

Dear Congregation Agudath Israel Community,

For this 'We Love Nat' celebration, I will be in Israel with the 8th grade from our school, The South Area Solomon Schechter Day School. I am very sad to be missing this event and look forward to hearing all about it and reading what has been written about our father, about our parents. I do know that if I need to miss the celebration for any reason, being in Israel is an excuse my father would accept wholeheartedly!

We grew up in your shul. It was a second home to us. We always felt that we were surrounded by deep love and caring from the time we were young children. We basked in the love that is given so completely to our parents and the love that they give back every moment they are in the shul.

To this day, when I say I am from Caldwell, people talk about the shul. There is no question that, no matter the age of the person with whom I am speaking, they seem to know my father. He has been a central personality for so long that he ties the different generations together. He is often the voice and the personality that others associate with growing up in Caldwell.

The other day, my mother wrote on Facebook, "I have loved Nat for 59 years". There are so many different kinds of love that my father has engendered and reading what my mother wrote, really put that in perspective. Growing up as part of the Taubenfeld family, we were given a sense of the world that is unique, that is passion filled, and that is Jewish to the core. Our parents' values permeated every part of our upbringing

I am going to share just a few thoughts and memories:

A scene that I wish we had on video was when our whole family went to Israel. We were in Yad Vashem's [ישראל] Community of Lost Villages and we found my father's village in Poland, called Radymno. We did not cry when we found it. We stood tall, all three generations, and took a family picture. My father proclaimed, "*This, our healthy and strong family, is a nail in Hitler's coffin.*" Strong words from a strong and passionate man.

It is that passion that he brings into shul every day. I love sitting next to my father when he davens. I will never forget the Yom Kippur when our brother, David, was so sick and we knew that he was not going to live. My father was *shaliach tzibur* for a liturgy that is filled with words about God choosing who would live and who would die. My father's voice was strong but he cried through the whole davening. For those of us who knew what he was saying, we too cried. I could not imagine saying those words and representing the congregation. But there he stood. My proud, compassionate, strong, deeply sad father, facing losing his youngest child, was sharing that moment in time with God and with his shul.

My parents taught us to be proud of who are, to stand up tall for what we believe, and, most importantly, to make a difference in the world. We, in turn, and with their help, have taught those things to our children. It means something to carry on the tradition of the Taubenfeld family.

We honor our parents every single day, every single minute in the day. We know that we are not alone. We appreciate that Congregation Agudath Israel loves him and accepts his love so purely. Thank you to all who worked hard to make this a wonderful event.

B'hatzlachah החלצה
Jane Taubenfeld Cohen