



## Charles Stanley Kopp

April 7, 1930 - November 27, 2020

Charles Stanley Kopp was born in Oklahoma City on April 7, 1930 to parents Bella and Leo Kopp. He graduated from Central High School, and worked in his family's grocery/hardware/feed store that was across the street from the original OKC fairgrounds on Eastern Avenue (now Martin Luther King) from childhood through high school. He drove a truck from the age of twelve to Yukon and other towns to pick up feed, food and supplies for the store. This was allowed in that era as a necessary part of agriculture and the agrarian economy.

Charles was the president of his high school's Ciceronian Debate Society, and a member of Aleph Zadik Aleph youth group (AZA). He then worked in his family's mattress factory for several years during college. His family were members of Emanuel Synagogue in Oklahoma City.

Charles earned a bachelors degree in business administration from the University of Oklahoma, was a member of Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity, president of his frat pledge class, and participated in the ROTC program. After college, he did military preparation at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland. Charles was an ordinance supply officer for the U.S. Army in Furth, Germany, outside of Nuremburg, from 1954 to mid 1956.. He was honorably discharged in June 1956 at the rank of first Lieutenant.

In the 1950s, he worked with his father-in-law, Louis Mandel, at Mandel Iron and Metal Company in Tulsa, owned a liquor store in Sand Springs for a few years, and sold life insurance for Bankers Life (now The Principal), being a member of their "million dollar" producers club. While working for his father-in-law, people often were baffled that they had different last names, as they assumed that Charles and Louis were father and son; they were that close.

In 1962 he purchased the Stekoll Insurance Agency, a specialty company with a select clientele. He changed the name to the Charles S. Kopp Insurance Agency, and was able to keep all of the accounts, expanding the business many fold. Several of his clients were

well-known Tulsa names that no longer exist, but are familiar to long-time Tulsans. Among them were Frougs Department Stores, Gray's Jewelers and Otasco. He ran the agency for 25 years.

Charles had a project, co-sponsored with Fitzgerald Funeral Home, of providing the Jewish holiday calendar for the Tulsa Jewish community. The Kopp Agency ordered, prepared and mailed them every year. After Charles sold the business in the mid 1980s, the Tulsa Jewish Federation took his place providing the calendar with Fitzgerald. Norman, Charles' younger son, grew up stuffing envelopes, and putting labels & stamps on them.

His talent for taking care of his customers was matched by his knack for developing innovative insurance programs for various industries. TIPS (Total Insurance Protection Services) catered to grocery stores in Oklahoma and Texas. Charles handled the insurance of many Otasco stores in several states, and had the territories of eastern Oklahoma and the state of Arkansas for Jewelers Mutual for many years, in addition to running the Kopp Agency.

But it was in the wholesale beer industry that Charles made his mark. He developed the first successful national property and casualty package insurance program for it. This program, through his agency, National Insurance Services, Inc., got the endorsement of 26 of the 42 state beer associations in the 1970s. The NIS "50-State" program existed for fifteen years, working with hundreds of independent insurance agents throughout the country.

Charles traveled to dozens of states for the program, sponsoring golf and tennis tournaments at state beer conventions, speaking at many of them. In those years most distributorships were owned by individuals. Charles developed a convention seminar for the wives of beer distributorship owners. The seminar advised them on how to keep the business afloat should they lose their husbands. He brought in wives who had been in that position themselves to participate. It was quite unique for its time.

Later Charles set his sights on developing progressive programs for the healthcare industry, including for several PPOs. Some of them expanded nationwide. He loved to work, and to be with people. He was a realist who had a positive outlook on life, and always looked forward to tomorrow. Charles was a handsome man with a pleasant disposition that attracted others. His hazel eyes became a more beautiful shade of blue-green in his later years.

Charles married the love of his life, Lillian Ida Mandel, in August of 1951 while still a student at the University of Oklahoma. They were married for 43 years until Lillian passed in November 1994. They were both strong willed, independent people who enjoyed each other's company. There is a funny story about their first meeting. Lillian was visiting a friend who was in a sorority at OU in Norman. She was walking up the steps to enter the sorority house, while Charles, who had just left his date in the house, was leaving. He bumped into her, and she fell down. After helping her up, he looked at her, and said: "Hello, and Goodbye." Lillian watched him walk away at a brisk pace. She then inquired at to whom he was. She liked his walk. And the rest became their story.

Charles survived his sister, Elaine Witrogen and her husband, Melvyn, of Wichita, Kansas; and survived his sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Shirley and Robert Wasserman, of Oklahoma City. He was close with them all, and his life was enriched by having them in it.

Charles is survived by his son Norman, his son Stuart and his two sons, Andrew and Adam; by four nieces: Natalie Barkan (Daniel) & their three sons of Tel Aviv, Marci Wasserman (Shelly Wilsey) of Washington D.C., and Marcia Singer & Beth McCloud of California; by nephew William (Bill) Wasserman (Karen Sherman) & their three sons of Bethesda, Maryland. Charles and Lillian also had a daughter, Valorie, who lives in Tel Aviv, Israel, as well as her two children, Tomer and Nellie.

Charles worked with his son, Norman, for 35 years. Norman was his business partner, and a tremendous source of support after the passing of Lillian and other relatives. They were good friends, sharing meals, holidays, civic events and entertainment.

Charles was a member of B'nai Emunah Synagogue in Tulsa, and, for many years, Temple Israel and the Tulsa Jewish Community Center. He loved playing tennis, and was a founding member of a Sunday morning tennis group at Tulsa Southern Tennis Club that played throughout the 1970s and early to mid 80s. Merv Aptak, Frankie Moskowitz and Irv Berman were the other core members. Several of their friends subbed for years. He enjoyed horseback riding, exercise/walking, country/western music and tv/movies. Also, gardening, playing with the family dogs and reading were among his pastimes.

In June 2015, Charles had an accident at the gym which resulted in a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Norman became his full-time caregiver. He considered himself lucky as Charles was sweet-natured and mostly cooperative. Their time together was special, and highlighted the love, friendship and trust that they shared.

Special thanks must be made to Dr. Michael Maxwell (pcp), his nurse, Lynn, PAs Pauline

and Michelle, and their office team (including Dena and Julie) at St. John Health System. Dr. Richard Liebendorfer preceded Dr. Maxwell as Charles' pcp until his retirement. Dr. Thomas Rapacki (neuro-surgeon), assistant Ingrid and nurse Jennifer are the best. Also, kudos to cardiologists Thomas Kalapura, Vikram Katari and Steve Scott. The attention and care that Charles received is truly appreciated. And thank you to the numerous unmentioned professionals at St. John.

Gratitude to the therapists and nurses at St. John Cardiac Rehab (main campus), especially Joanna Hughes and Regina Dillon. Also to Joy, Jill, Shelly, Dana, Dan, Jeremy, Travis, Julie and Drew at Cardiac Rehab. An honorable mention must be made of The Villages at Southern Hills, a skilled nursing facility at which Charles had three six-week stays.

In his later years, Charles attended services at Temple Israel, events at Zarrow Pointe (the Tulsa Jewish Retirement Center), art shows at the Allie Jensen Memorial Gallery of the Dennis R. Neill Equality Center, and ate out at a few local restaurants. April (server/mgr) at the 31st & Memorial IHOP is a sweetheart and friend; Managers Debbie, George and Eddie have been friends there, too. The IHOP at 71st & Lewis (managers Stephanie, then Dillon), Ricardos, Cancun International and 3 different Braums locations also were favorites. The kindness, assistance and inclusion afforded him by the staff and managers (and many fellow patrons) has been most appreciated.

Miller Hospice in Tulsa was essential in helping Norman care for Charles during his transition. Nurses Jaime and Anita, Social Workers Francis, Mary and Jonie, CNAs Ashley & Maegan, Business Manager Charity, Nurses Elaine, Whitney, Kim, James & Brandy, Intake Nurse Janie, and Dr. Holder all were present and responsive to both Charles and Norman. Their guidance, candor, listening ears and compassion made this time meaningful, beautiful and bearable.

A private family service was held at Hebrew Cemetery in Wichita, Kansas. Charles was buried next to his wife, Lillian, and her parents, Louis and Nellie Mandel. It would be appreciated that any donations in Charles' memory be made to B'nai Emunah Synagogue, Temple Israel, Zarrow Pointe or the Dennis R. Neill Equality Center, all in Tulsa.

# Events

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**DEC** **Graveside** 01:30PM

**14**

Wichita Hebrew Cemetery

Wichita, KS, US

# Comments

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“ We would like to share our condolences to members of the Kopp family. We went to B'nai Emunah with Valorie and Stuart.

Charles helped my parents with their insurance needs and always did it so professionally.

Fondly,

The Neuwald family  
Karen Neuwald  
Sharon Neuwald  
Bonnie Kennedy

**Karen Neuwald** - December 26, 2020 at 02:25 AM

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“ We traveled to Italy with Charles & Lillian Kopp mid-1980s for 'Thanks a Million,' insurance convention where \$1M Lire was to be given to an agent. He and Lillian took this opportunity to travel to Israel to visit Valorie during this time - wouldn't you know it..., his name was drawn for award/prize that you had to be present to accept. They always were pleased to be with their daughter and you'd admire their grace in this...!

He adored Lillian and loved his family very much - very close to Norman.  
God bless all Kopp families. Clay Roberts

**Clay Roberts** - December 20, 2020 at 09:02 AM

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“ I met Mr. Charles much later in life. He always was warm and welcoming, and had a terrific smile. He most definitely had the gift of gab and loved to just chat. His gracious nature will be missed.

May his memory be a blessing, and may grace carry Norman in the loss of his gentle father.

**Rosie Lynch** - December 16, 2020 at 05:43 PM

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“ These are relevant pictures that I thought people might like to see. Thank you.

.....Norman Kopp



**Norman Kopp** - December 16, 2020 at 10:58 AM