



Marlene Krakow

October 16, 1939 - October 1, 2019

In order to get into the passenger seat of Marlene Krakow's car, you had to move a few things — mostly aprons and vests, ones she wore at the places she gave her time. She wasn't just a dedicated volunteer, giving was at the core of her being. She gave her time and her love freely, and everyone was along for the ride to receive it.

Born in Atchison, KS, Marlene and her family moved to Kansas City where she completed her junior and senior year of high school at Southwest High. Though she attended the University of Minnesota and graduated from the University of Missouri with a degree in education, she ultimately became a dedicated fan of Jayhawk basketball. While she traveled extensively for Hallmark, holding a wide variety of positions and making life-long friends, she was grounded in her Kansas roots and became a pillar of Kansas City, building community in every corner. She taught the city's school children, volunteered in a wide variety of capacities, and committed herself to making Kansas City better with her iron strength and never-ending kindness.

And she continued to give, even through the multiple bouts of the cancer she fought successfully for 38 years. At every turn, she approached new battles with the strength and determination to win. And she shared that strength with those who needed it most, talking with those going through the same fight on cancer hotlines, and just those who reached out through a friend, approaching these conversations with compassion and pragmatism.

As a volunteer in the waiting rooms of Menorah Medical Center - walking with a limp left behind by her first defeat of cancer and an oxygen tank caused as a result of her more recent winning battles, she encouraged patients and family members with the mantra she embodied: "There is nothing to worry about until there IS something to worry about."

Marlene nourished the Jewish community of Kansas City and took deep care in maintaining its strength. Her matzah balls were incomparable, a recipe passed down from her mother, that only she perfected. She helped envision a new synagogue based on congregational engagement and leadership, was president of Kehilath Israel's sisterhood,

a respected board member, an engaged volunteer, and a beloved and devoted congregant. Through Day of Discovery, she willingly volunteered to spread knowledge and understanding while encouraging people to engage in acts of loving kindness. Exemplified by both of her sons' engagement in their Jewish communities, she inspired many to commit themselves to leadership.

After Yom Kippur, Marlene's house was full of family and friends, breaking the fast together, over bagels and blue cheese torte. Her greatest pride came from her family who shared her willingly with a seemingly endless list of friends. Many simply knew her as "Aunt Mar," and never figured out who was really a niece or nephew. She connected with and encouraged those in their 90's just as beautifully and individually as she did a toddler.

The ultimate highlight of her life was becoming a Bubbe. And she was the epitome of a Bubbe to her grandchildren and many others who lovingly shared in the joy and fun she brought to life. She shared with them her love of reading and cooking, loving them steadfastly and encouraging them all the way into adulthood. Hosting multiple sleepovers, she made Sunday morning chocolate chip pancakes and had an enviable basement full of art supplies and toys. She made her home an extension of her heart, open to them fully and completely.

Marlene passed away October 1, 2019 and was preceded in death by her parents, Herman and Frieda Friedman, and her stepgrandson Adam Strongin. She is survived by her son Russell (Chavah) and his children Sydney, Myles, and Avery, and her son Jason (Andrea) and their children Morgan and Caleb, her sister Felicia Weiner (Seymour) and brother Gary Friedman (Patti) and many loving nieces, nephews and cousins.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Kehilath Israel Synagogue, The Hyman Brand Hebrew Academy, or a charity of your choice.

Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Thursday October 3 at Louis Memorial Chapel.

Previous Events

Funeral

OCT 3. 11:00 AM (CT)

Louis Memorial Chapel
6830 Troost Ave
Kansas City, MO 64131
info@louismemorial.com

Shiva

OCT 3. 6:45 PM (CT)

at the home of Gary and Patti Friedman. Please call funeral home for further information.

Shiva

OCT 4. 8:30 AM (CT)

at the home of Marlene Krakow. Please call funeral home for further information

Shiva

OCT 4 to 5 (CT)

with services at Kehilath Israel Synagogue.
10501 Conser
Overland Park, KS 66212

Shiva

OCT 6. 8:00 AM (CT)

at the home of Marlene Krakow. Please call funeral home for further information.

Receiving

OCT 6. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

at the home of Marlene Krakow. Please call the funeral home for further information

Shiva

OCT 6. 6:45 PM (CT)

at the home of Gary and Patti Friedman. Please call the funeral home for further information.

Shiva

OCT 7. 8:30 AM (CT)

at the home of Marlene Krakow. Please call the funeral home for further information.

Shiva

OCT 7. 6:45 PM (CT)

at the home of Gary and Patti Friedman. Please call the funeral home for further information.

Tribute Wall

SP

“ Gary, Patti and family.
Susan and I wanted to send our deepest condolence to you and all of your family on Marlenes's passing.

Rob and Susan Pittell

Susan Pittell - October 07, 2019 at 09:17 PM

MM

“ To all of Marlene's Family- Just want you to know my thoughts and prayers are with you and know Marlene will be missed greatly by all that knew her. I hope soon that your tears of sadness become smiles and laughter once you can begin to share your wonderful memories of her. Sincerely, Melanie Jacobs McGraw

Melanie Jacobs McGraw - October 07, 2019 at 03:23 PM

JA

“ Dear Family,

Over the years we had far too few visits with our beloved Marlene, but in her presence, we were always enriched with her loving kindness. Our dear Marlene left an impact on all of us and so many others and we will miss her dearly.

*All our Love,
Jon, Debi and the Alberts Family*

Jon Alberts - October 06, 2019 at 11:55 AM

 Ettie
Litke

“ *Ettie Litke lit a candle in memory of Marlene Krakow*



Ettie Litke - October 05, 2019 at 01:13 PM

MR

“ Dear Family of Marlene Krakow:

Well, another chink in the armor of the "MURPHY" Family! Whenever we saw each other here in Greater KC, Marlene and I would happily recall her parents, the original Murphy family. Needless to say, I'll miss that, as I'm sure you will miss the real Marlene right here next to you. Ha-makom Y'neichem etchem b'toch sh'ar avelei Tziyon V;rushalayim. May G-d bring comfort to all those who grieve the loss of loved ones, and may the memory of Marlene Krakower be a blessing to the family and to the world.

*Sincerely,
M J Rosenbloom*

M J ROSENBLOOM - October 04, 2019 at 03:50 PM



“ *It was an honor to stand at the back of the room with my friends, Marianne James and Mary Kay Morrow, and listen to the stories and remembrances shared about our dear friend Marlene at her funeral service yesterday morning. We cherish our memories from our lunches together, talking about anything and everything, when we all worked together at Hallmark and for all the years since.*

I painted this portrait of Marlene in hopes of capturing her colorful spirit... that sparkle in her eyes and her generous smile. I'll miss her greatly but am grateful that I was able to call her "friend."

John Keeling



John Keeling - October 04, 2019 at 01:04 PM

JG

Magnificent portrait. I think she would have loved it.

Jody Gittleman - October 06, 2019 at 10:53 PM

CM

“ *I worked with Marlene at Williams-Sonoma for many years — our “second acts.” We bonded over cookware & electrics. She was witty, kind, and a wonderful person with whom to work. I shall miss her.*

Carol McCullough

Carol McCullough - October 04, 2019 at 10:10 AM

CK

“ *Marlene will be missed, and the memories you shared will always be fresh in your hearts and minds.*

Cara Krashin - October 04, 2019 at 12:42 AM

JP

“ *May her memory be for a blessing. What else can be said of such a wonderful person!*

Joe & Debby Pfefer

Joe & Debby Pfefer - October 03, 2019 at 08:49 PM

ES

“ *Marlene was the best student a rabbi could hope--smart, cheerful, attentive, appreciative, committed and wise.*

She would come to Jewish History class even on the "slow weeks." She would ask good questions. She would smile exactly as you see in the picture. And then she would be running out to volunteer at Menorah Medical center.

May Hashem send comfort to Marlene's entire extended family. Bracha and I were blessed to be touched by Marlene.

Elchanan Schulgasser - October 03, 2019 at 02:07 PM

PK

Such a huge a huge loss! Mar and I became best friends when she and Felicia moved to KC I have the MOST fun stories to tell about our escapades! But the summer night we each bought a rum crook cigar and a whole piece of bubble gum was our favorite story. We were pushing the car, for no reason, smoking and chewing the bubble gum when I looked over at her and she had no front tooth. We had been best friends for two years and I never knew she had a false front tooth. Needless to say, I had to go home and change my pants. I have so many fun stories to share! The last time I was in KC we had lunch. She chose to leave her oxygen at home. The last time I texted her was Sunday to wish her a healthy happy New Year. I will call Felicia next week. My love and prayers for a life well lived!

Pam Oliver Klein - October 03, 2019 at 07:11 PM

EM

“ *Marlene was a lovely woman. I am saddened to hear of her passing.*

Elle Magariel - October 03, 2019 at 01:38 PM

JL

“ *She was always my Sister-In- Law and I shall miss her until we meet again*

joel levin - October 03, 2019 at 12:58 PM

LZ

“ *Marlene has been part of my life for as long as I can remember. She always had a smile and a wry comment. She saw the good in life and was engaged with the world and people around her. She will be missed.* ”

Lizz Zitron - October 03, 2019 at 12:56 PM

SJ

“ *I had the pleasure of working with Marlene at Hallmark Cards in the Licensing and Properties group while we all worked on Shirrtails and Rainbow Bright. She became a friend whom I admired for her talents and kind heart. We had many wonderful times at Toy Fair. You were a blessing. Prayers to her family.* ”

Sherri Jacobs - October 03, 2019 at 11:57 AM

CE

“ *Carole And Bernard Ellis lit a candle in memory of Marlene Krakow* ”



carole and bernard ellis - October 03, 2019 at 10:53 AM

JL

“ *Julie & Terry Levine lit a candle in memory of Marlene Krakow* ”



Julie & Terry Levine - October 03, 2019 at 10:50 AM

RC

“ *Rachel Coleman lit a candle in memory of Marlene Krakow* ”



rachel coleman - October 03, 2019 at 07:57 AM

BR

“ I worked with Marlene back in the 80's at Hallmark. She was always fun to talk to and always in a good mood! She was a classy lady and I loved her dress style too! I'm not surprised how many lives she touched with her positive outlook on life.

Brenda Rodgers

Brenda Rodgers - October 03, 2019 at 07:40 AM

TF

“ Our deepest condolences Jason and Russell. We share in your loss as your mom was not only a pillar of our KI community, a shining example of selfless love, and one of our family's dearest friends. May she rest in eternal peace. With heavy hearts, BDE.

The Pool Family - October 03, 2019 at 05:35 AM

 Rachel Gruber

“ We will miss Aunt Marlene greatly. She wasn't officially our aunt, but we could call her nothing else 💕. It was always a highlight of our evening getting to see her at family functions and always so easy to chat with her. She had a warm and kind presence. So grateful for the many years we got to share with her.

Rachel Gruber - October 03, 2019 at 12:57 AM

MW

“ I worked with Marlene at Hallmark and will never forget her smile, warmth, humor and passion. We reconnected on Facebook as though the years between had not passed. I will miss this friend. But her example of determination will remain for me. A journey well traveled. Rest well Marlene.

Mike Williams - October 02, 2019 at 11:09 PM

AT

“ Marlene will truly be missed. We have been friends for so many years but had a special bonding in 1981. She was always a role model for me. I admired her strength. I shared with her family she was my go to person for recipes, Jewish movies etc. and I would text her often and ask what book are you reading. Always a reply. Sometimes she would say the book was hard to get into but I stuck it out .She definitely made our community a better place. She volunteered so many places I lost track. A real Mench! Rest well sweet friend.



Ann Tannenbaum - October 02, 2019 at 09:05 PM

WF

“ *Walter Fink lit a candle in memory of Marlene Krakow*



Walter Fink - October 02, 2019 at 05:55 PM

BR

“ *Barbara And Skip Rein lit a candle in memory of Marlene Krakow*



Barbara and Skip Rein - October 02, 2019 at 05:28 PM

LS

“ *I am so saddened by the news of Marlene's passing! She was always a delightful ray of sunshine, from the time I met her when we both worked at Hallmark, to those occasions when I would see her in our neighborhood or at a Jewish community gathering. While it was apparent that she endured considerable pain throughout the many years she battled her illness, she never seemed to be hindered by it. Marlene chose instead to see the positive side of everything, and her optimism was contagious -- what a big heart for such a diminutive person! She will be sincerely and deeply missed by everyone who knew her. May her memory be for a blessing.*

Linda Salvay

Linda Salvay - October 02, 2019 at 05:26 PM

PC

“ *I met Marlene about 35 years ago at Cy an Esther Rudnick's New year Day parity. I can remember that first meeting Where we shared a connection. Many many times after that we shared moments at events in the Jewish community. Her kind spirit and smile was consistent and I always loved seeing her. She had a unique spirit and I will miss her.*

Phyllis Carozza

Phyllis Carozza - October 02, 2019 at 04:51 PM

AC

“ To all of Marlene's adored family, we send our deepest, heartfelt condolences. She was an incredible, brave person who embodied the best a person could be. May she rest in peace, she will be greatly missed.

Anita and Sam Chaplick

Anita Chaplick - October 02, 2019 at 04:47 PM

RH

“ Please accept our deepest sympathy on the passing of your beloved Marlene.

Rickie and Dr. Ed Haith



Rickie Haith - October 02, 2019 at 04:31 PM

JZ

“ For a little over a year (2002-2003), Marlene's was the smiling face greeting visitors at the Midwest Center for Holocaust Education. Always pleasant and upbeat, despite her personal health challenges, she was far more than her title as administrative assistant would suggest. Marlene seemed to know everyone in the community and always had a positive comment to share. She brightened everyone's day and found true joy in being with people. She will be missed by so many.

Jean Zeldin

Jean Zeldin - October 02, 2019 at 03:51 PM

CL

“ Condolences to all of Marlene's family and friends. About 25-30 years ago I had a cancer scare I called Marlene for advice and the name of a doctor. She listened to me and said she would call me back. Not only did she call back but already had an appointment set up for me. My late father used to call Marlene his Shabbas girlfriend because he set next to her every Shabbat morning and if he missed more than 1 she would call to see if he was ok. Marlene was one in a million and she will be greatly missed. For me every holiday in shul because she was always there and I knew where to sit , right behind her. Norman and I loved Marlene and will always remember her with love.



clara Levine - October 02, 2019 at 03:40 PM

EP

“ We will miss Marlene. I especially will miss her at KI board meetings. I will miss her smile and her hugs. Baruch Dayan HaEmet. I know her memory and her name will continue as a blessing for you, her family, and all who have the pleasure to know her.

Ellen Portnoy - October 02, 2019 at 02:19 PM

MK

“ Please accept my sincere condolences on the passing of Marlene. Memories go back a long way to this past year in the water at Village Shalom and seeing her volunteering within the community. She fought a long and hard battle. To all of her loving family, I know you will share memories and keep them deep in your hearts. May her memories be a blessing.

Marlene Katz

marlene katz - October 02, 2019 at 01:28 PM

BB

Jason I am so sorry for your loss. She was a beautiful lady. May her memory be as a blessing for you and your family

barbara bloch - October 03, 2019 at 07:38 AM

GD

“ To Marlene's entire family. It's very difficult for me to put into words how I feel about the passing of Marlene. From the time we grew up in Atchison until the present I always felt like she was a cousin to me even though we were not blood relatives; that's just the way it always was!

She will be highly missed and may she now rest in peace.

Gene Dolginoff

Gene Dolginoff - October 02, 2019 at 12:31 PM



JS

“ Please accept our heartfelt condolences on the death of Marlene. We had the pleasure of meeting & knowing both Marlene & Felicia as new members of Kehilath Israel Synagogue. Marlene was the first to greet us on a Shabbat morning & her warm welcome into the KI family was enormously appreciated. May her memory be for a blessing. She will be truly missed. Fondly...Judy Elliott & Jerry Stolov.

Judy Elliott & Jerry Stolov - October 02, 2019 at 12:12 PM

FL

“ It puts a great smile on my face to just reflect on the many many times of joyful interaction we had.

Frank Loeffler - October 02, 2019 at 11:28 AM

LP

“ I am so sorry to hear of the passing of Marlene. She always had a kind word and always dealt with her pain in quiet. May her memory be for a blessing

Leslee Gottlieb Price - October 02, 2019 at 11:26 AM

AR

To the entire family of Marlene Krakow & especially Felicia & Gary. We were so shocked to hear of her passing upon arrival at KI the 2nd day of Rosh Hashanah. I never knew your parents (Friedman's) but I am sure that the kindness and unconditional giving of herself that is also typical of her siblings, nieces and nephews were undoubtably a testimony of their upbringing. As Jerry, a new KI member, mentioned she always was the first to say hello, welcome & good Shabbos. May her memory be for a blessing to all of us who were blessed to know her.

Aaron Rissien - October 02, 2019 at 02:01 PM

BG

To the Family of Marlene, Phillip and I were shocked by the passing of Marlene She will be missed by all .May her memory be for a blessing. Fondly, Barbara & Phillip Goodbinder

Barbara House Goodbinder - October 02, 2019 at 03:28 PM

MJ

I am so sorry to hear of Marlene's passing. My condolences to the entire family....

marsha johnston - October 02, 2019 at 05:17 PM

SS

Marlene was an unbelievably positive person. Never did we observe her without her warm smile. We had the pleasure of traveling to Israel with Marlene and her sister and brother in-law. Our memories of all that she did for her and community will serve as an inspiration to many.

Stewart Stein

Stewart Stein - October 02, 2019 at 09:29 PM

MJ

Leigh Anne and our family will miss Marlene's joyful personality and quick wit. She will be missed at family gatherings. The Johnson's

Mike Johnson - October 02, 2019 at 10:04 PM

DR

Marlene's smile could light up a room!

When I moved from Des Moines to Kansas City in 1978 to work at the old JCC on Holmes Road, I had the fortune to meet Marlene Krakow. At that time, she was very involved with a new start-up congregation, Shir Chadash. The Center was their home, and their meeting and activity room was directly across from my office. So I saw Marlene there on a regular basis, and was very lucky to have had the opportunity to get to know her.

As a newcomer to KC, she helped to make me feel welcome here. She had such a warm, friendly, and outgoing personality.

Although our paths did not cross often enough in the ensuing years, it was still always a pleasure to see Marlene at Kehilath Israel for the High Holidays, and at community events.

After my Mother passed away last fall, I began attending evening minyan at K.I. to say Kaddish. As I had also just retired, and no longer had to work late night shifts, I was able to once again regularly attend weekly Shabbat morning services. Not only did Marlene welcome me back to the Synagogue with open arms, she wanted to get me involved. I think because of my many years in the restaurant business, she wanted me to help with anything involving food! So I helped her make latkes for Chanukah and hamentaschem for Purim. I remember being impressed that she was savvy enough on social media to send me reminders on Facebook messenger to be sure and show up.

Over the past year, every Shabbat morning, I would walk by Marlene and Felicia and Seymour's row to get to my seat. It brightened my day to see her friendly smile, and I always got a nice warm hug. We would stand together in the aisle during the Rabbi's processional to return the Torah to the ark. Afterwards, at the Kiddush lunch, it was an honor for me to usually sit at her table. I always enjoyed her conversation.

Marlene really had an impact on my life this past year. It will be so terribly sad to see her empty seat at K.I. this Shabbat. I will truly miss her presence.

I am sure that her family knows how much she will be deeply missed at K.I., in the Jewish community, and all around greater KC. May her memory be for a blessing.

My condolences to Russell and Jason, Felicia, and the entire family.

David Rabinovitz

David Rabinovitz - October 03, 2019 at 01:46 AM



Leanne Taylor

What a beautiful beautiful soul. I've read each of these comments above am touched to have gotten to know her even better through them. What a beautiful beautiful face and smile. I am so incredibly sad and was shocked to hear of the passing of this very special woman, my former neighbor. Though in ways, I was tempted to feel a bit unworthy to make personal comments, as she was my neighbor for a mere six years. However, she deserves the highest regard and I owe it to her to take the time. Marlene was one of the warmest, kindest neighbors I'd known. v It just so happened that it's been one of life's privileges to have had her sister, Felicia, as well, as a dear neighbor in decades prior, back in Bridlespur for over ten years. Ironically, well after we moved into Marlene's Overland Park neighborhood we didn't know how we'd find the connection. It was a little extra surprise blessing to learn how Felicia's sister was across the street now! Marlene treated both my husband and me with great warmth and welcoming conversation on every occasion we'd see each other. Later, when my husband, Kent, was in the hospital, she quietly brought food to the door with a card. She had written the most beautiful, encouraging things and expressed many lovely sentiments. She inquired in concern until he was fully recovered. She touched my heart. The world was just such a better place and I, a better person, from having known Marlene even briefly. I am thankful to G-d for that and do not consider it a coincidence. It seems to me, arranged for my own education and good -- how powerfully positive it is just to become a good and faithful neighbor (an art that is quickly becoming outdated, yet oh so desperately needed!). Marlene's life even today encourages me to reflect and be challenged. How deeply I wish I would have shared with her when I had the chance. I would have told her how much I appreciated her. Not taking the time to say goodbye and keep in touch after we moved from her neighborhood a year or so ago was a mistake. To do so was more important than I realized. Awkward ability to explain gratefulness is no reason to avoid trying, and fear of displaying strong emotion pales in the light of sharing one's heart to bless others. Perhaps my gentle tears would have been enough and would have helped her understand what an impact she'd had. To her family, loved ones, and closest friends, it's clear you encountered a true, very rare, ever so precious gem in knowing Marlene well. I, too, am thankful to G-d that I knew her at all. Leanne Taylor

Leanne Taylor - October 03, 2019 at 10:44 AM

RS

Claudia and I send our sincere condolences to Gary and all your family.

Rich Sophir - October 03, 2019 at 11:29 AM

HA

I am sad to read of Marlene's passing . As an old-school chum and, later in life a friend who I really never saw that often. When I saw her wonderful memories and thoughts came to mind . My sympathies to her family.

Hanna Apple - October 03, 2019 at 12:05 PM

MC

Marlene was such a lovely woman. I loved talking to her whenever I was at KI, which was where I would run into her. I send my sincere sympathy to her entire family. May her memory be a blessing.

Mary E Covitz - October 03, 2019 at 02:56 PM

CP

When I moved into our neighborhood a few years ago, Marlene made me feel right at home. When I found out I had stage 4 cancer, Marlene was so comforting encouraging to me. She had more of an impact on me then she could ever possibly know. Rest in peace, Marlene.

Cindy Preston - October 03, 2019 at 05:18 PM

CI

*Marlene, I hardly knew you, but , like many others, was shocked to learn you passed. I feel so sad, but realize you were the most wonderful person. We all will remember so well,
Cheryl Intrater and Jesse Newman*

Cheryl Intrater - October 04, 2019 at 05:52 PM