KESSLER, IRVING

JUH-10-15-10

Irving Kessler, 88

NEWPORT - Irving Kessler, the executive vice chairman emeritus of the United Israel Appeal (UIA), died on Oct. 2. He was an esteemed leader devoted to the care of the Jewish community worldwide, and to the nurturing of Israel.



A World War II veteran, he served in the Army Air Corps Pathfinders. He led UIA from 1974-1988 and was senior advisor to Mendel Kaplan, the late chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), for several years. He had been the executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford and a staff associate for the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston. He also worked with the Labor Zionist Organization, Histadrut, and Israel Bonds.



He was instrumental in early effort to secure U.S. government funding for Soviet and Ethiopian Jews to immigrate to Israel, and he secured the necessary line of credit with UIA's strong reputation in the banking circles.

Active in the Association of Jewish Communal Professionals (AJCOP), he received its highest honor for professional service, the Mandelkorn Award, and served on many local, national and international Jewish community and Zionist organizations.

In his later years, he devoted a great deal of time to his four children and seven grandchildren. He lived in Newport, with his wife Greta. They were members and supporters of Newport's Touro Synagogue in which they married in 1955.

Hs life was about Israel. He exemplified the saying in *Pirkei Avot*, "Say little and do much."

Donations may be made to Touro Synagogue, 85 Touro St., Newport R.I. 02840.

Newport Daily News

Obituaries



Irving Kessler

NEWPORT – Irving Kessler, 88, Executive Vice Chairman Emeritus of the United Israel Appeal, passed away on Saturday, October 2, 2010.



Kessler

He was a World War II veteran, in the Pathfinders, Army air Corps.

Irving Kessler's career began at Tufts University with a BA in History and Government. His graduate work at Columbia was in the Department of Public-Law and Government. He earned a Masters Degree in Social Work while working for the Combined Jewish Philanthropies in Boston.

During the 1940s to the 1960s, Irving Kessler served organizations supporting the state of Israel: Israel Bonds, Labor Zionist Organization, and Histadrut in New England.

He became Director of the Hartford Jewish Federation, and in 1974 the Executive Vice Chairman of the United Israel Appeal until 1988. Kessler served the following organizations during a time of historic happenings: Professional Advisory Committee of the School of the Jewish Communal Service, Hebrew Union College; American Jewish Appeal of Greater New York; National Conference of Jewish Communal Service; Hornstein School, Brandeis University; American Zionist Youth Foundation; United Jewish Appeal of Greater New York; National Conference of Jewish Communal Service; Member of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

Irving Kessler was committed to the well being of Jewish communities worldwide through his competence in Jewish community organization. He was held in the highest esteem from colleagues and volunteer leadership around the world.

Irving Kessler is survived by his wife Greta, brother George, son Seth and wife, Susan, daughter Susan and husband Buki Schwartzman, daughter Deena and husband Barry Sarvet, son Alex and husband John Miller-Monzon, grandchildren Aaron, Ma'ayan, Samantha, Gideon, Galit, Shir, Asher and cousins, nieces, nephews.

Children Seth, Susan, Deena, Alexander and their families join Greta at home in Newport for the mourning period.

Gifts in Irving's memory may be sent to Touro Synagogue, Touro Street, Newport, Rhode Island 02840.

A Funeral Service will take place on Wednesday, October 6, 2010 at 2 p.m. at the Hoffman Jewish Memorial Chapel, Fowler Avenue, Newport. Burial will take place at Beth Olam Cemetery, Wyatt Road, Middletown, RI.

For more information visit www.onhfh.com

JFNA MOURNS PASSING OF IRVING KESSLER

Oct. 5, 2010
With great sadness, the Jewish Federations of North America, its Board of Trustees and staff mourn the passing of Irving Kessler, z"l, an esteemed leader of the Jewish people.
Kessler, 88, Executive Vice Chairman Emeritus of the United Israel Appeal (UIA) passed away Saturday, Oct. 2 surrounded by family. He was devoted to the care and well-being of the Jewish community worldwide, and to the nurturing of Israel.
A veteran of WWII, Kessler served in the Army Air Corps Pathfinders. Kessler led UIA from 1974-1988 and then was senior advisor to the Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, Mendel Kaplan (z"l), for several years. He had previously been the Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford, Staff Associate for the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston, and worked with the Labor Zionist Organization, Histadrut, and Israel Bonds.
As partner with UIA lay leadership, Irving brought the message of the Jewish Agency for Israel to the American Jewish public, and to the Federations. Irving was instrumental in the earliest effort to secure U.S. Government funding for immigration to Israel for Soviet and Ethiopian Jewry. It was Irving who secured the line of credit with UIA's strong reputation in the banking circles. UIA served as paymaster for the first planes carrying Ethiopian Jews from refugee camps in Sudan to their freedom in Israel in 1984. This was the beginning of Operation Moses.

He was active in the Association of Jewish Communal Professionals, receiving its highest honor for professional service, the Mandelkorn Award. He served with many local, national and international Jewish community and Zionist organizations.

"We are greatly saddened by the passing of a hero of the Jewish people," said Michael Gelman, chair of the JFNA Executive Committee. "Irving did so much for Jews in Israel and around the world, and his loss touches us all."
In his later years, Irving devoted a great deal of time to his four children and seven grandchildren. He lived in Newport, R.I. with his wife Greta. They were members and supporters of Newport's Touro Synagogue, where they married in 1955.

Irving's life was about Israel. He exemplified the saying in Pirkei Avot, "Say little and do much."

A funeral service will take place Wednesday, Oct. 6 at 2 PM at the Hoffman Jewish Memorial Chapel, Fowler Avenue, Newport. Burial will take place at Beth Olam Cemetery, Wyatt Road, Middletown, R.I.
Donations in Irving's memory may be made to Touro Synagogue, 85 Touro Street, Newport R.I. 02840.
May the entire Kessler family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem and may his memory be forever as a blessing.