

BURTON KAPLAN



Burton Berline Kaplan, August 31, 1940 - March 28, 2011. Burt was a business leader, philanthropist, father, grandfather, athlete, and unwavering supporter of social justice. He died peacefully at his house in Highland Park at the age of 70 after a courageous 20-year battle with Parkinson's disease. After graduating from Highland Park High School in 1958, he went to Wesleyan University, where he played football, studied intellectual history, music appreciation and began his 50-year marriage to Anne, the love of his life. His career as CEO of Sealy Mattress of Illinois and co-chairman of National Bedding was launched after graduating from Harvard as an MBA in 1966. In the late 80's, he became concerned about the growth of economic inequality in America and focused his efforts on providing educational opportunities for the underserved children of Chicago. This pursuit would continue throughout his life. In 1987, he started an I

Have A Dream (IHAD) program in Chicago's Cabrini Green neighborhood, adopting a class of 43 seventh-graders. He worked to provide them with the tools and financial resources necessary to graduate high school, college, and to become productive citizens. This class remains an important part of the extended Kaplan family. He continued his efforts to break the cycle of disparity in the quality of public education for underserved children as one of the founders of North Lawndale College Prep, a charter high school producing positive results working with the children of Chicago. He also served as a director of the Albert Pick Foundation, the Ounce of Prevention Fund, and the Kaplan Family Foundation. His contagious love of the arts translated into loyal support as a board member of the Ravinia Festival, the Joffrey Ballet, Auditorium Theatre, and as a collections committee member of the Art Institute and the Museum of Contemporary Art. A devoted skier and golfer until the end of his life, Burtie will be remembered for his beautiful turns, clutch putts and his relentless determination to fit all he could into each and every day. He tirelessly sought to provide those around him with ever-expanding physical, educational and intellectual opportunities. Burt is survived by his wife Anne; his father Morris (Dolores) and the late Alice; brother Robert (Laurence), sister Jean, his three children, Beth (Ken) Karmin, Mike (Laura), Charlie (Elaine Sun); and his nine grandchildren, Hannah, Henry, Chloe, Edmund, Emma, Eli, Stella, Ava and Sam. Services will be held at the Kaplan Residence on Thursday, March 31, 2011 at 3 p.m. In lieu of flowers, contributions to the North Lawndale College Preparatory School, Museum of Contemporary Art or the Joffrey Ballet. For information please call **Seguin and Symonds Funeral Home** 847-432-3878

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