



Russell Jay Apfel

April 11, 1949 - October 10, 2023

Russell Jay Apfel passed away on October 10, 2023 with his loving wife Nancy by his side. Russ was born on April 11, 1949 in New York City. He is survived by his wife Nancy, his twin brother Mark (Deanna) and older brother Alan (Joan), his children Abe (Holly), Miranda, Gabe (Katie), Isaiah, Elge, Kelley, Dalia (Matthew), Eric, Jake and Alex, and his grandchildren Milo, Elijah, Sam, Ben and Leo, as well as numerous cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

Russ grew up in The Bronx, and later Queens, and had an adventure-filled childhood that included a love for baseball and comics while also excelling academically, including attending the prestigious Bronx High School of Science.

Russ left home at age 16 to attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), earning a degree in electrical engineering, and later doing graduate work at Santa Clara University and the University of California - Berkeley. Russ was passionate about engineering, technology and entrepreneurship, and enjoyed a long and successful career working at numerous companies, including as a founder of multiple start-ups. During his career, Russ was awarded over 50 patents, and worked on crucial technology related to telecommunications equipment, hearing aids, and solar power. MIT remained a source of pride for Russ throughout his life, and he relished returning to

campus every January to teach and mentor undergraduates.

Russ closely followed all sports, and was an avid skier and golfer. He loved cooking, reading, music and cultural events, and was fortunate to travel the world for both work and leisure.

In April of 2018 Russ married his longtime partner Nancy, and has long considered her expanded family to be his own. Recently, in retirement, Russ was able to focus on what he cared about most - his family, his Judaism, and his desire to help others. In particular, Russ founded the Austin Jews for Refugees program to meet the growing demand for refugee services, particularly for Afghanis and, more recently, Ukrainians. Russ has received numerous recognitions for this work, including being named Volunteer of the Year by Shalom Austin. Recently, Russ helped launch an English as a second language (ESL) school for Ukrainian refugee women in the Austin area.

Russ's legacy lives on through his love of his family, his Jewish faith and the lives of so many who were touched by Russ's generosity and kind spirit. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to: Austin Jews & Partners for Refugees.

<https://www.austinjewsandpartners.org/>

May his memory be a blessing.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT 12. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Temple Beth Shalom
7300 Hart Ln.
Austin, TX 78731

Graveside Service

OCT 12. 2:15 PM - 2:45 PM (CT)

Austin Memorial Park
2800 Hancock Dr.
Austin, TX 78731

Tribute Wall

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“ *I loved co-mentoring with Russ at MIT. He was so available to the students, so warm and so receptive. They loved him as a wise and trusted mentor. He was wonderful.... I will miss him and our collaboration together.*

Andrea Reyman-Cruz - November 01, 2023 at 02:18 PM