



# Theodore D. Gelman

MAR 9, 1934 - JAN 23, 2018



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## Theodore D. Gelman

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**G**ELMAN, Theodore was an exceptional and revered father, brother, grandfather, great-grandfather, a loving husband, a father-in-law, a popular uncle and he was a loyal friend. He was taken from us by a sudden heart attack on Tuesday, January 23, 2018 at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach, FL. When Teddy Gelman held court...he regaled you with his long-winding tales or his endless collection of corny and funny jokes.

A self-made man, he was a living example of the American success story where hard work makes dreams come true! Born on March 9, 1934, he became a successful, trusted and admired financial advisor and Wall Street broker. Teddy grew up during the depression in the Jewish enclave of Brighton Beach in Brooklyn, New York. His work ethic was surely born from seeing his parents Benjamin and Helen toil tirelessly in those trying times. Teddy and his older brother Bobby watched their mother at the kitchen table, over and over paint a dozen sets of eyes on dolls for 25 cents.

He was proudly a US Marine who enlisted straight out of Abraham Lincoln High School to join his countrymen in the Korean War. Although as he disembarked, he and his platoon were ordered "back on the ship" because the war was over. He spent the next three years on duty at a Marine Corps camp at the base of Mt. Fuji in Japan. After his tour of duty, Ted returned to New York where his remarkable Wall Street success story began. Having only a high school degree, he arrived at the offices of Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenn & Bean (as the firm was known at the time) and offered to work for free if they would teach him something. They were so impressed with the young Marine that he was given a \$45 a week job in the order room. Using his native intelligence, he quickly rose through the ranks, eventually receiving his brokerage license and becoming a financial advisor. After twenty-three years in the financial industry in New York, Ted joined the firm of Donaldson Lufkin and Jenrette in 1978



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and moved with his wife Ellen and their four children, Bonni, Mila, Duff and Karen from the bitter winters on Long Island to a tropical paradise, Sunset Island in Miami Beach, Florida. Teddy lost his beloved wife Ellen to cancer on May 22, 1997.

In 2000 DLJ was acquired by Credit Suisse and he spent five years with that firm before spending the last eleven years of his career at the venerable firm Dominick & Dominick.

After becoming a widower, Ted began to devote more and more time and energy to charitable causes. He served on the Board of Governors at the Bankers Club, and was active with the Beacon Council, the Miami Bond Club, and the North Shore Optimist Club. He was also an avid supporter of the United Way of Miami, the Sylvester Cancer Center, the Salvation Army, St. Jude Children's Hospital in Memphis & the Founders Club at Mount Sinai Medical Center. In the mid-nineties, he began serving one day a week at Camillus House and became a longtime member of the institution's Board of Directors. He was both the inspiration and the host for the first major Camillus House fundraiser at Norman's, a restaurant Ted co-founded with world famous chef Norman Van Aiken. It is there in 1998 at a closed-door dinner featuring Julia Child that he met his second wife, the now former Miami TV News anchor, Ana Azcuy. This December 18th would have been their 20th wedding anniversary.

An eternal lover of jazz, Teddy relished vibrant memories of countless NY nights in the 1950's when he attended live concerts by Miles Davis and John Coltrane. An art collector, movie fiend, a big Broadway fan, a connoisseur of fine wine and food...he for years savored his favorite Cuban cigars.

Despite working on Wall Street for some 60 years, just retiring in August 2016, Teddy managed to see the world. He visited every continent and probably sailed the seven seas as a major cruise ship lover who relished long hours reading his favorite authors reclining on a deck chair.

Above all, Teddy was a loving father and generous provider. While he did not go to college, his respect for a good education tirelessly committed him to fund private school and college education for his children and grandchildren. He was just getting started with his four great-grandchildren.



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He gave more than he took and wanted to be an impactful member of his community and the American family. He even surprised his wife Ana for her 45th birthday by establishing the “Ana Azcuy Excellence in Journalism Scholarship” at her alma mater of Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton.

Obviously, we all love Teddy....so today the question is not how he will be remembered...but how could we EVER FORGET HIM.

The Gelman family respectfully asked in lieu of flowers, donations be made in his memory to Camillus House, P.O. Box 11829, Miami, FL 33101, [www.camillus.org](http://www.camillus.org) and/or the Montessori School of Columbia, 411 South Maple Street, Columbia, SC 29206, [www.montessoricolumbia.com](http://www.montessoricolumbia.com), where his youngest daughter, Karen Kuse, is the Head of School.

A service celebrating the life and times of Ted will be held TODAY, Saturday, January 27, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. at Levitt-Weinstein Memorial Chapel, 18840 W. Dixie Hwy, North Miami Beach, FL 33180. Arrangements by Blasberg-Rubin-Zilbert (305) 865-2353



# Events


**Theodore D. Gelman**

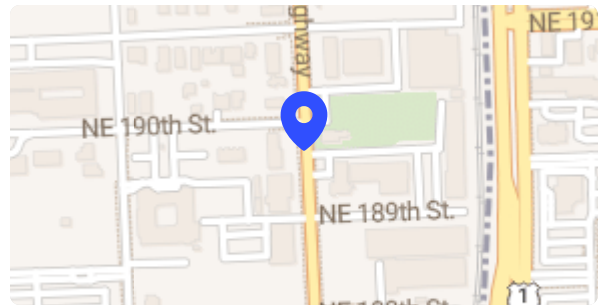
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## Celebration of Life

 **Saturday**, January 27, 2018

 1:00 PM ET

 **Levitt Weinstein Eternal Light Funeral Service Center**  
18840 W. Dixie Highway, North Miami Beach FL  
33180





## Tribute Wall

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**Leslie Taheri** posted:

When Teddy first hired me as his assistant, back in Sept 1985, I thought I was the luckiest person in the world. I LOVED my job. I Loved getting up in the morning and coming in to work. I loved being there. I never in my life worked with someone who had such a love for life, such a whacked-out sense of humor and I never knew what to expect next. Was he going to shoot rubber bands at me? Tell me another crazy joke? Down a whole cup of cafecito all by himself and then bounce off the walls with a caffeine overdose? I laughed with him for 31 years and I cannot begin to say how sorely he will be missed. Leslie Taheri

January 26 at 9:45 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Theodore by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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