Benjamin G. Paster



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What, Me Dead?

Ben died. He knew it would happen eventually, but now? Yes, now. On September 16, 2023.

Born to David and Ruth Paster of St. Louis, Ben is survived by his most respected and beloved wife, Linda, whose role in his life he often described with the Aretha Franklin lyric, “When my soul was in the lost and found, you came along to claim it”. He is also survived by his wonderful daughter, Nicole Campbell (and her husband, Keith) and his adored granddaughter, Eleanor Mapitsitch, his revered brother Jim (and his wife, Flora), and numerous nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his first wife, Judith Ann (Gray) and his sisters, Betty Leavitt and Toby Rossner.

A graduate of the Wharton School, Ben went on to earn law degrees from the University of Cambridge (LL.M.) and Yale University (J.D.). He also studied at The Hague Academy of International Law, The Netherlands, and the London School of Economics, England. Ben practiced trust and estate law in several large law firms before founding a boutique firm with John Harpootian, his partner of 40 dispute-free years.

Ben was a good technical attorney, taking the greatest pride in solving complex tax issues with what tax lawyers refer to as “elegant” or simple solutions. But most satisfying to him was working with clients to minimize the stress inherent in family relations and assisting them in the structuring of their philanthropic activities to achieve the Jewish tradition of tikkun olam — the healing of the world. Many of Ben’s clients became lifelong friends.

One of his greatest loves was the sea and he was happiest when sailing. His catboat, Per Stirpes, was a fixture on Narragansett Bay for decades and he was proud to have been a Past Commodore of the Edgewood Yacht Club, a role he described as being the best job. Ben was also a member of both the New York Yacht Club and Sam’s Club.

Ben served in many leadership roles, as well. Meaningful to him were his time as a Chairman of the Miriam Hospital Foundation and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Rhode Island Foundation. In recognition of his service to the state, Ben was bestowed the honorary title of Rhode Island Commodore.

There will be a memorial service to honor his life on Sunday, September 24, 2023 at Temple Beth-El in Providence, RI, at 11:00am. In lieu of flowers, Ben would like you to go out and buy some for yourself to brighten your day.

Arrangements are in the care of Sugarman-Sinai Memorial Chapel, Providence. For condolences, please visit www.sugarmansinai.com

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