



Bernard David "Dave" Meltzer

August 8, 1924 - May 7, 2026

Bernard David "Dave" Meltzer, a devoted family man, proud World War II veteran, and accomplished engineer, passed away peacefully on May 7, 2026, at the age of 101.

Born in Chicago in 1924, Dave was the youngest of four children of Michael and Minnie Meltzer, immigrants from Poland and Lithuania. He was preceded in death by his beloved parents, brothers Hillard and Herbert, and sister Adelaide Weinstein.

From an early age, Dave found a love of learning, of making things, of physical activity, and especially of giving back to his community—common threads throughout his life.

Dave enlisted in the U.S. Army during World War II, without his mother's permission, and served as a combat engineer in the 97th Infantry Division. His military service was spent in the South Pacific, including invasions at Okinawa and Leyte. He attributed his survival to his "Meltzer Mazel," and that good fortune followed him and those he loved for the rest of his years. It was a common refrain for Dave whenever fate intervened to avert disaster, large or small, from recovery from serious illness to making a last-minute connecting flight: "Meltzer Mazel."

With the help of the GI Bill, Dave attended the University of Oklahoma, studying petroleum engineering and earning a Master of Science in Engineering. While studying at OU, he met the love of his life, Pearl Jean Mackler. Pearl and Dave married shortly after Dave's graduation, and Dave began his extensive career at Chevron. Dave's work took them along the Gulf Coast, from New Orleans to Natchez and Jackson, Miss., and then back to New Orleans. All three of their children—Elliott Allen, Anne Rachel, and Toby Roger—were born in Mississippi, before the family settled in New Orleans for the next 34 years. When Hurricane Katrina flooded their home in 2005, Pearl and Dave moved to Austin, Texas, and established a new life. Dave celebrated his 100th birthday in 2024, and his 75th wedding anniversary with Pearl in 2026, surrounded by the many friends and family they drew to their new home town. Losing a home, then finding a community: "Meltzer Mazel."

Dave was an avid fan of the Oklahoma Sooners and New Orleans Saints football teams. He was rarely without an OU or Saints hat and/or shirt, and he always decorated his home offices with sports memorabilia. For many years, Dave and Pearl watched the Saints play in the Superdome, steadily supporting them (even during losing seasons). Football season was his favorite season.

In retirement, Dave and Pearl enjoyed traveling on cruises and seeing the world through Elderhostels. Memorable experiences included recreating the Lewis & Clark Trail, cruising on the Seine and learning about the French Impressionists, exploring the Art Institute of Chicago, and attending MLB Spring Training in Phoenix. They also made time to attend countless family events and celebrations, including graduations, weddings, b'nai mitzvot and brit milot for their grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. Just six weeks ago, Dave celebrated the first bar mitzvah of a great-grandchild, following the five b'nai mitzvot of his grandchildren decades ago. Every celebration was a chance to gather with family, and Dave always took

advantage of the opportunity. He was also an amateur photographer who selflessly designated himself the family archivist. Many of his family's memories are framed through his lens, a reminder of his presence at every joyous event.

Theater was another shared love of Dave and Pearl's. Dave designed and built many sets at the community theater in Jackson, and even won an award at Le Petit Theatre in New Orleans for his work backstage. Ever the engineer, his sets were not only beautiful but structurally sound.

Dave was also a pillar of the Jewish community in every city he and Pearl called home. He was active in community organizations, including the Jewish War Veterans, and he was not just a member of his synagogues' congregations but a leader, taking board and officer positions over the years and even serving as President of Congregation Shir Chadash in New Orleans. The Meltzer family dining room in Dave and Pearl's Austin home was the site of weekly Shabbat dinners with their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren for more than a decade, always lovingly prepared by Pearl, and the seders, Hanukkah celebrations, and Erev Rosh Hashanah meals hosted at their table are too many to count.

Dave always enjoyed being active, especially bicycling and tennis. After contracting polio at 32, he was told that he had to stay active, and he faithfully obliged, exercising daily up to his final days. Dave played tennis until he was 88, sharing the court with his children and grandchildren, and rode his bike well into his nineties. When he became too unstable on a 2-wheeled bicycle, he graduated to a 3-wheel recumbent, which he rode around the neighborhood with his daughter Anne. Anyone who saw Dave on his bike—or engaged him in a lively debate, informed by his daily review of the Wall Street Journal—marveled at his age.

Dave had a smile and a warm greeting for everyone. Asked how he was doing, he invariably said, "Better, now that you're here." He was a beacon of love and stability for generations of family and friends. And he was a role model for all who knew and loved him. Dave's secret to living into his 100s, in his own words: "Living right and 'Meltzer Mazel.'"

Dave is survived by his wife, Pearl Mackler Meltzer, of 75 years; his children and their spouses, Dr. Lee Meltzer (Gloria), Anne Demuth (Jeff), and Dr. Toby Meltzer (Ellen); grandchildren and their spouses, Brendan Keegan (Julia), Niall Keegan, Loren Meltzer, Emily Kupersztoch (Danny), Wes Meltzer (Catherine Carson), Amanda Bullman (James), Ryan Meltzer (Polina Novozhenets), and Chloe Meltzer (Andrew Musgjerd); great-grandchildren Maximus Keegan, Benjamin Keegan, Elijah Meltzer, Micah Kupersztoch, Nora Kupersztoch, Noah Bullman, Elliott Keegan, Leo Meltzer, Sadie Meltzer, Sofie Bullman and Miriam Meltzer; and many nieces, nephews, and great-nieces and great-nephews.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to Congregation Agudas Achim (Austin, Texas), Austin Post 757 of the Jewish War Veterans (JWV) of the USA, Blood Cancer United, or the charity of your choice.

Cemetery Details

Austin Memorial Park

2800 Hancock Dr.
Austin, TX 78731

Previous Events

Graveside Service

MAY 12. 12:30 PM (CT)

Austin Memorial Park
2800 Hancock Dr.
Austin, TX 78731

Tribute Wall

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“ Dear Pearl and family,
Dave will be greatly missed by so many, his legacy will stay with us forever. He bless so many people by his graceful, humble personality and his kindness. We admire how he enlisted & served his country in the army knowing the need was great! He served his community well and his leadership and the synagogue must have impressed many. Can just imagine how he impacted his wife, Pearl, children, and grandchildren. What an amazing life he carried. Our prayers continue for you all! With love, Gary, Annie & Natania 🙏💕
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Gary & Annie Gonzales - May 25 at 12:42 PM