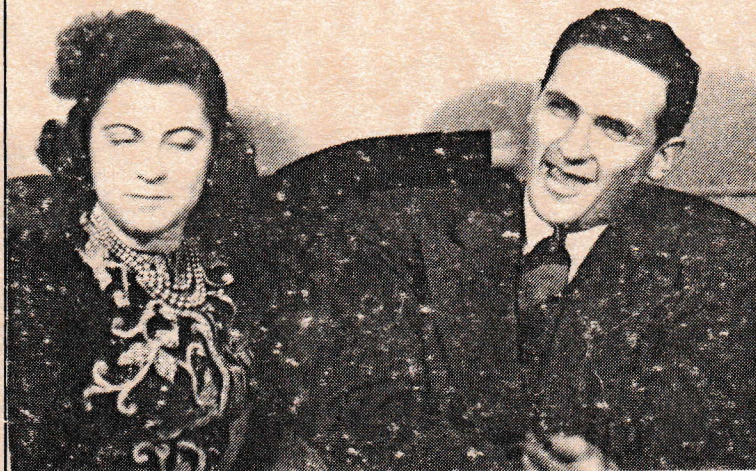


# **Irma and Milt**



The Happy Couple Circa 1939

**50 Years Together**  
1939-1989



## Here are a few words from some friends...

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### From Charlie Siegel:

Milt and I go back to the early years of the 1930's when he and I and Marvin Marks had an apartment together on Chicago's south side. Milt worked at Marshall Field's while I was going to law school. We ate very well as Marv was a butcher with a super market and brought home plenty of food.

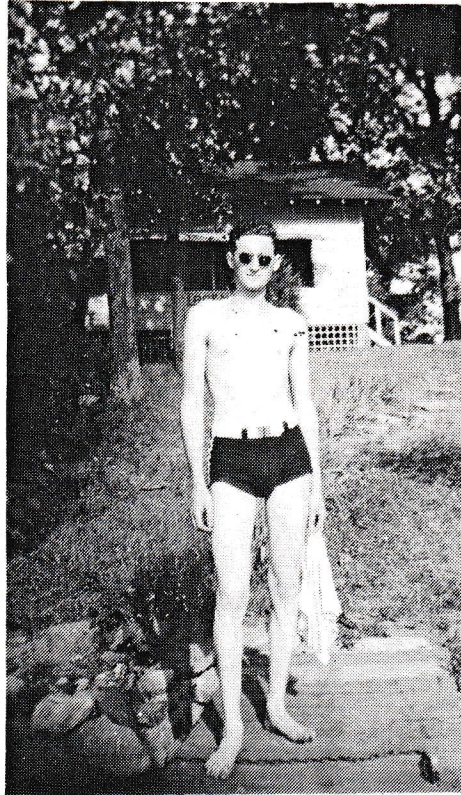
Once a week we splurged for a seven-course Italian meal for 75 cents. Milt then returned to Marion to go into business and I returned soon after. In the summers, several of us rented a cottage on Lake Manitou where the Valinets had a cottage on the lake. That's where we spent many a Sunday during the summer and Milt and Irma started their romance.







Milt knows some good El-Al jokes. Don't ask...



The bather. Just before a strong wind came and blew him off.





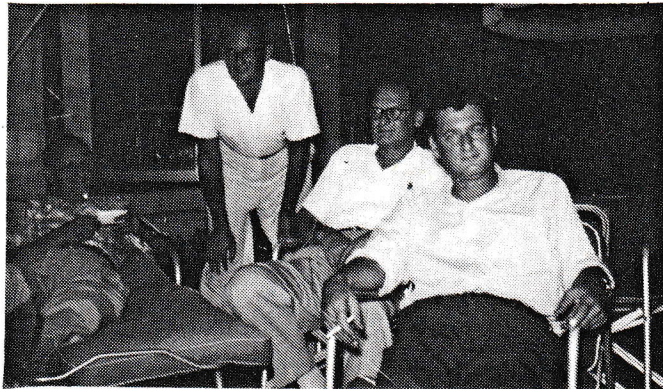
**From Jennie Abel:**

To Irma and Milt,

So many years have passed by and when I look back the times that stand out most are the ones when I was at my lowest point. You were so thoughtful when I lost Adolph and Milton. The gifts of friendship and caring are the most special gifts to receive. We always enjoyed being invited and attending your children's weddings. Such happy events! Although we don't always show our feelings it's at times like these we realize just how much our friendship means. Happy 50th Anniversary to two wonderful people. I wish you happiness and good health and many more anniversaries together.

Love,

Jen







**From Betty Fleck:**

My friendship with Irma and Milt goes back over 40 years. Irma was much easier for me to get to know well. However, from the time Henry and I made our first trip to Israel with Irma and Milt, there seemed to be a "kindred spirit" between the four of us. We enjoyed many good times together. And since Henry's death I can say one thing—I couldn't have made it without them! They're both great people! One last thing—according to Irma and Milt, Henry was the one who suggested crossing Lake Manitou to go over to the Valinet cottage so that Milt could meet Irma.







**From Joyce Maidenberg:**

Since joining the family in 1981 we have had some super holidays together. We have been to some interesting places. Irma and Milt really research an area before visiting. It is always fun being with them, and I hope we will have the chance to travel with them often.

One of the main activities of each trip is the decision where and what to eat!! My first recollection of Milt's likes and dislikes with food was in Eilat in 1981. We had dinner at a small but exclusive restaurant named "Coquille." The waiter persuaded us to order a whole Red Sea fish between us. Milt agreed reluctantly with the provision that if he didn't like it, he could order something else.

The dinner arrived served on a cart with a silver dome cover. With great flair the fish was divided. The waiter hovered by while we took our first taste, expecting a glowing approval. Of course you can guess the outcome. I can still see the waiter's face. The disbelief that Milt wanted to order something else!!

Milt and Irma are two exceptional people. They have welcomed me into the family and it has been a real privilege











**From Thelma Blickman:**

Irma—my most fascinating cousin—your charm, your wit, your intelligence—your flair for the unusual, has only improved over the last 50 years. You are still **THE ONLY** person I know who can take a basic outfit and put it together as if you just walked out of a French couturier shop. Your artistic and creative ability are a rare and envious gift.

And then there is “my oldest” cousin Irma. My Dad always loved you like one of his own—maybe because he drove your Mom to the hospital for your birth. You were special from the beginning, and you are special today. You were the first to dress up in Aunt Julie’s shoes and hats and whatever else she had—wasn’t Aunt Julie fun?—maybe that’s where your flair all started...I remember sitting on your bed at 5650 N. Meridien—you were packing for college—we were all there—it was so exciting—the first one to leave and go to college, too. Your wardrobe was divine (I thought). My Mom said **ALL** your clothes came from the French room at Blocks—I thought you should have been a model—you had **THE** figure—you made the clothes look good.

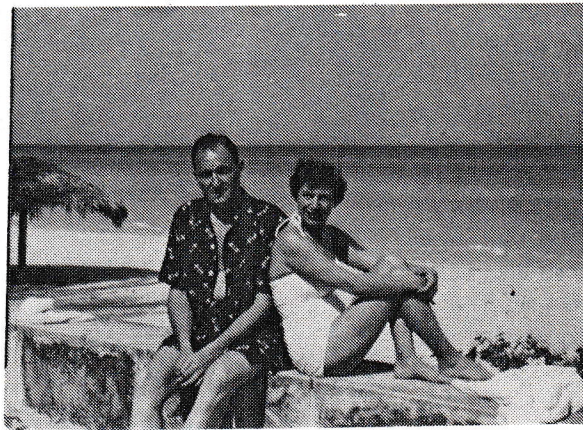


And then in the summer we were all off to Lake Manitou, that wonderful mudhole that we all loved, and “all the boys” from Marion—just hanging around you—and all the other ones that were left back in Indianapolis. Which one,



which one? That's when you and Betty were off having your secret "girl talk." I guess I was too young.

I'm not really sure how old you are (you still look great) — but we have always exchanged greetings — I guess that's because you are the 17th and I'm the 23rd — and I remember sitting out in front of "4137" after your Dad passed away — a few days before your birthday — and you said "I guess no one will remember my birthday this year" — but we did, and always will. They say you carried me around until my feet dragged on the floor. I thank you for that long ago pleasure, and if you ever need a push, I'll reciprocate. Your hospitality and creative gourmet treats are enviable, and will we ever come to Marion when you forget to show the tennis pictures? I hope not. It's the highlight of our 60-mile drive!



And Milt — since it's your anniversary too — I should say — **how you have mellowed over the years!** Your family can tell the story about the real Milt — Sol has always enjoyed his conversations with you — he says you are a *mensch* (you know what that means) — and he could not think of another person in the whole world who was more qualified, more knowledgeable than you to bring back a Shofar from Israel for him.

May all the years ahead bring you the same joy and happiness that you have shared together. We have always been proud to say Irma and Milt are OUR COUSINS. God Bless.

Love,  
Thelma and Sol

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**From Betty Sachs:**

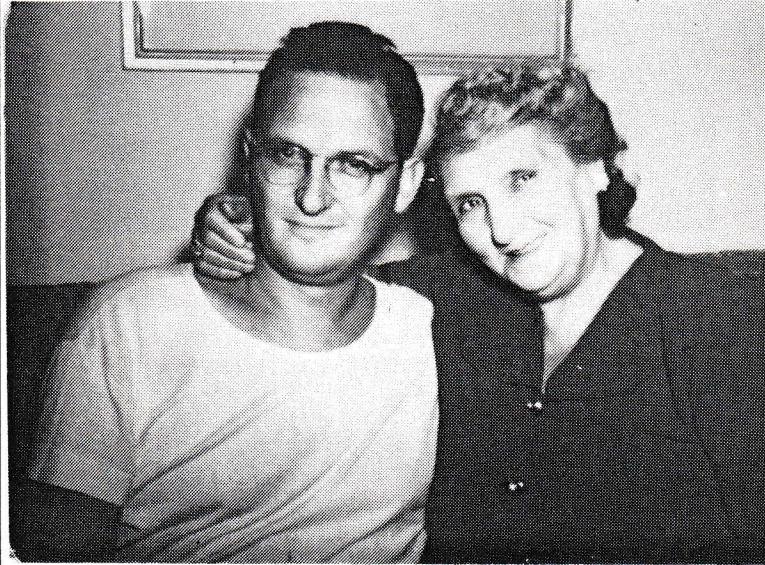
I treasure Milt and Irma's friendship. I have travelled to Israel with them twice, and thank them for their thoughtfulness and concern for me and for their "joie de vivre." From Irma I've learned her secret of youthfulness is her goodness, kindness, and genuine concern for others, plus her optimism, creativeness, and innate intelligence. From Milt I too have learned to love Israel and he has reactivated my interest in Judaism and its survival. He is a man of strong will and Lincoln-like character. I have learned wisdom, honesty, and to have a sense of humor from Milt. United they stand—I wish them good health and every happiness on their 50th anniversary.



Love,  
Betty Sachs



P.S. They are my favorite cousins and instead of 50 years of marriage, Irma looks 50 years old or less, and what better proof is that they have had a happy marriage — Long may they live...I love them both and all their family.



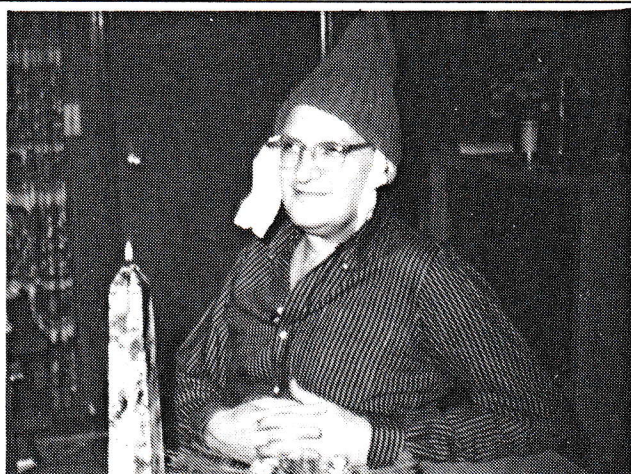
“Milt- He is a light in my life.”

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**From Sylvia Greenberg:**

I am most grateful to Milt for making it possible to connect with family members in Israel and Russia. He is the one who took it upon himself to search out family while visiting Russia and then get us addresses so we could correspond. Milt had started to write to our aunt in Russia who responded in Russian and asked if I could find a translator. I was lucky to find a woman who could read Russian and she translated for me.





From that contact Milt found another cousin in Kishinev, Amnon Maidenberg, whose letters are works of art. Imagine how thrilling it was to find that Amnon remembered me as a



4-year old in Russia, escaping from the Pogroms and emigrating to Canada. He also filled me in with information about our family in Russia and his letters (written to Milt and then copied for me) have always been a joy to read. The fact is that Milt is so conscious of the importance of family and the need for communication. He inspired in me the same sort of need and I have, by example, tried to emulate him. He is always helping our family by word or deed and is therefore much admired and respected for his constant attention to what is asked of him. February in Chicago is not the season of the year I would choose to travel, nor is the timing good, since I just returned from a trip, but upon receiving the invitation, without the slightest hesitation, I began planning how I could make it. I will be there!!

Love,  
Sylvia











**From Sylvia Prager:**

(As told to Reed over the phone.)

In the winter of 1956 the Maidenberg and the Prager family decided that they were going to go to Haiti to spend Christmas vacation with their families.

We arrived in Puerto Prince on the first plane to come into Haiti following a revolution. At this time, Papa Doc Duvalier became the President and everything was supposedly stable. We stayed at a little hotel called the Villa Creole, and it was so small that our families occupied most of the rooms.



The morning of New Year's Eve, we were sitting around the hotel pool, and I was talking to a young lady whose husband worked for the diplomatic service, and she was very bitter. They had lived in several areas of South America, and they were on leave at present as her husband was recovering from



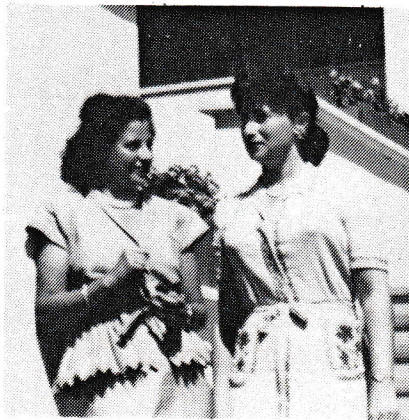
malaria. She talked about the second world war, and made a comment about how she thought that neither Sam nor Milt had been in the service. She inferred that their being Jewish had something to do with them not serving in active duty, which riled me. I explained that Sam had worked for an agency out of Washington, D.C., in a business that had been essential to the government, and that Milt Maidenberg

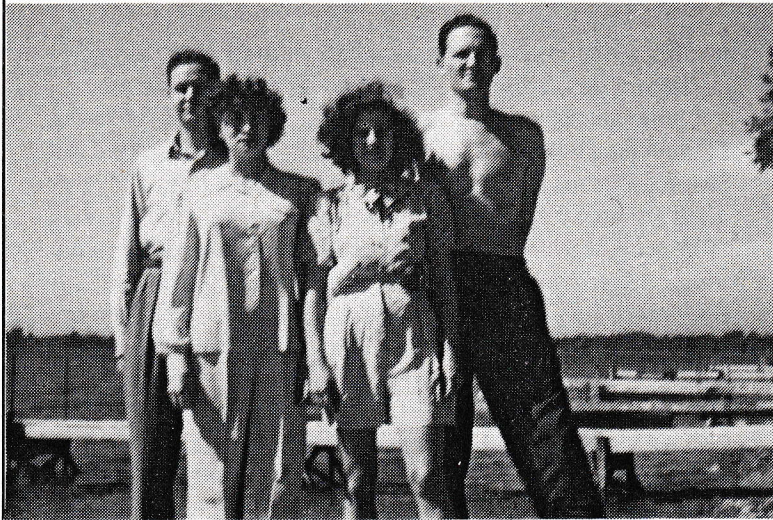


had been honored by the town of Marion, Indiana, for being a frequent blood donor. She had no comment about this.

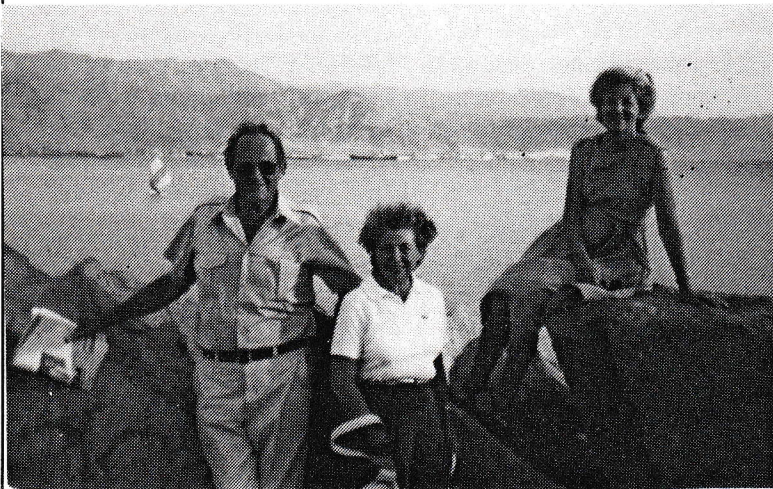
Later that evening, we took the girls and a couple of young Haitian men who were with us and went to a place called the Marengé Palace. Part of it was covered with a thatched roof; it was situated on a hillside, and was a very gay place. We were all dancing when somebody noticed smoke. It turned out that some people who were dissatisfied with the government had decided to set fire to the thatched roof. We were taken out and hidden, as it was considered unsafe for Americans to be seen in the climate of unrest surrounding the incident. We finally got back to the hotel after midnight. We were disheveled, sooty, and smoky, and finally went to sleep. The next morning, Sam and I were awaiting for Milt to appear for breakfast.

When he didn't appear, we made some inquiries and found out that he had been called out at around 4:00 am. He was needed as a blood donor; the recipient being the young woman I had talked to the previous day at the pool. I discovered she was pregnant, and her husband hadn't been able to be a donor because he was recovering from malaria, so Milt's blood was needed to aid the woman. Milt, of course, took advantage of the situation to remind the woman that from now on she'll "always have Jewish blood in her veins," and not to forget it. This incident sticks out in my mind from among the many vacations we took with the Maidenbergs over the years.



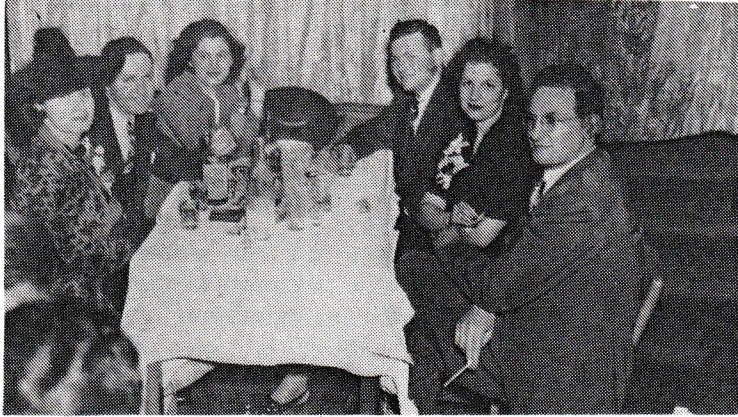


**With Sam and Sylvia Prager**



**Israel, sweet Israel**





**L'Chaim!**



**Soul Sisters – Born to shop**

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**From Ann and Julian Sector**

We have very fond memories of being with Milt and Irma when we were all newlyweds. Julian and I were married in 1940. We were all in the same boat financially and got together often for informal dinners, card games, and Mah Jongg.

Our separation during the war years drew us apart but Milt was wonderful about keeping in touch with all the men and wives in the service. Milt sent a small newsletter frequently to all of us telling about things happening in Marion and what he had heard from all the servicemen. Julian and I were fortunate because I was able to be with him in all the places he was stationed as he did not have to serve overseas. Milt always kept us cheered up and helped in our loneliness and homesickness.

When we returned home we again socialized with more formal dinner parties and had wonderful "happy hours" and times together.

As our families grew, so did we in our community activities and we each found our own niche. But we have always remained good friends and if any of us needed something from the other we were there to help.

Love,

Ann and Julian Sector



**The extended nuclear family circa 1981.**



**Editor's note:** Mom has always had a way with words. I have saved many letters she's sent me over the years with poems she custom-wrote for the occasion. Here's one I received from Sylvia Prager:

A Poem Irma composed as a Hallowe'en invite  
from 1943

**W**e're giving a party on Saturday nite  
And aspire to raise your Fahrenheit.  
Our aim is to banish all daily care  
And follow a course of laissez-faire.

**T**he mood is that of Hallowe'en  
1124 Euclid — the mise-en-scene.  
No one admitted without costume  
No matter how much they fret and fume.

**O**ctober 28th at nine p.m.  
Is the date we've set for our strategem.  
So cast inhibitions to the wind  
And plan for an evening undisciplined!

---

**From Peggy Gibbons:**

Dear Milt and Irma,

**I**'m so glad to have the opportunity to wish you both the very best on such a special occasion. Whether you know it or not, you've both touched my life deeply with your kindness, generosity, and wisdom. I wish I could do the same for both of you.

Love,  
Peggy and Gina

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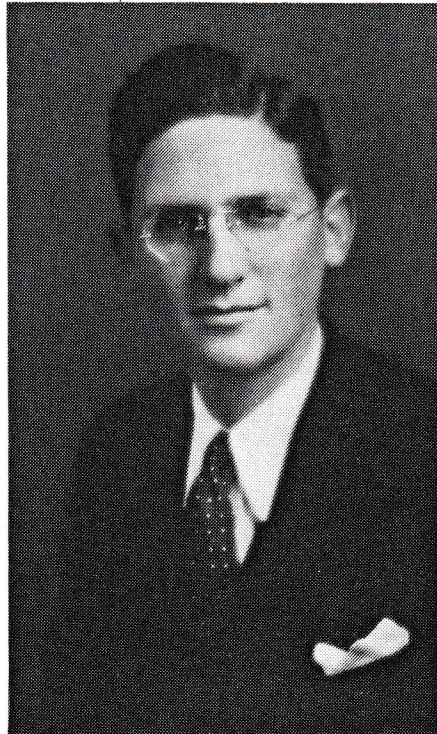
**From Ann and Max Ganz**

(As told to Reed over the phone)

Ann Ganz:

I've always had a pet name for Milt—the George Washington of our Jewish community. He was always there when we needed him; we could count on him. It was wonderful how he took care of the needs of our community. I want to thank Milt particularly for his efforts in publishing the newsletter that went out to all the Jewish Marion servicemen during World War II. Since Max was in the service I was on the mailing list, and it was a marvelous paper. *Thanks, Milt.*

I remember once when Max came back from the service on a 30-day leave, we came to Marion to spend a couple days. Milt's mother Rose had us over for one of her typical wonderful dishes of kugel, knishes, and all that...it was just wonderful. Frank was still in the service, but Milt and Meyer were there. It's been a very close, long relationship.







(Ann Ganz, continued)

And Irma, you have been a wonderful friend. I love going to the art galleries with you. ..I've always felt you were a "sexy dame."

**From Max Ganz:** (told to Reed over the phone)

I've known Milt as long...longer..than almost anybody in Marion. I was in the third grade when I came to Marion. Milt was a year ahead of me, though younger (I started school a year late since I came from Europe.)

We enjoyed the poker games we had when we were kids on Sunday afternoons on the porch of Milt's folks on third street. That was a lot of fun; we had a lot of good times—Jason, Julian Secttor, Julian Savesky, Charlie Siegel; a fellow named Rosenbaum was there, too...

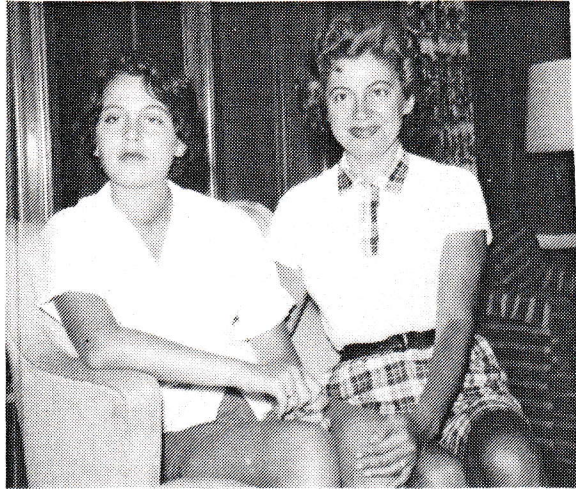
When Milt first went away to college, when he would return for some weekends, we would just ply him with questions about college—about the parties, and other aspects we wanted to know about. He gave us quite an incentive to go to college; he was responsible for *my* being so interested, and probably many of the others.

Marion, being such a small town, didn't have much to do other than what you did yourself. After we came home from the service, we had some very, very fine parties; a lot of people, good attendance, and at times they would even get a little wild. Especially when Jake Weinberg was around, and he would start in with the tie cutting. Meyer was one of the culprits too, with the cutting of the ties and carrying on. Meyer, because of his size, would help to carry home people who had imbibed too much alcohol.

We have a contract, to have a party on New Years' Eve, 1999. Milt started that. I'm hoping we'll all be able to be there.

We were at Milt and Irma's wedding reception. It was a rainy day in Indianapolis at the home of the Valinets'. Even though it was a rainy day, the marriage sure has done okay.

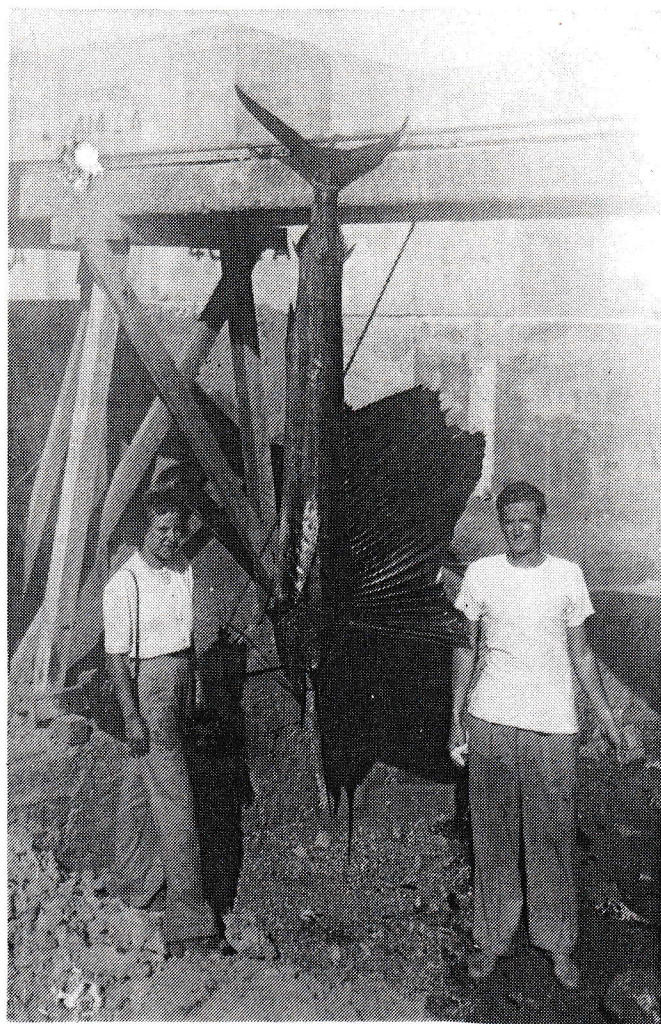




**Toby and Irma circa 1954. Toby was driving us all crazy watching Elvis on Ed Sullivan.**



**Now Toby has Johna to drive her crazy in her own way...**



**Is this where Milt's thing with fish started? I believe this was taken in Mexico.**





Looks like about the early 60's



Mom loves to play around with her own image.

Here's a "dressed up" photo she sent me a couple of years ago in a letter. It looks even wilder in the original color.

—Reed

From Betty Rubin

Recalling Irma and Milt circa 1939

When the world was young and so were we  
Before World War II, Korea, Vietnam,  
And the assassinations of Jack and Bobby and Martin  
When people married and stayed married  
And got high on martinis and Scotch  
Not cocaine, crack, and heroin  
In the Heyday of Swing,  
Before the Beatles and the Rock invasion  
It was the kinder, gentler America for which we so yearn  
That we grasp at the promises of politicians

Looking through a gauze-covered lens  
To capture the movie of our lives  
No imagining of the past obscures the reality of Marion  
The sleepy hick town to which Milt brought Irma as a bride  
Only the arrival of the Chicago Tribune disturbed the dust  
With its glimpses of big bands, movies, plays – living  
What an unpromising stage  
This dull, boring, constipated town was  
For the vivacious, imaginative, questing sophisticate  
Irma was and is

Yet into this time and place Irma arrived  
Attracting a coterie – every Jewish young blood envied Milt,  
And hung around their living room playing make believe  
From the vantage point of my college years, coming and going  
I observed the young marrieds  
as I awaited graduation and escape  
Milt yearned to be in uniform with everyone else  
Then Toby arrived, changing the equation  
Living across the street I thought she was the cutest baby ever

During that summer of '42,  
College completed, job-hunting ahead  
I first began to know Irma and Milt



Ben Maidenburg came into town, the deus ex machina  
 Who would change the plot of my life  
 By helping me get a job in New York – New York!  
 That city of “black magic,” the realization of a dream  
 Occupied with making it in New York,  
 Chicago, and Washington, D.C. I lost track  
 As Michael and Reed arrived  
 Missing the great growing years  
 For Irma and Milt as well as their kids

**V**isiting Marion on weekends,  
 Tightly scheduled with family obligations  
 It was impossible to nurture relationships  
 that were not already cast in bronze  
 Only occasionally did I wonder  
 Why Irma and Milt stayed in Marion  
 Beyond the time when business ties bound them to locale  
 And all that kept them were the ties of friendship, community  
 That helped them build a full life out of the barren environment

**O**nly recently,  
 As the opportunity to spend time together has happily occurred  
 Have I revisited the still questing enthusiasm, the joie de vivre,  
 The interest in the arts  
 Back in 1939-1942, the greenest of my years,  
 The world to conquer, myself to find  
 I thought...if I could grow up to be like Irma  
 Now that I ;m an involuntary retiree,  
 With the wisdom of my years and experience  
I still want to grow up to be like Irma  
 Milt was out of the question as a role model  
 –I can’t imagine myself 6 foot 3.

I do aspire to their joint accomplishment:  
 Still enjoying each other after 50 years

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

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**From Ruth Horwich:**

Ours has been a long and delightful relationship. We have traveled together many times and, of course, remained very close friends—the test of friendship, I would say. We’ve had many, many wonderful weekends in New York City, enjoying all the delights of that exciting city. We’ve been to the “Bitter End” together. Thank goodness, that only remained the name. It has truly been a very gratifying relationship for Leonard and me, and now, just for me.







July 28, 1983

FEB. 20, 1939

From Ann and Austin Hokin:

Don't you think it's really nifty  
 They're celebrating their number 50.  
 I'm speaking of Irma and Milt.  
 Of course, they love each other to the hilt.  
 Now I don't have any fears  
 Their marriage will last many more years.  
 And as they go on with their life  
 Let's hope it's without struggle and strife.  
 One thing more we would like to say:  
 "Have a very **Happy Anniversary** on this great day."

Love,

Ann and Austin



July 28, 1983

FEB. 20, 1939

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 One thing more we would like to say:  
 "Have a very **Happy Anniversary** on this great day."

Love,

Ann and Austin





**Irma and Milt on their anniversary in 1985. Milt was recovering from a broken leg.**

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**From Frank Maidenberg:**

(As told to Reed over the phone.)

During the war years something happened which summarizes Milt and no doubt Irma to a very substantial degree.

Milt is a wonderful letter writer. He writes letters to everyone in the world. He writes letters to all the relations; he writes to somebody just because their name is Maidenberg whether it's in China or Timbaktu, and he finds out things. Every time he finds something out, he finds out how to find something else, and on and on.

During the war – and I don't think he was ever really recognized for all it was worth – he published what they called The B'nai B'rith Bulletin. Now, Marion always has been a small Jewish community, and during the war years there was, at any one time, anywhere from 25 to 33 servicemen from the community throughout the world – Africa, England, Italy, Australia, Casablanca, everyplace. There was no way we could keep up with what everyone was doing, or where and why they were doing it.

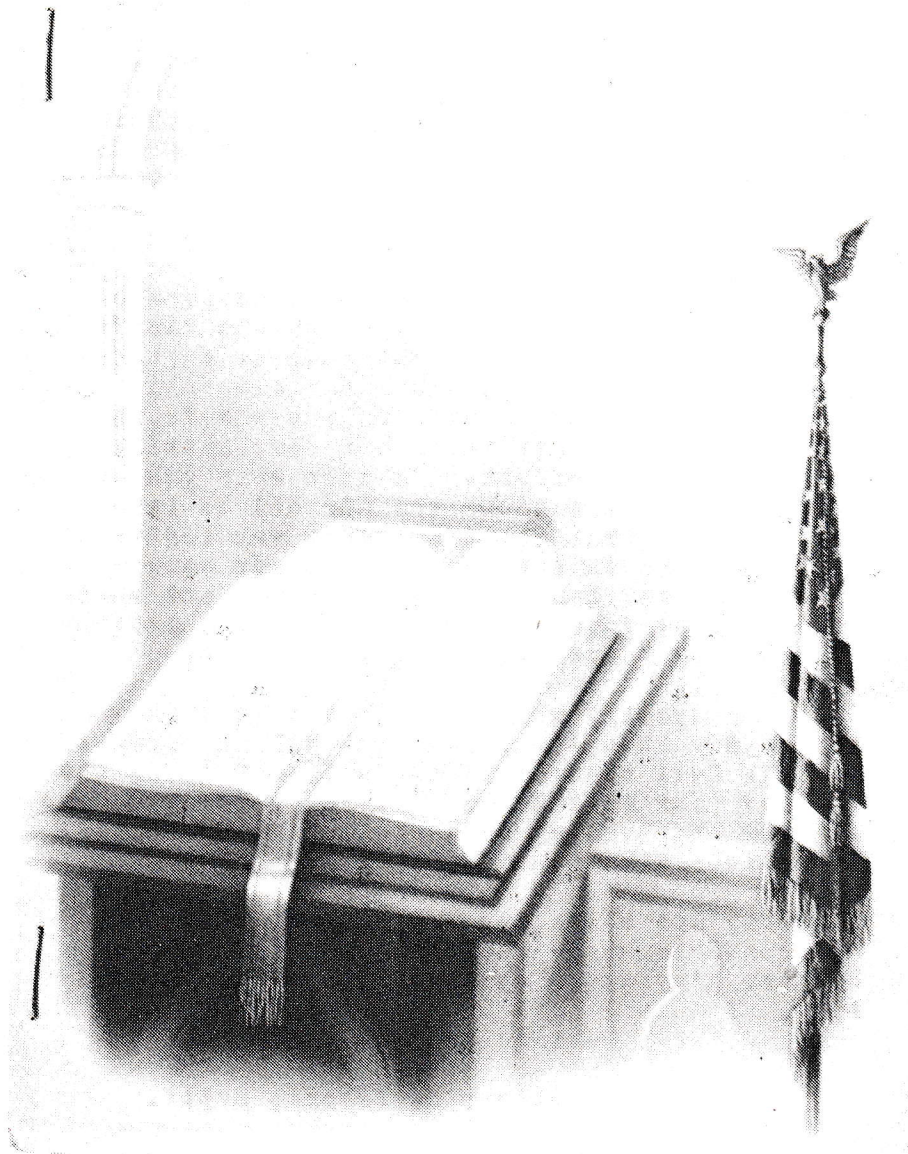
FIRST ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

THE B'NAI B'RITH BULLETIN

(OF MARION, INDIANA LODGE)

VOLUME 1, NO. 8 - - - - - JUNE 15, 1944

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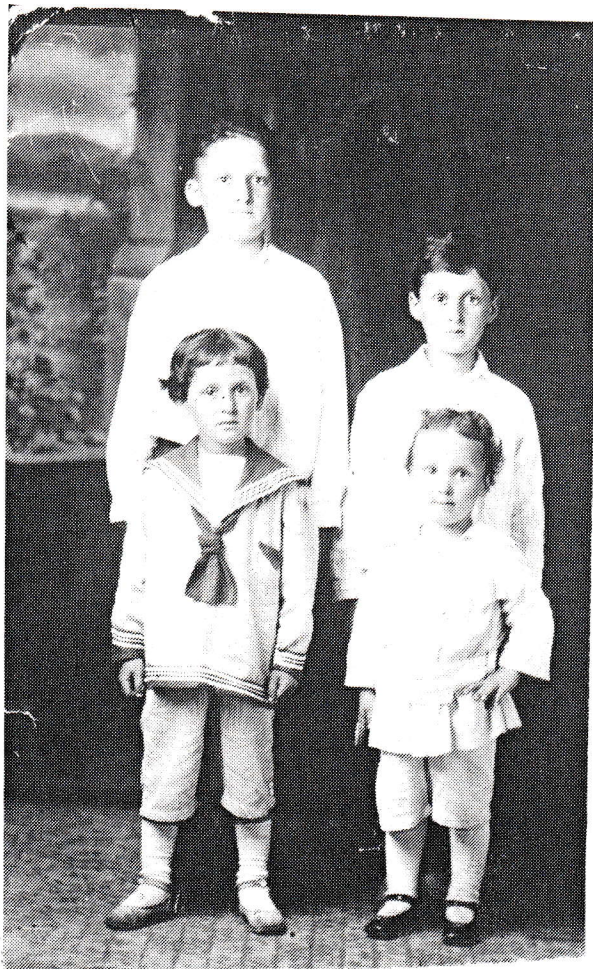
**The B'nai B'rith Bulletin.**



Well, Milt put together this bulletin, and in it he put all kinds of information, so that if I wanted to know what was happening with Max Klain, or Max Ganz, or Harry Schiff, or Captain Ben Maidenburg, I could find it in there. Whenever I received any mail, and the B'nai B'rith Bulletin was in there, I would open it first. It told us what was happening back home, so we knew when Dick Simons died, or Bobby Glogas; we felt close to home. Milt kept in touch with all the servicemen all over the world, and put it all together in the bulletin.

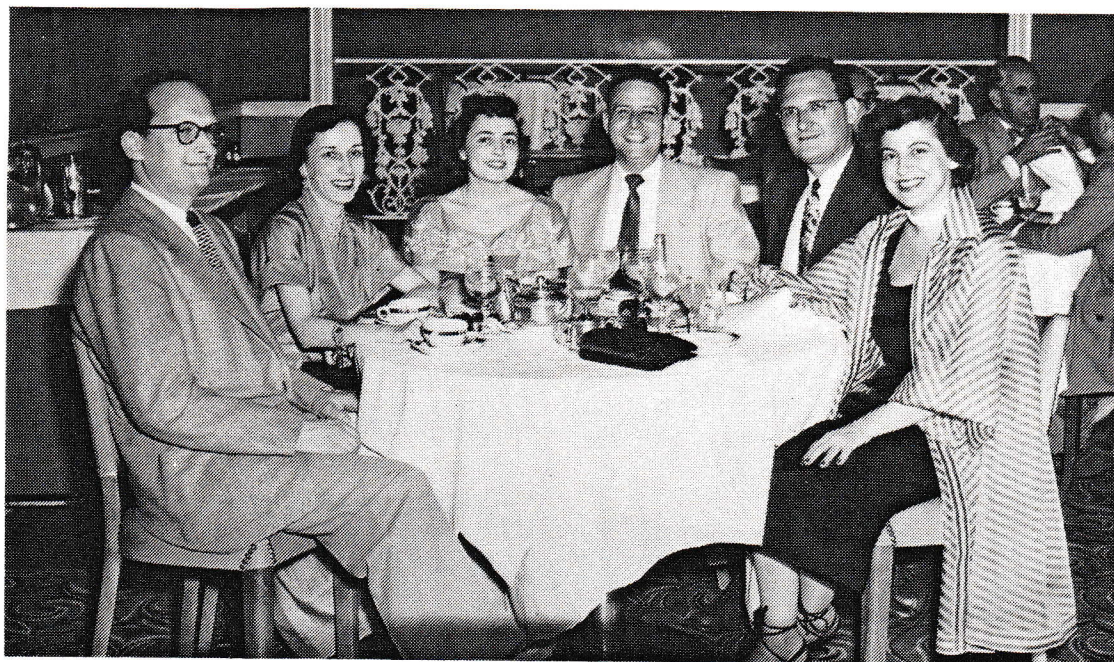
Milt is the famous communicator—he's a prolific letter writer. He subscribes to Jewish publications whenever he finds them because he always finds things he didn't know from somebody else, such as where the big strong Jewish communities are.

Well, Baltimore has a large Jewish community that has a fantastic newspaper, and among other things there was an article there about Senator (now Vice President) Quayle's father being a John Bircher, and maybe antisemitic, so Milt gets a copy of the letter and sends it to Quayle's father, who lives only 25 miles from Marion, and asked if he could comment on it—was it true? And the man called him on the telephone. He said he was once a member of the Birch Society, but that was years ago, it was a temporary thing, and he wasn't antisemitic, and he wanted to know where Milt got the letter. Quayle's father said he was going to be in Washington in a couple of days and was going to look into it, and he would be back in touch with Milt. That just exemplifies Milt's letter writing ability, from the B'nai B'rith Bulletin to other letters he's always writing. He finds out things, and I just thought it showed the kind of man Milt is. He's always trying to find out things one way or the other.



**The four Maidenberg brothers. From Top left, clockwise:  
Meyer, Ben, Frank, Milt. Photo taken in 1917.**







Some of the ladies from the temple.

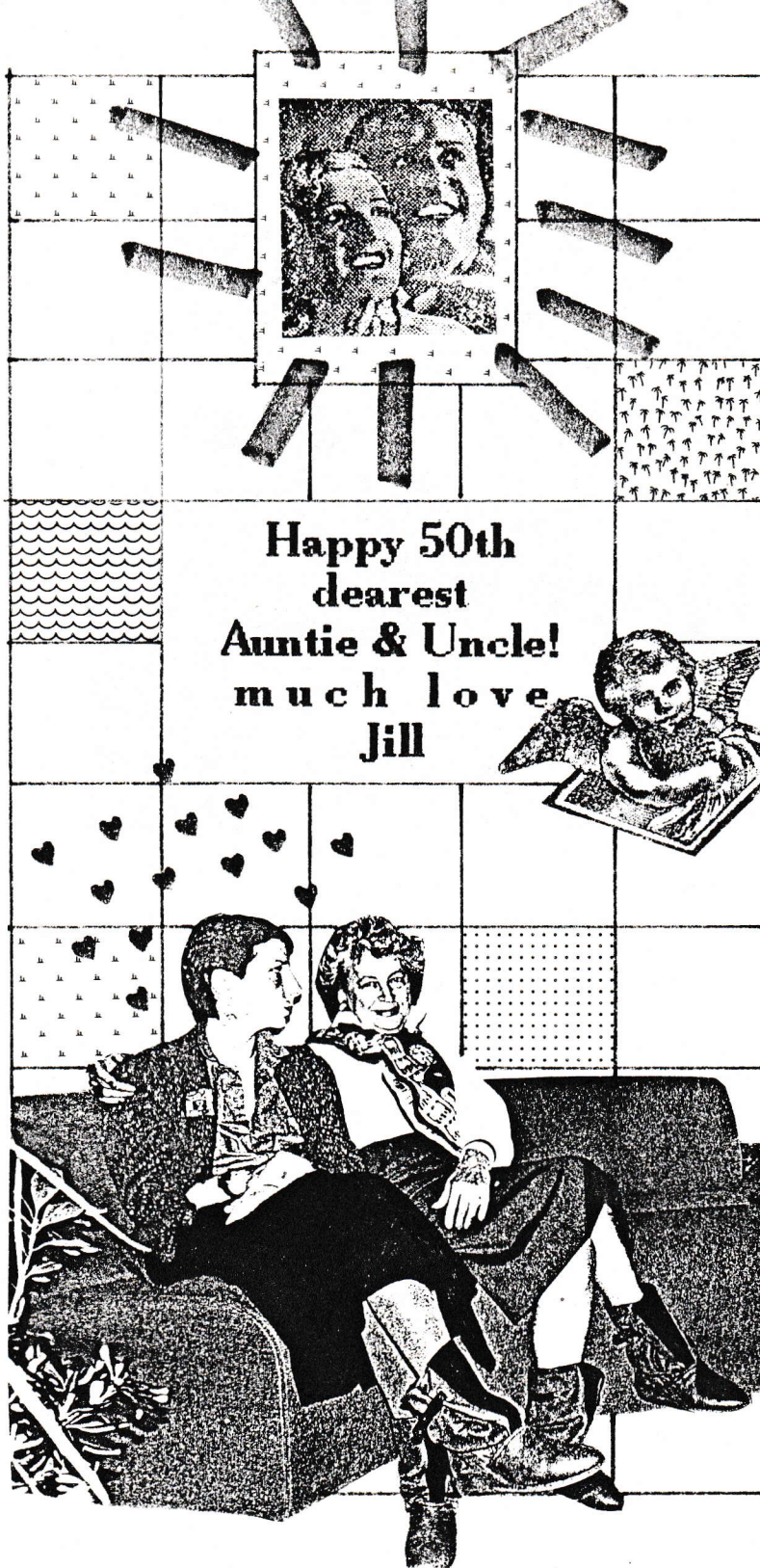
**Editor's Note** (from Reed to Mom and Dad:)

I want to use this space to add one thing for two people who couldn't be here for this occasion, but whom I know would share the joy of the moment if they could.

Mary Moore, my "Black Jew Mama," as she called herself, loved us like her own family. In many of her letters to me she described her appreciation for the care you took of her, and how you treated her as a human being, with dignity. She gave it back to us through her love and dedication to her work. It was the thrill of her life to travel to Boston when Johna was born.

And let's not forget Joe Mansfield. Wouldn't it thrill him to celebrate this happy occasion with us? I'll raise my glass once each for Joe and Mary this evening.





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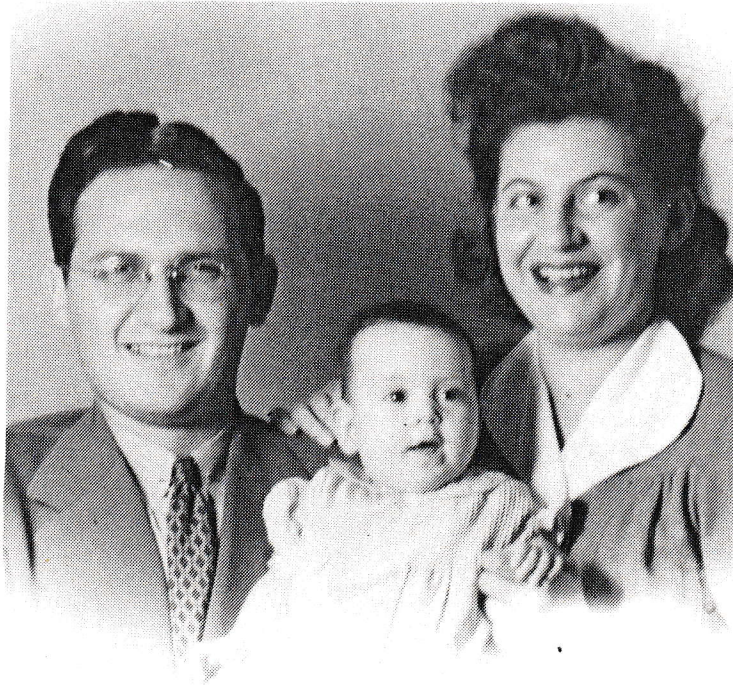
**From Suzy Shoshan and Family:**

Irma and Milt are two unusual people whose love and friendship, help and support, we have had the privilege and honor to experience.

They have always been there for our family at times of great or small need. They are FAMILY.

It is said you can't choose your family—in this case, that's fine. Irma and Milt, you are something extra special in our hearts. We wish you many more happy occasions and we love you.

Love,  
Suzy, Rafi, Jeanne,  
Gaby, David, and Nathaniel



With Toby



---

From Tony Maidenberg:

### **A Political Ode**

**M**ilt and Irma, like all the Maidenbergs,  
Lo these many years,  
Have tried to improve the human condition;  
They've enjoyed laughter and shed a few tears.

**T**hey've worked through the decades  
Trying to build a better world.  
And through those many battles  
It's the Democrat flag they've unfurled.

**We** take the measure of a person, however,  
Not just from those who admire him so.  
We also learn much about a man  
From those who tell him where to go.

**T**hat brings us to this recognition of honor  
That political trophy of which we're so proud.  
It was the singular achievement for The Family  
And we want to acknowledge it right out loud.

**I**t was Milt who was so honored.  
I remember the day with pride.  
It burst upon us like the 4th of July,  
Though some Republican friends say they almost died.

**I**t was one day in the early 70s —  
The radio new was my source.  
It was only a brief announcement  
Though it hit us with great force.

**U**ncle Milt, we were amazed and so proud to learn,  
Through the Washington, D.C., mist,  
Had been included on the original  
**Richard Nixon Enemy List!**

**M**ilt and Irma's political work  
Has inspired us all this time.  
I simply wanted to thank them with love  
Through this little rhyme.

Love,  
Tony



## A Family Album:



**The back of the photo reads:**  
Dear Toby  
and Mike,

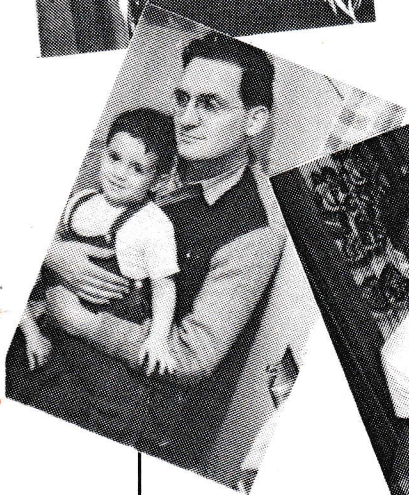
Look at your  
silly Mommy and  
Daddy. I'm sit-  
ting on a little  
donkey. Isn't he  
cute?

Love,  
Mommy  
and  
Daddy

**Who would have considered this an  
auspicious beginning?**

**The following pages contain photos of Irma, Milt, the  
children, and the grandchildren; messages, too...**









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**Three guys done gone fishin'.**

There is an amusing story behind this picture.

In December, 1961, shortly before my thirteenth birthday, Dad took Michael and me to Florida for some deep-sea fishing.

The trip had a difficult beginning. We took off on a night flight on a 4-engine prop jet. Several incidents took place on the plane which are memorable. First, Michael beat me twice in cribbage and then humiliated me in a wipeout game of crazy eights.

Then came the food. In those days, they served condiments in little paper cups with pull-tab tops. Our shrimp cocktail, of course, was accompanied by some kind of red sauce. Well, in trying to remove the top, I accidentally pushed it *into* the cup, causing a kind of cocktail sauce eruption which travelled about ten feet. Fortunately, though, most of the damage was local, specifically Michael's tie and white shirt. Unfortunately, it set the tone for the 7 days to follow. I seem to recall a bald man three aisles up wiping his pate with a handkerchief.

After our meal came the coffee, and the turbulence. The plane started jerking violently in the air, and the pilot came on the line asking us to please empty all liquids out—just pour them on floor. We complied, and immediately the turbulence passed. I don't know if it was something we did, or a joke the pilot was playing on the flight attendants ("stewardesses" in those days.)

Our week in Marathon was really pleasant for the most part. We did some great bonefishing, saw sharks and rays, and I learned some great new expletives from our guide that day.

Later in the week we went out on the "Ace," where I caught the 54", 64-pound Amberjack in the picture. It lived in my bedroom for quite awhile after that, preserved as a monument to my prowess. Eventually my trophy was consigned to a lowly, dusty corner of our basement, to the delight of my mother and some hungry little insects, which saw their food needs taken care of for awhile.



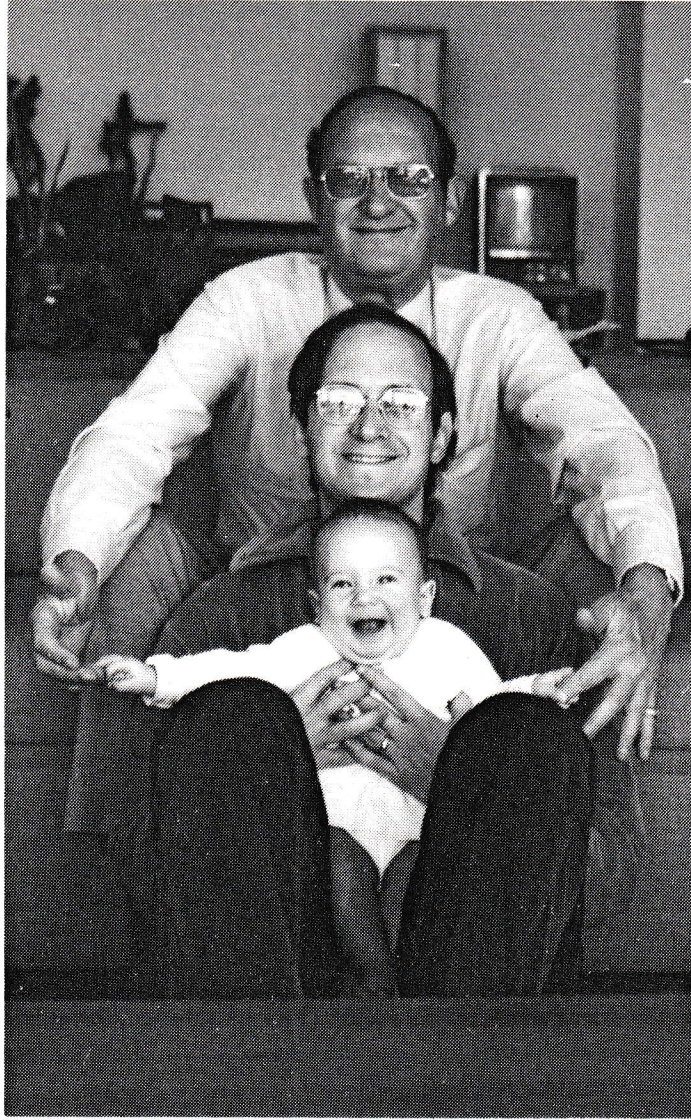
As you can see, we had a good day out on the ocean. The fish didn't. I eventually won some kind of trophy for the biggest fish caught that month at the Buccaneer Lodge. Being a vegetarian now, I look back on the whole thing with a sense of irony.

Dad, Mike, and I got along pretty well, for the most part. Dad got a little peeved by Michael's and my sparring over cribbage or whatever (Michael knew all my buttons very well), and by my antics on the tennis court. I reacted to losing at singles to my Dad in a less than honorable fashion. But what about our room at the lodge? Everybody knows Milt's insatiable hunger for newsprint. It didn't abate on vacation; as a matter of fact, the salt air and sunshine seemed to stimulate his appetite. By the third day, we no longer could see the carpet, having spread a uniform layer of Miami Herald's and New York Times on top of it.

About 12 days after this picture was taken, I was made Bar Mitzvah in Marion (A tip of the yarmulke here to Abe Zuckerman). In my own mind, however, I had proved myself a man by landing the "biggest fish of the month" at the Buccaneer Lodge.

Our 1956 venture to Haiti stands out as another memorable family outing, though I was only 8 at the time. First was the birthday cake on the airplane. Then "Raul" drove us in his battered car in a fashion that made one glad they hadn't eaten recently. The Haitian women on the road with the baskets on their head...The marketplace, with its array of exotica (such as the little Voodoo heads with the "poison" eyes). ..The little poodle which ran in the enclosed gutter of the swimming pool...the bougainvillea everywhere...Sylvia Prager incessantly posing with flowers in her mouth. And the Citadel. We ascended the mountain to that awesome stone fortress atop sure-footed donkeys. Yes, Milt and Irma, too! What an experience!

**And now, on to the Grandchildren!**



**Milt, Mike, and Joseph, circa 1972**



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**From Dan Maidenberg (age 11):**

**The House:** Grandma and Grampa's house will always be a vivid memory. With the plant light which I never understood (and don't to this day!), the moldy barfarino will always remind me of them.

**The Food:** Another great aspect of their house is the constant M&M and gum source. The little hamburgers made with bread are a unique delicacy.

**Grandma and Grampa:** Grampa always amused me with his sense of humor. He has a coin collection that I have always been fascinated with. Grandma, being a great chef, is also infinitely helpful.

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**From Ted Maidenberg (Age 14):**

The one good thing I remember is going to Granpa's and Granma's house when I was young. We would pick pears, play baseball, and generally have fun. No matter how busy grandpa or grandma were they would always have time for me. If I got hurt they would make me feel better. If I wanted a snack they would stop what they were doing and make me one. All and all I am one lucky grandson.

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**From Joseph Maidenberg (Age 16)**

Ohboy, ohwow, alright, supercool, and awesome penguin!! Tomorrow we fly to Grandpa's!

Can't wait...turkey...soda...and all those really weird things in that really weird room. One eye opens. It's still eleven forty something (one eye provides for quite a poor vantage of the clock.) I'll never get to sleep! I'm gonna stay up all night. I'm just too excited. The next thing I do is catapult out of bed and race upstairs to get the clothes carefully laid out there the



**Ted, Joe, and Dan Maidenberg**

night before. Doughnuts on the table. Good...they got chocolate-iced ones.

Jeez, airports are really big places. Playing with the buttons on the seats keeps me occupied for awhile. Gin rummy still holds secrets of strategy to be found. Danny and I play for quite a while, but Mom makes me give him back the half candy bar and assorted change.

My goodness, he's a big person! I wonder if I'll ever grow that tall. Nope. I bet I'll stay under five feet for the rest of my life. The kitchen smells great, and that refrigerator in the back is stocked with things that give teeth nightmares and dentists a job. There are Dymo stickers everywhere, including my favorite:

**A MOLDY BARFARINO LIVES HERE.**

A dish on the table has peppermints on it and a drawer at the bar is stuffed with gum. There's one room that spooks me out. It has a mirrored ceiling and all manner of bizarre items in it. There's a light whose leaves act as a switch, and a huge plastic turtle full of toys.



Every visit would be accompanied with a ride into town. We would cluster around Grandpa as we left, each putting his two cents: I want candy! or Can we get toys? or whatever. Grandma would always say "Oh, Milt! Stop spoiling those children. They ought to eat real food, not candy and junk." He would reply something like, "Don't worry, Irma, it's only four-thirty." She would shake her head and we would swiftly pull Grandpa out to the garage and fight over who hit the button. Well, someone got it, and the chain drive garage door opener pulled up one of the doors. We piled into the great huge green car (may it rest in peace) and headed to the store.

We arrived back home, toys in hand (including the annual collection of plastic dart guns) and artificial flavors and colors melting in our mouths. Grandma was raving at Grandpa for buying us huge sticks of grape bubble gum, but I could tell she enjoyed seeing us happy as much as we did.

There is a certain magic at 1100 Euclid Ave. Over the years, it has changed, as I have, but it is still there. Those memories are old, but fond.

I should like to add a few more recent ones now, like the Marion Inn. This place is one of the poorer hotels I have ever slept in, but it does have redeeming qualities. Since few people are brave enough to stay there, it is virtually empty, so we could play Lazer Tag at will. Also included should be the A-frame, the perfect picnic spot.

All in all, Marion, Indiana, Someplace Special (from that road sign) would be nothing without Grandma and Grandpa.



**Johna and David Klebenov**

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**From David Klebenov: (Age 15)**

When I think of Milt, I think of how much fun I have when I am with him. He is so easy to get along with, and in 15 years of knowing him, I have never seen him in a bad mood. The same goes for Irma, too. She is such a FUN person. She has a great sense of humor, and is very easy to talk to.

I remember whenever I wanted to visit them, I would look forward to grandma's cooking, especially her corn fritters. This year, my mother was playing a joke on Milt and Irma that I had gained an enormous amount of weight. She also told Grandma to not make her normal food, because I would eat too much of it. Finally, though, I made Mom tell Irma



that she was just kidding, because I wanted to have Irma's good food like usual.

When I think of Milt, I am amazed at how generous he is. Not only did he (I hate to say it) and still does spoil his grandchildren, but he also gives to charities and organizations. He does both of these out of the kindness of his heart. Milt is also a very interesting person. I am still learning about his life, and I barely know any more than where he was born, and where he lived as a child. When he tells me things I didn't know, I become amazed at how much he has accomplished and done.

When I think of Irma, I think about her jewelry for some reason. I think her jewelry reflects the part of her that I mentioned earlier. In this I mean that her jewelry is happy and talkative, just like herself. As with Milt, I don't know much about her past, but it sounds fascinating. These are things that I should find out.

All in all, I like everything about Milt and Irma, from where they live, to what they, say to what they do. They are very special to me, and I love them both.

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**From Johna Klebenov (Age 18):**

My grandparents are the coolest in the world. Being the first grandchild of the family, I have had the pleasure of knowing them the longest of all the grandchildren, and I'm glad of that.

From when I was a young child with Grandpa's candy cabinet at my fingertips, and a house full of love, to today, they have shown me that no matter what I do, they still have faith in me and love me, and that's important to me.

Congratulations, Grandma and Grandpa, for 50 years of a wonderful partnership, and for the marvelous family you have produced.

I love you both very much.

JOHNA



Santa Rosa, August, 1988

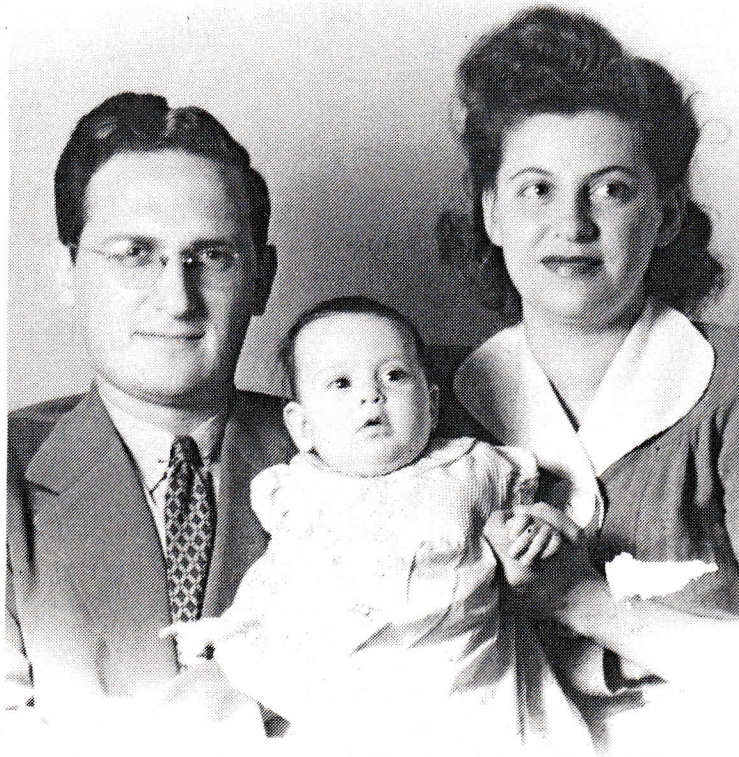
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**From Toby Maidenberger Klebenov:**

I don't remember anniversaries talked about or celebrated much in the years that I was growing up. I suspect that talk of anniversary celebrations received the same response then as we received just a few months ago when we conspired and then suggested this 50th wedding anniversary party: guffaws, hoots, protest. We grown children had to be firm and let Mother and Dad know that we weren't asking them if they wanted a party, we were *telling* them that for once we intended to celebrate their anniversary together with them...and please supply a guest list! 50 years is, after all, an accomplishment that some of us are more in awe of than others.

It is impossible for me to separate my earliest memories of my parents's wedded life from memories extracted from photographs, all entwined with a vague cast of characters, brothers and grandparents included.





Scene I...There were stories of summer visits to Lake Manitou by the boys from Marion. During one of these visits my father met my mother. Fade to:

Scene II...Dad hands (tosses?) Mother a small gift box as he leaps into his car, saying: maybe you would like this! (This being an engagement ring.)

Scene III...Mother and Dad at my grandparents' home in Indianapolis—Mother dressed in a satin wedding gown and posing in numerous outfits from her trousseau, Dad (and all the the male characters for some unknown reason) with fake moustaches, looking very rakish.

Honeymoon...World War II...Toby...Michael...Reed... Grandchildren! Fast forward to this event in Chicago (where Michael, Reed, and I share still more memories having to do with growing up in our family...family outings).

**We are happy for our parents and their successful venture!**



1954

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**From Kitty Maidenberg:**

I'll begin by saying that I'm especially grateful that Irma and Milt were together 46 years ago in order to produce Michael who is a terrific husband and father.

In the 17 years since we were married I've had a special interest in their marriage as an example to my own. Three ingredients come to mind: mutual respect, shared adventures, and most of all, shared laughter.

I am indeed fortunate to be part of this family. It's with sincere affection and deep admiration that I say:

**Congratulations on your 50th Anniversary.**





Mike and Kitty with Milt

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**From Jane and Joe Schaeffer:**

**H**eartiest greetings to all the Maidenbergs and friends,  
We salute you and send our best felicitations to you on this  
happy day of celebration.

What a joy it was for us when Kitty brought your Mike to our  
home and the big bonus was getting you two fine people along  
with their marriage! We are proud to be a part of your clan.

Congratulations on your Fiftieth Anniversary. We look for-  
ward to your Sugar Island visit this summer.

Much love,

Jane and Joe

**From Mike Maidenberg:**

**Dad:** It's a fall day in 1960. We have driven together to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where I will soon be entering college. It's been an uneventful drive on this grey day, but there is something in the air. What is it? We pull up to South Quad, my dormitory. It doesn't take long to find the room and unload my belongings. Here I am at college. Still, I feel there is something in the air. We talk, you look around. Lots of other 18-year olds in sight, not too many parents. I need to meet my roommate, find new acquaintances. It's time for you to return to Marion.

We walk silently to where the car is parked. I stick out my hand for a goodbye shake, and look into your eyes. I see the tears, and now I know what was in the air.

We are at one of life's parting points, and you are bidding me farewell with a love that cannot be expressed in words.

I see it in your glistening eyes, though, and know: it has always been with me, it will always be with me.

**Mom:** It is late 1958, not too long after my 16th birthday. For months now, I have mooned over the thought of getting my driver's license. The ability to drive: The ultimate teenage freedom, the great rite of passage in Marion. We drive to the examiner's office where I will take my road



test. I am nervous, jumpy. You say you will wait for me while I take the test.

I get in with the examiner, and it is a disaster. I can't do the damn parallel park, banging the tires on the curb again and again. I get flustered on a turning exercise, head down a street in the wrong lane, traffic heading directly at us. The examiner turns ashen, grabs the wheel, tells me to return to the station.

Flunk. Come back in a month, son. I am devastated. It's the ultimate humiliation. I walk to you in dejection, tell you what happened, and start to get in the car on the passenger side, the flunkee side, the dodo side.

No, you say firmly, you drive. It's a flash of revelation. You have confidence in me. You have more faith in me than I have in myself. You gave me back what I just lost:

Self-confidence. It's the gift of a lifetime.



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**From Reed Maidenberg:**

One of the advantages of putting this booklet all together was getting to see everything people sent before putting in my own two cents' worth. Getting the long view, so to speak. I just want to say how pleased I am and grateful to those who participated by sending words and pictures. I couldn't have done it without you. I was really very touched by much of what I read. Thank you. And now, back to our program...

Mom, Dad: You're wondering, I know: "Why all the fuss?" True, like us all, you're only human, with all that implies, subject to the inbuilt deficiencies of the human condition. So what's so special about you?

We aren't gods or heroes, perhaps, but like Sagittarius, we hold our bows tensed to shoot arrows of aspiration heavenward. How many times those arrows land in the swamps of our own confusion!

There are moments when we pass a mirror and with our peripheral vision spot something different about our all-too familiar image. Stop. What is it? Has something changed? Let me look, scrutinize that inscrutable reflection. But I can't make it out. I thought for a moment I could see the actual passage of time taking place. But no—It happens while we're busy doing other things, looking away from the mirror towards the daily business of life.

Dad, you often have quoted to me that poem:

Time by minutes passes away,  
First the hours, then the days  
Small at first the loss appears,  
But it soon amounts to years.

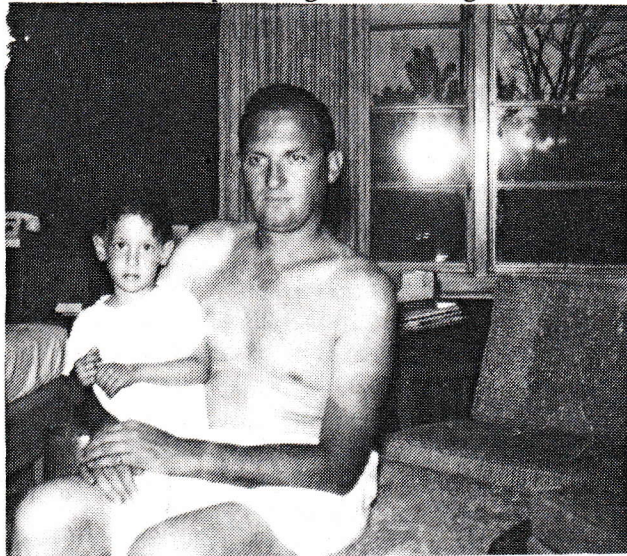
There's also a song which goes:



Turn around, and you're two  
Turn around, and you're four  
Turn around, and you're a young man,  
Going out of the door.

Turn around again, and we're in Chicago, 1989, gathered in your honor in celebration. Small at first the accomplishment appeared – but it's now amounted to 50 years!

This celebration is providing a lens through which we can



view our own lives, an alchemist's stone for an experience which will fill our hearts to overflowing, and, I suspect, our eyes as well.

So let us be happy, let us cry, for those two emotions are as wedded as you.

This, for me, is a true Harmonic Convergence.

In closing, I want to say some thanks: for your love and confidence in me, which has helped to shape who I am; for instilling in me values of humanity, tolerance, and forbearance; for an appreciation of beauty and grace and a sense of aesthetics; for irreverence and a healthy skepticism of authority; for your dedication to family; for a healthy constitution; and for the supreme importance of a sense of humor and the healing quality of laughter.

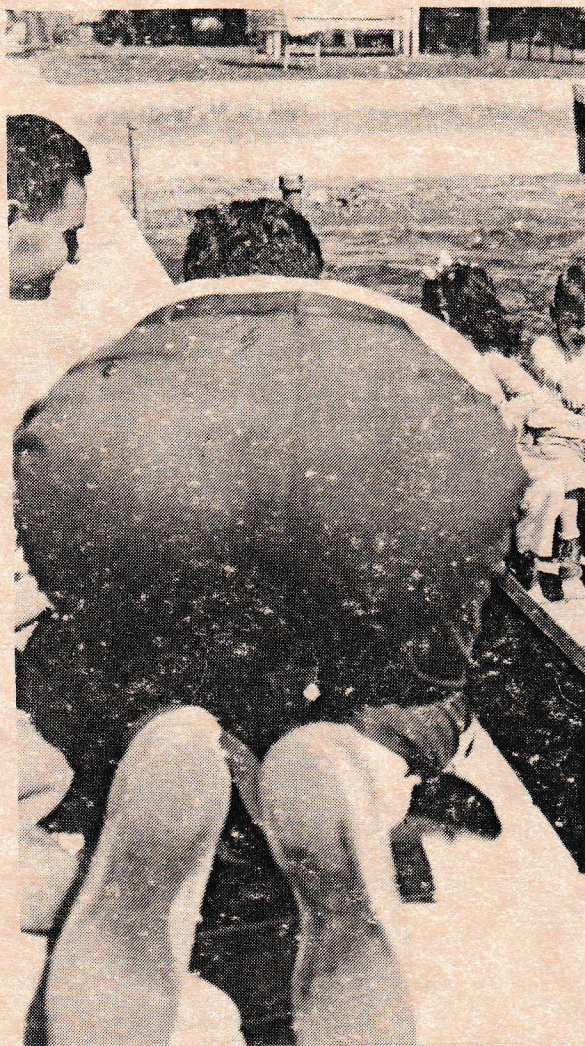
Thanks, for all that, and for arriving at this day together so we all could share it with you. May many more such as this come our way!

Love,  
Reed.

**That's All, Folks!**

**L'Chaim!**





**The End.**