

Notable Deaths of 5765 Rabbi Randall Mark Wayne, NJ

(Lists compiled by Rabbis Arthur Weiner & Howie Siegel)

Each year many, many people die. Some of them are well known or have accomplishments that are noteworthy. It is worth a moment of our time to stop and consider just a few.

Saul Bellow, Noted contemporary Jewish author of, among others, “Herzog,” and “The Natural,” later to be made into a movie starring Robert Redford.

Johnny Carson, the unquestioned “King of Late Night Television.” For over 30 years he brought into our bedrooms and living rooms smiles and laughter at the end of some difficult days. Someone once asked Mr. Carson what he would like his epitaph to be. He thought for a moment and reached for the traditional line of a talk-show host: “I’ll be right back!”

Chief Justice William Rehnquist, a staunch Conservative who remained true to his ideology throughout his time on the Supreme Court. He was often referred to as the “Lone Ranger” for his many dissents on a previously more liberal court. A champion of states’ rights, his most notable decision was probably a 5-to-4 vote in 2002 permitting parents to use public tax money to send their children to religious schools.

Rodney Dangerfield, born Jacob Cohen, he became the comedian who “got no respect.” He used to say, “I was ugly, very ugly. When I was born, the doctor smacked my mother.”

Arthur Miller, the famed Jewish playwright who wrote such notable plays as “Death of A Salesman” and “The Crucible.” He was also known for having been married to Marilyn Monroe.

Milton Green, a US Jewish athlete who refused to compete in the 1936 Nazi Olympics.

Peter Zvi Malkin, the former Israeli Intelligence agent who in 1960 captured Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in Argentina.

Louis “Shorty” Levin, in 1946 he sold a ship that needed renovations to the Chinese American Industrial Company – a firm that turned out to be a front for the Haganah, pre-state Israeli army. The ship was rebuilt and in the summer of ’47 sailed for France renamed “The Exodus.”

James Doohan, best known to Trekkies as Scotty, the Chief Engineer on the U.S.S.

Enterprise. How many times have we found ourselves in situations where all we could say was, "Beam me up Scotty!"

Simon Weisenthal, a Holocaust survivor who, together with his wife, lost 89 members of their family, he devoted the rest of his life to bringing Nazi war criminals to justice. Among the 1100 war criminals he flushed out, he is best remembered for the information he passed on to Israeli Intelligence leading to the capture of Adolph Eichmann.

Maurice Hilleman, the microbiologist who developed vaccines for mumps, measles, chickenpox, pneumonia, meningitis, and other diseases accounting for the saving of tens of millions of lives.

Bob Denver, remembered as the wacky first mate of "Gilligan's Island."

Nahum Sarna, the notable Jewish scholar whose translations and commentaries on the Bible made it more attainable and understandable to generations of Jewish students, rabbis, and laity.

Christopher Reeves, who played the title role in the Superman movies of the 1980's, who after a 1995 horseback accident became a leading advocate for the needs of the paralyzed and for stem cell research.

Benjamin Mehlman, a leader of the Reconstructionist movement, a branch of Judaism that encourages a continual re-examination of the religion's basic tenets for the modern age. He was a founder and chairman of the Board of Governors of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and a founder and president of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation, an association of about 100 Reconstructionist synagogues in North America.

Yassir Arafat (Ymach Shmo)

Verona Johnston, America's oldest person, a 114-year-old woman who voted in every election since women earned the right in 1920 and had the thinnest file in her doctor's office.

Reggie White, the defensive end who was one of the greatest players in National Football League history. White was named to the NFL's 75th anniversary team in 1994 at defensive end. He was the league's defensive player of the year in 1987 and 1998 and was chosen for the Pro-Bowl for a record 13 consecutive seasons, 1986 through 1998.

More than 300,000 men, women, and children in 11 South East Asian nations as a result of a massive earthquake triggering tsunamis staggering in power and dimensions.

Jerry Orbach stage veteran and star of NBC's venerable "Law & Order". Orbach made his mark on the New York stage in musicals including "The Fantasticks," "Chicago," "Carnival" and "42nd Street." He won a Tony for his work in "Promises, Promises."

Frank Perdue, chairman of the executive committee of Perdue Farms, the company he transformed from a family farm into the country's third-largest chicken processor. Last year, Perdue Farms had sales of \$2.8 billion and employed 19,000 people. In over 200 different ads from 1974—1991, he reminded us that “it takes a tough man to make a tender chicken.”

Ezer Weizman, former President of Israel and military hero.

Anne Bancroft, the stage and film star whose signature triumphs in a 50-year career ranged from the courageous Annie Sullivan in "The Miracle Worker" to the hungrily seductive Mrs. Robinson in "The Graduate."

Luther Vandross, Grammy award winning singer and song writer.

Gen. William Westmoreland, who commanded U.S. forces during the Vietnam War from 1964 to 1968 and advocated a strong military buildup at a time when American casualties were mounting.

Peter Jennings, anchorman of ABC World News Tonight.

Hundreds of our fellow Americans, in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, victims not only of Hurricane Katrina, but incompetent leadership, disastrous environmental policies, contempt for the needs of the poor, and institutional racism that even a half century after the civil rights movement's victories, still afflict our nation. Perhaps before Katrina we could ignore this—but no longer.

Shirley Chisholm, the first black woman to serve in Congress and the first woman to seek the Democratic presidential nomination. When she left Washington, she said she did not want to go down in history as "the nation's first black congresswoman" or, as she put it, "the first black woman congressman." "I'd like them to say that Shirley Chisholm had guts," she said. "That's how I'd like to be remembered." Indeed!

Yitzhak Levi, the next-to-last Afghan Jew. He was 80. Zebulon Simentov, 45, is the last known Jew remaining in the country.

Johnny Cochran, prominent civil rights and defense attorney who represented OJ Simpson, among other celebrity clients.

Terri Schiavo, whose death by removal of her feeding tube led to a national debate on the meaning of life, and the rights of both the sick, and their caregivers.

Pope John Paul II, who made reconciliation with Jews a priority, and will be remembered for his vigorous defense of life and human dignity.

We have also faced personal loss in our own community. We have had members suffer the loss of grandparents, parents, siblings and friends. We have lost many members too.

We remember the warmth of Harry Adlerstein, beloved husband of Shirley; they came to us to be close to their daughter Annette and her family and he adopted every child in the shul.

We remember Boris Becker, husband of Lilia and father of Simon; who fought a valiant battle against his illness, but in the end it was too much for him.

We remember Helen Bergman, a long time member, with no immediate family of her own. She was loved and remembered by her extended family and her Shomrei Torah family.

We remember Bill Cohen, husband of Gail and father to Jennifer, Scott & David – who waited patiently for a new liver and then sadly left this earth much too soon.

We remember Louie Heidelberger, a WWII liberator of Nazi concentration camps.

We remember Alvin Honigfeld, husband of Natalie and father of Howard; he was the patriarch of his family.

We remember Steve Katz, brother of Ann Wolman; a gentle giant, who for a brief time, shared his presence with our Shabbat Regulars.

We remember Tom Lewis, husband of Susan, father of Josh, Micah & Noah; a man who embraced Judaism, loved his family and did the best that he could.

We remember Gregory Markhasin, husband of Rimma; he hung on to life for months and months against all odds, after tragically being struck by a car crossing the street to come to shul. Rimma, thank God, made a full recovery and then spent every day at his bedside, loving him, caring for him and praying for him until his passing.

We remember Jerry Salny, husband of Abbie; he spent many years being Abbie's eyes and caring for her; until suddenly the tables were turned and then she cared for him the last days of his life.

Every person is special to someone. Each of us has characteristics that endear us to others. The question that each of us should ask ourselves now is what do we want to do with our lives? How do we want to be remembered? Now is the time to change! Now is the time to make a difference in the lives of those that we love. No one knows the day of his/her death, so it is incumbent upon each of us to live each day to the fullest, for we don't know what tomorrow will bring.

Take a moment to think about the people that are most important to you and what is the most important thing that you can be doing for them or with them? Think about what you can do or say this very Yom Kippur day.

Yizkor is a time to remember, but also to think about how we want to be remembered.
May you fill your life with wonderful memories today and always.