 80,000 people and everybody is wearing the same colors, I said, “Can you see me?” And he said, “What are you wearing?” And I said, “red!” And he said, “Well then I can see you!” And then I had to hang up because we were rushing the field.

I want to tell one final story and it isn’t really even about my dad and me but it was one of his favorite stories about his mom. I started to think about it when I was on the plane flying back to DC because I realized that when we say the mourners kaddish, it won’t just be ritual and tradition, I’ll have someone to say it over. And I’ll have to light a yahrzeit candle for him. For those of you who don’t know, yahrzeit candles are lit one year after a loved one’s death and they are a traditionally yellow candle that is enclosed in glass. And I think he would like that I’m telling this story because he thought passing down traditions from generation to generation was very important, and that being there for family was very important, even when it got a little absurd. So, my

grandmother never learned how to drive. She lived in Brooklyn and didn't need to know. But when she was getting older and it was harder for her to walk, and those motorized scooters were becoming popular, my dad decided she should try it out. Well, they were in a supermarket in Brooklyn, and for those of you who don't know, even if you're from DC, the aisles in a Brooklyn supermarket are incredibly tiny. And she was having problems getting around. Well, there was a big yahrzeit candle display at the end of one of the aisles stacked up like you'd see canned vegetables. And she rammed right into all of them, and yahrzeit candles were rolling down all the aisles. I'm not sure they helped pick up any of the candles, but my grandmother definitely never drove again.

As my mom and I were remembering and reminiscing about my dad, I keep thinking that he would have loved to be here for this. Loved to spend more time with his family and friends. I know my mom is going to talk more about this but my dad was a great husband and father. When people ask Ruth Bader Ginsberg how she got to where she is, she often says that it was important to marry well – not as in for money but as in for love and support. And in my mom's generation and in mine, where it seems like women are surpassing all sorts of expectations, it also often seems like the men in their lives aren't ready for that. But that wasn't my dad. He told both of us we were strong, and capable, and brilliant. I know how much he loved me and how proud he was of me because he told me all the time, and he called me his "wonderful daughter" and said that my smile lit up a room. I know he knew that I loved him, because I told him all the time too. But even if I could see him one more time, give him one last hug, and tell him one last time that I love him, it would never be enough. The only thing that would be enough if he were here with us today.

Susan's Eulogy:

BEING HERE AT A FUNERAL FOR MY LITTLE BROTHER SEEMS UNREAL. SUCH THINGS ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN. AND THEN THEY DO.

BEING HUMAN, I ALWAYS ASSUMED HE'D BE THERE. I COULD CALL OR VISIT OR TEXT OR SIMPLY THINK ABOUT MY BROTHER -- EVEN ACROSS GREAT DISTANCES OF TIME AND SPACE SINCE WE'VE ALWAYS LIVED SEVERAL HOURS APART SINCE I LEFT BROOKLYN -- AND I JUST EXPECTED IT WOULD BE AS IT ALWAYS HAD BEEN, SHARING A STORY, ASKING A QUESTION, SEEKING ADVICE.

I WAS MAYBE 3 1/2 AND QUEEN OF THE RHELM WHEN A LITTLE BLOND INTRUDER ENTERED MY LIFE AND TOOK OVER. SHARING PARENTS' ATTENTION WAS NOT WHAT I HAD BARGAINED FOR, AND TWO YEAR'S LATER I GOT MY CHANCE TO REGAIN "ONLY CHILD" STATUS WHEN MOM PUT HIM IN THE CARRIAGE AND TOOK US BOTH TO THE BANK. IN THOSE PRE-ATM DAYS, YOU ACTUALLY ENTERED THE BANK AND STOOD ON LINE TO SEE A TELLER, BUT THE BANK FROWNED ON BRINGING CARRIAGES INSIDE SO MOM ASKED ME TO WAIT OUTSIDE AND WATCH MY BROTHER IN HIS CARRIAGE.

SINCE I HADN'T AGREED TO BE BIG SISTER TO THIS CUTE INTERLOPER, I SIMPLY FOLLOWED MOM INTO THE BANK, LEAVING HIM ALONE. A FEW MINUTES LATER MOM REALIZED I WAS INSIDE AND SHE WENT OUT TO CHECK ON HIM. THE CARRIAGE WAS THERE -- BUT HE WAS GONE!

AS A 5 YEAR OLD, I DIDN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS GOING ON, BUT FOR SEVERAL HOURS I SAT IN THE BACK OF A POLICE CAR AS IT CRISS-CROSSED THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD, AND LOOKED

OUT THE WINDOW TO TRY TO FIND HIM. OUR MOTHER WAS IN ANOTHER POLICE CAR DOING THE SAME.

EVENTUALLY A CALL CAME IN ON THE POLICE RADIO, AND TOGETHER MOM AND I WERE DRIVEN TO A POLICE STATION IN ANOTHER NEIGHBOOD WHERE A LITTLE BOY FITTING STEVE'S DESCRIPTION WAS WAITING. IT SEEMED THIS CURIOUS LITTLE TYKE HAD GOTTEN OUT OF THE CARRIAGE, WALKED ABOUT 40 FEET TO THE BUS STOP, AND GOTTEN ON THE BUS HIMSELF BEHIND A WOMAN. THE BUS DRIVER ASSUMED HE WAS WITH HER, UNTIL THE END OF THE LINE WHEN THE DRIVER SPOTTED HIM HAPPILY SITTING IN THE BACK ALONE.

WHEN WE GOT TO THE POLICE STATION, STEVE WAS SITTING ON THE SARGENT'S DESK HAPPILY EATING AN ICE CREAM CONE. HE NEVER CRIED, NOR DID HE RESPOND TO US WHEN WE CALLED HIS NAME. IT WAS TENSE. THE POLICE WERE NOT SURE WHAT TO DO. AFTER WHAT SEEMED LIKE HOURS, HE FINISHED THE ICE CREAM, SLID DOWN FROM THE DESK AND WORDLESSLY TOOK MY MOTHER'S HAND – EVER THE DROLL 2-YEAR-OLD.

THAT'S WHEN I DECIDED HE COULD STAY.

I'M SURE ALL OF YOU ARE AWARE OF STEVE'S PASSION FOR MUSIC, AND ESPECIALLY FOR GUITAR. DURING OUR CHILDHOOD, THE RADIO AND PHONOGRAPH WERE ALWAYS PLAYING IN OUR HOME. DUETS FROM "GUYS AND DOLLS" WAS A PARTICULAR FAVORITE, AND AS I WRITE THIS, I CAN HEAR HIS VOICE SINGING "LUCK BE A LADY."

KATHY REMINDED ME OF A CONVERSATION I HAD WITH STEVE JUST BEFORE OUR MOTHER'S FUNERAL. I APOLOGIZED TO HIM BECAUSE

OUR MOTHER HAD GIVEN SO MUCH MORE TIME AND ATTENTION TO ME. HE SAID, “NO,” THAT HE HAD HAD THE BULK OF HER ATTENTION. WE EACH BELIEVED WE WERE HER FAVORITE.

JUST AS HE ABSORBED FROM OUR MOTHER THE ABILITY TO MAKE EVERY PERSON HE CARED ABOUT FEEL FAVORED, HE ABSORBED THE DEVOTION TO FAMILY FROM OUR FATHER. THAT IS A PRECIOUS LEGACY HE HAS PASSED TO CAROLYN.

OUR PARENTS BOUGHT HIM HIS FIRST GUITAR WHEN HE WAS HOME FOR A FEW WEEKS RECOVERING FROM A KNEE INJURY, AND IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST CHORD. ARMED WITH A FAKEBOOK AND A MEDIOCRE INSTRUMENT AT BEST, HE TAUGHT HIMSELF TO PLAY THE ROCK AND ROLL OF THE DAY AND WAS SOON PLAYING UNPAID GIGS AROUND THE CITY, INCLUDING BOOKLYN’S SUNSET PARK. HE WASN’T THE BEST – BUT HE WAS FAR FROM THE WORST – AND I THINK THAT WAS THE START OF HIS PERFORMING. HE ALSO BRIEFLY TRIED ACTING AND HAD A STARRING ROLE IN AN AMATEUR PRODUCTION OF “PAL JOEY,” AND WAS SURPRISINGLY GOOD.

STEVE NEVER TOOK THE EASY WAY IN ANYTHING. INSTEAD OF WALKING ACROSS THE STREET FROM HIS PUBLIC SCHOOL TO OUR FAMILY’S SYNAGOGUE FOR HEBREW SCHOOL CLASS, HE WALKED OUT THE OTHER DOOR TO THE BASEBALL FIELD TO PLAY BASEBALL. THIS WENT ON FOR MONTHS, AND IT WAS A BIG SHOCK TO OUR PARENTS WHEN THEY WENT TO MEET WITH THE HEBREW SCHOOL PRINCIPAL ABOUT HIS BAR MITZVAH ONLY TO LEARN THAT HE HADN’T BEEN LEARNING. ONLY OUR PARENTS’ CAJOLLING THE RABBI, STEVE’S STEEL-TRAP MEMORY AND THE FREQUENT REPETITION OF THE RECORDING OF HIS PARSHE ALLOWED HIM TO COMPLETE THAT MITZVA AT THE PROPER TIME.

AND WHEN HE DECIDED HE WANTED TO BE A POLLSTER, STEVE DIDN'T TAKE A COURSE. HE SAT WITH BOOKS AND ANALYSED THINGS AND FIGURED OUT HOW TO DO IT BETTER THAN MOST. AND AFTER BEING STIFFED AFTER WORKING ON HIS FIRST POLITICAL CAMPAIGN, HE LEARNED QUICKLY HOW TO GET PAID.

I'M SURE YOU KNOW THAT STEVE WORKED FOR THE STATE IN ALBANY. I WAS VISITING MY PARENTS ONE DAY, WHEN A LETTER CAME FOR MOTHER AND SHE OPENED IT AND BEGAN CRYING. IT WAS FROM THE SECRETARY, AN OLDER WOMAN WHO WORKED FOR STEVE AND SEVERAL OTHERS, THANKING MY MOTHER FOR HAVING RAISED SUCH A WONDERFUL SON. SHE WROTE ABOUT HOW POLITE AND RESPECTFUL HE WAS, HOW WELL HE TREATED HER AND OTHER PEOPLE. SHE WROTE THAT HE WAS VERY GOOD AT HIS JOB, BUT PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANT, HE WAS A FINE YOUNG MAN.

AT A TIME LIKE THIS, SO MANY MEMORIES COME FLOODING INTO MY HEAD. HOW WHEN HE WAS IN COLLEGE IN NEW YORK HE WOULD DRIVE 2 ½ HOURS TO MY APARTMENT IN MERIDEN SO THAT I COULD CUT HIS HAIR. I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THE FABULOUS 50TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND FOR OUR PARENTS THAT STEVE AND KATHY ARRANGED. HOW STEVE COACHED MY HUSBAND LEN AND I WHEN WE STARTED OUR BUSINESS. HOW WE WORKED TOGETHER FOR WEEKS ON A NEWS SECTION CELEBRATING ISRAEL'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY. THE TRIP TO OTTAWA THAT STEVE, CAROLYN, MY DAUGHTER ESTHER AND I TOOK SO WE COULD SKATE ON THE RIDEAU CANAL AS OUR FATHER HAD OFTEN TALKED ABOUT. I REMEMBER HIM AS AN 8-YEAR-OLD ACTUALLY DRINKING 4 CUPS OF WINE AT OUR PARENT'S SEDER. AND WHEN IT COMES TIME IN A FEW

WEEKS TO SING “DAYANU,” I KNOW I WILL HEAR HIS ROUSING CHORUS AND HIS “HICHNIYANU.”

BUT REALLY, IT IS NOT ENOUGH LIFE FOR HIM. NOT DAYANU. IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE ENOUGH. WHEN SOMEONE HAS HAD A GOOD LIFE AND TOUCHED SO MANY PEOPLE IN SUCH GOOD WAYS, WE ARE SUPPOSTED TO CELEBRATE. THAT IS SO DIFFICULT. SOMEDAY THIS WILL MAKE SENSE.

KATHY, CAROLYN: HAZAK HAZAK.

Cemetery Details

Crumpton Cemetery

Crumpton, MD

Previous Events

Service

MAR 8. 11:00 AM (ET)

Chestertown Location
130 Speer Road
Chestertown, MD 21620
(410) 778-0055
info@fhnfuneralhome.com

Visitation

MAR 8. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Chestertown Location
130 Speer Road
Chestertown, MD 21620
(410) 778-0055
info@fhnfuneralhome.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Steven Michael Appel*



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - March 07, 2018 at 08:43 AM



“ *Steven Michael Appel*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *Steven Michael Appel*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *Steven Michael Appel*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM



“ *I will always remember Steve's smiles, his conversations, and how proud. Of Carolyn. Passing the bar exam. He was a great Dad, farher, and husband and friend.. Both Marilyn. and myself. regret that we cannot attend the service, but our hearts are with you and your entire family*

Arthur Meisnere - March 07, 2018 at 09:50 PM

DW

“ Kathy and Carolyn,

So sorry to read of Steve's passing. My thoughts are with you all.

Dennis Whalen

Dennis Whalen - March 07, 2018 at 03:44 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Steven Michael Appel.



March 07, 2018 at 11:15 AM



“ 66 files added to the album Life Tributes



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - March 06, 2018 at 03:02 PM

PL

“ I had the great joy of meeting Steve through our mutual profession as market researchers at meetings of the QRCA, an organisation to which he devoted a great deal of time and energy.

We both loved music and especially studying guitar. A couple of years ago he shared his joy at buying a new archtop guitar by a very well known maker and at attending a seminar with the great British Jazz guitarist Martin Taylor. I admit to having a touch of jealousy. Over numerous postings he shared his extensive song collection, much of which he had written out with his personal form of music annotation, which I have to admit, I never fully understood. But it showed that he would never do anything by halves.

Fortunately Steve and I also shared political views and I found him to be immensely knowledgable on this topic. He also enjoyed ribbing me about the tough times we are having in the UK over Brexit

Above all I shall remember Steve as warm hearted, generous spirited, enthusiastic, personable and a truly calm presence.

His death has come as an enormous shock to me and I shall miss him greatly.

I should like to send my condolences to family members. I share your grief with you.

Peter Lovett, Oxford, UK.

peter Lovett - March 05, 2018 at 07:52 PM