



Leon Lebowitz

October 18, 1921 - January 11, 2020

Leon Lebowitz, longtime professor of law and a true mensch, passed away peacefully at home on January 11. He was 98.

Leon, a scholar of both Judaism and the law, was a rare combination of brilliance, humility, and kindness. He was born and raised in Waco, Texas, where he often worked in the dry goods store owned by his parents, Frances and Dave Lebowitz. After receiving his law degree from Baylor University, Leon enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he served as a staff sergeant in the 3rd Infantry Division. He fought in the Battle of Anzio, participated in the liberation of Rome, and was awarded the French Legion of Honor for his role in the liberation of southern France.

Leon returned to Waco after the war. In a 1940s version of the Dating Game, arranged by a friend, he was introduced to Elaine Ephraim, a visitor from Plaquemine, Louisiana. They married in 1948 and had two children, Brian and Amy. In 1956, Leon left his teaching position at Baylor Law School to begin his career at the University of Texas, where over the years he taught thousands of Texas lawyers Civil Procedure, Business Associations, and Securities Regulation. Through his State Bar committee work, Leon was instrumental in shaping Texas law in those areas.

Leon was a leader in the Austin Jewish community, serving as president of the

Jewish Community Council, B'nai B'rith, and his synagogue, Congregation Beth Israel, where he was an active member for over 60 years and where he instituted the lay-led Saturday morning minyan. He also worked passionately for justice and equality, working to end Jewish quotas in American law schools in the 1950s and to expand banking opportunities to East Austin in the 1960s. He supported a diverse array of organizations, including the Anti-Defamation League, Austin Symphony, Chabad of Austin, and West Austin Rotary.

In addition to his amazing whistling talent, Leon had a beautiful singing voice, and he always serenaded Elaine at their anniversary celebrations. He loved traveling, garage sales, books, music, interfaith dialogue, and playing bridge and poker with his buddies. He was devoted to his family, friends, community, and any cause he saw as helping the less fortunate.

Leon is survived by Elaine, his wife of 71 years; his son, Brian Lebowitz and wife Lise Goldman, along with granddaughter Samantha Goldman, of Chevy Chase, MD; his daughter, Amy Greenspan and husband Donny; his grandson Adam Greenspan and girlfriend Shannon Scott; his granddaughter Gina Manlove and husband Kyle; and his great-grandchildren, Nelly and Miles Manlove, all of Austin. He is also survived by his two sisters and his brother-in-law, Bernice Beckerman and Shirley and Hy Warshaw of Houston. along with their children and grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held at Congregation Beth Israel, 3901 Shoal Creek Blvd., at 11:30 a.m. on Monday, January 13. A shiva memorial service will be held at the same location at 5:30 p.m. that evening.

The family extends its heartfelt thanks to Lena Shaw, Hospice Austin, and the many caregivers whose skill and compassion eased Leon's last years. In lieu of flowers, contributions in Leon's memory may be made to Congregation Beth Israel, the Leon and Elaine Lebowitz Endowed Presidential Scholarship

at the UT School of Law, or the charitable or civic organization of your choice.

Cemetery Details

Capital Memorial Park

14501 N. Interstate Hwy 35
Pflugerville, TX 78660

Tribute Wall

MP

“ I had the privilege of being a teaching assistant for Professor Lebowitz from 1985-1987 at the University of Texas School of Law. He brought in a footlocker with his memorabilia from World War II and we had numerous discussions about his experiences during the war while serving as a Company Clerk in the 3rd Infantry Division. It was a privilege to know and serve him. I thought of him today and found that he had passed which is unfortunate. He was a great man. Mark C. Prugh, Attorney at Law

Mark C. Prugh - June 27, 2024 at 03:03 PM



“ Leon Lebowitz

October 14, 2022 at 12:02 PM

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“ Funeral Consumers Alliance of Central Texas (formerly the Austin Memorial & Burial Information Society) will be forever grateful to Leon Lebowitz for his great leadership. Leon served for over 25 years on the board, providing the legal work necessary to incorporate the organization that was created in 1964, and securing nonprofit status for it with the IRS in the 1980s. For the past fifteen years, he was listed as President Emeritus of the organization. Our forever thanks to Leon and our sincerest condolences to Elaine and his other family members as well as everyone else who knew, admired, and loved him.

Nancy Walker - January 15, 2020 at 08:17 PM