

Irwin A. Levy



Irwin "Irv" A. Levy, beloved husband, father, grandfather and friend, passed away peacefully on January 17, 2023. He was 91.

Irv approached life with an unbridled curiosity about all things, and from an early age, this shaped his path personally and professionally. Born during the Depression in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, he graduated from Central High School in 1949 with many scholastic honors. His proud mother kept his report cards and letters of praise from teachers. Irv was the first in his family to go to college which was a source of immense pride to his parents, Pinkus, an immigrant from England, and Anna, from Scranton, Pennsylvania, born to an immigrant mother from Austria.

He attended the University of Pennsylvania on a full academic scholarship, where he graduated in 1953 Phi Beta Kappa with Honors in International Relations. He went on to attend graduate school at the University of Chicago studying political science but decided to instead pursue law school after one year. He attended Yale Law School on an academic scholarship where he was an editor of the Yale Law Journal. He graduated Yale in 1957 and then clerked for one year for a federal district court judge in New York city.

After his clerkship, Irv joined the office of the general counsel at the State Department and then eventually what became the Agency for International Development. AID was the perfect place for Irv, who was fascinated by other cultures and people, and not only wanted to see the world, but hoped to make it a better place. His travels took him throughout Asia, and as his wife and children can attest after multiple forced viewings of projection slide shows in the living room, the temples of Angkor Wat left an impression on Irv. His work eventually led him to Latin America in 1963, and to his post at the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 1964 to 1967. While in BA, he met his beautiful wife, Susie. She knew she had found "the one," and after marrying in 1967, they settled down in DC.

Along with their two children, Andrew and Catherine, they traveled to the Dominican Republic in 1976 for a three-year assignment before returning permanently to DC. Throughout their lives, he shared with his children the same thirst for knowledge and intellectual curiosity that took him so far in his career. He was the ever present, loving,

and proud father, attending all activities from sports to theater rehearsal. He instilled in them the importance of education and hard work, while encouraging them to pursue whatever they loved, as he had done.

Irv was an only child, so it is no wonder he embraced Susie's large and extended Argentina family as his own. His brothers and sisters-in-law, and many nieces and nephews, all were drawn to his ever-present smile and warmth. Despite his Spanish fluency, his missteps with the Argentine dialect over the years are some of the family's longest held and funniest memories. He was never afraid to try, and his self-effacing humor made everyone in his presence feel comfortable.

Irv retired from AID in the late 80s and then worked on similar international activities with Georgetown University as a non-teaching faculty member until 2013. He also volunteered as a guide for the Kennedy Center, a place he cherished, as he had always loved the symphony, classical music, and a variety of other performing arts. His work as a guide gave him an opportunity to share his knowledge of the history of the building and to continue to meet people from countries around the world.

Throughout the years, in letters and poems about Irv's accomplishments, his friends and family lovingly described him as "the genius of the family," and "generous with his time and knowledge." But to us, he was Irvy, Dad, and Poppop. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Susie, his daughter Catherine, his son Andrew and his wife Megan, and loving grandchildren.

Irv valiantly fought the greatest injustice – a disease that slowly took the mind of one of the brightest men. The family asks that any donations be made in his honor to the Cure Alzheimer's Fund through the link below.

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