



Marilyn Saikin Stahl

September 5, 1936 - July 27, 2022

Marilyn Saikin Stahl, a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, daughter, granddaughter, sister, and friend, passed away July 27, 2022 following an active, compassionate, beautiful, lovely and full life.

Marilyn was born to Eva Rae Hochberger Saikin and David Charles Saikin in Shreveport, Louisiana, on September 5, 1936. The family soon moved to Artesia, New Mexico where Marilyn grew up. Family lore has it that Marilyn was High School Ping Pong Champion - she certainly dominated the local Stahl clan ping pong games.

Marilyn attended College at the University of Texas at Austin and was a member of the Sigma Delta Tau sorority. Her father died unexpectedly when she was only 20 years old, and her SDT sisters took Marilyn under their wings and became her extended family then and for the rest of her life. She was forever grateful for how SDT was there for her at such a difficult time -- it was then she decided to give back often, always selflessly, always with an eye toward building community.

First, she gave back by committing herself to volunteering for her sorority, SDT, becoming President of her local chapter in school, then local Chapter Advisor for the better part of 5 decades. She was also National Field Secretary, served on the National Board of Directors, and was SDT National's Outstanding Alumna of the Year in 2012 - an honor she cherished the rest for her remaining years.

Marilyn graduated college with a B.S. in Elementary Education in 1958, with specializations in Speech Therapy and Hearing Pathology. She then obtained her Teacher Certificate and embarked on her work and community life in Austin. She especially loved working with children. And after a few years, following a blind date and lengthy 3-week romance, Marilyn was engaged to Marion Leonard Stahl, and they married on December 3, 1961 -- they recently celebrated their 60th anniversary. Together, they raised three children and later celebrated what she called the "dividends" - that is the children's spouses who joined the family and became her children too, and she would say,

especially the grandchildren and her great grandchild.

In midst of work life, marriage, and raising children, Marilyn found one of her true passions, volunteering in, and helping to truly build, the local Jewish community of Austin - a passion she carried through the rest of her life. Here are a few highlights.

While at Congregation Agudas Achim, Marilyn was President of Sisterhood, twice served as President of the Synagogue, and was a Building Committee member for the CAA building at the Dell Jewish Community Campus. She was the first woman President of CAA which happened to overlap with the time when her son Stuart celebrated his Bar Mitzvah. She, along with many others at CAA, were instrumental in making the shul a welcoming, egalitarian space where women are welcome on the Bimah, women are called to and read from the Torah and women not only vote at congregational meetings but also serve in critical leadership roles. She was also active in CAA's Sisterhood, receiving the Torah Fund Award. While serving the synagogue in her various capacities, Marilyn went on to serve in the national United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, first as President of Southwest Region, and then as Vice President of its National Board. All the time, she remained a local pusher of all things USY and Kadima.

As her young children moved past toddlerhood, Marilyn and others decided that the Austin Jewish Community needed a pre-school education program. So, with Marilyn as a driving force, the Austin Jewish Federation founded the Jewish Community Center's Early Childhood Program in the early 1960s. Marilyn molded and nurtured the ECP in its early years, both as Director, and as a mother while all three of her kids attended the ECP during their pre-k years. A generation later, Marilyn was beyond excited when her grandchildren attended the ECP program among the first, second-generation kids in the program (third generation if you count the Founder - just sayin').

Marilyn volunteered early and often at the Jewish Federation of Greater Austin. She received its first Young Leadership Award, served as President (twice), helped begin the Women's division with her dear friend Lois Krumholz, and chaired the Annual Campaign (twice). Marilyn was part of the initial Planning Committee for the Austin Jewish Community Plan - which developed the concept for a Campus facility for the Jewish Community of Austin -- and she helped raise the first \$10 million toward what eventually became the Dell Jewish Community Campus. Marilyn was honored with the Federation's Woman of Valor Award. Oh, and she was also Executive Director of the Federation in the late 1980s for almost 5 years, which happened to coincide with her daughter-in-law Susan becoming a teacher in the ECP program (i.e., Marilyn was the boss of her daughter in law's boss)

At Temple Beth Shalom, Marilyn helped build yet another new structure on the Dell Jewish Community Campus -- TBS' new building -- she served on a subcommittee for the kitchen, and co-chaired Phase One of the Capital Campaign for the Building.

Marilyn returned to her UT roots later in her volunteer years, assisting the Hillel Foundation with its Building Committee for the new-Building at University of Texas at Austin. Marilyn also volunteered with the local Hadassah Chapter for many years and received its Myrtle Wreath Award.

Volunteering, Jewish life in Austin, building programs, building buildings, and seeing the fruits of all that labor in the smiling eyes of so many children, students, and families -- all the while experiencing those things with the community at large and with her own family. This was the pattern for Marilyn Saikin Stahl - this was what she loved to do. Building warm, welcoming, and strong communities for herself and all those she loved, and then relishing life in those communities.

As Marilyn struggled with various physical challenges later in life, she was blessed to have so many caregivers with kind hearts and thoughtful care, making her final years comfortable, peaceful and meaningful - Victoria, Cynthia, Al, Cecelia, and so many others - Marilyn's family thanks you from the bottom of our hearts.

Marilyn is survived by her children Stuart Stahl and wife Ronda, Brent Stahl and wife Susan, Nancy Stahl Shuman and her life's love Lee Dickerson; by seven grandchildren: Courtney Kizer and husband Steve, Harrison Stahl, Bradley Stahl, Seth Shuman, Noah Shuman, Jacob Stahl, and Gabe Stahl, and by great granddaughter Wesley Shuman. Marilyn is also survived by her brother Stanley Saikin and his wife Mary Jane Saikin, and by her sister Harriet Saikin, along with tons of cousins, nieces, nephews and friends. And she is survived by one of life's special people, Robertia Wilson.

For those wishing to make a donation in Marilyn Stahl's memory, please consider donating to

Congregation Agudas Achim: <https://congregationagudasachim.shulcloud.com/form/give>

Temple Beth Shalom: <https://www.bethshalomaustin.org>

Shalom Austin: <https://www.shalomaustin.org>

Marilyn Saikin Stahl Sigma Delta Tau Leadership Endowment Fund -- Austin Community Foundation https://austincf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit_id=5587

or the badass woman's organization of your choice.

Cemetery Details

Austin Memorial Park

2800 Hancock Dr.
Austin, TX 78731

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUL **29**. 11:00 AM (CT)

Congregation Agudas Achim
7300 Hart Lane
Austin, TX 78731
<http://caa-austin.org>

Tribute Wall



“ *Marilyn Saikin Stahl*

October 14, 2022 at 12:02 PM

SS

“ *Marilyn was one of many kind women who welcomed me into the Jewish community when I converted & married Charles Scherr in 1970.*

Susie Lightfoot Scherr - August 24, 2022 at 02:43 AM

AO

“ *Al Okorie lit a candle in memory of Marilyn Saikin Stahl*



Al Okorie - August 14, 2022 at 11:20 PM

RE

“ *Growing up in a much smaller Austin Jewish community in the '70's and '80's where everyone knew each other; Marilyn was an integral leader that helped build the foundation that was needed for the ultimate growth of our vibrant Austin Jewish community of today. Mrs. Stahl was always involved in all of the organizations and everyone knew she just could get things done. On a personal note.....Growing up I have fond memories which include when Brent and I would often receive a side glance or a quizzical look from Marilyn when we were about to do something that maybe we were not supposed to be doing.*

For all the thousands of Jewish families who enjoy the JCC take a minute and realize that Marilyn Stahl was part of the group that dared to dream that someday the Austin Jewish Community would become what it is today.

Rick Epstein - July 28, 2022 at 10:46 AM