

Vineyard Gazette Online

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Educator Marvin Joslow, 79, Was Active in Aquinnah

Marvin Joslow, 79, of Aquinnah, died at home on Nov. 25. He was the husband of Betty B. Joslow.

Marv in his personal life was a devoted husband, a loving father to his daughters Laurie, Wendy and Nancy and his sons in law Bob and Karl, and a caring grandfather to his seven grandchildren: Joshua, Rebecca, Emily, Andrew, Brad, Cliff and Jeremy.

Marv enrolled at Colby College. After one semester, at the age of 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He served in the medical service until 1945, achieving the rank of lieutenant at nineteen.

After the war he returned to Colby, graduating in 1948 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. He then enrolled at Western Reserve in Cleveland, from which he graduated in 1950 with a master's degree in educational administration.

He met Betty in 1949 at a folk dance group. They were married in June of 1950.

Marv always said it was the luckiest thing he ever did in his life. Only one short month after their wedding, he was recalled as a reservist in the U.S. Navy to serve during the Korean War. He volunteered to train as an underwater demolition expert, a "frog-man," and was sent to Yokosuka, Japan. Transported to Inchon Harbor, Korea, by submarine, he worked with his small unit in the dangerous and risky operations of blowing up tank traps, bridges and other underwater impediments under the noses of the North Koreans. Armed with a carbine and explosives, he made forays on land, and underwater in the dark of night. His unit earned presidential citations.

In August 1952, he was discharged. He was very proud of his naval service, knowing that he had been part of a highly selective endeavor.

He and Betty renewed their life together in Columbus, Ohio, where they lived for two years before moving to Newton Highlands, where they raised their three daughters.

For many years, he owned and directed the Reading Institute of Boston, a private school founded by his parents. He was also a consultant at many schools. A highly regarded educator, he served on the board of the College Reading Association.

Marv and Betty were summer residents of Martha's Vineyard for many years. Then, in 1963, they built a home in Gay Head. They took much pride, pleasure and delight in this community. In 1996, they became year-round residents. Marv and Betty loved Gay Head, its trails and its beaches, collecting beach glass and other treasures of the deep. Marv spent a lot of time fishing at West Basin. Although he was crazy about fishing, he wasn't fond of fish, so the fish sometimes went to friends or were released.

In retirement, Marv engaged in a great number of community activities. As a proud volunteer in the Aquinnah Fire Department, he hardly ever missed a Sunday muster. He served as constable of the town and chairman of the zoning board of appeals. A lover of books, he served as chairman of the Chilmark Friends of the Library and treasurer of the Friends of the Aquinnah Library. He was treasurer of the Aquinnah/Gay Head Community Association. He was chairman of the Up-Island Council on Aging for nearly 10 years. He kept abreast of ongoing community affairs, dutifully attending meetings and actively participating. In all of these activities he was always well prepared, principled and even-handed.

Upon learning he had cancer, Marv and Betty dealt with this new challenge forthrightly, determined to carry on their lives as normally as possible. He made his plans realistically with the recognition of the



limitations of his conditions.

We all must pay tribute to his courage and fortitude during his treatment in living his life as fully as he could for more than three years following his diagnosis. He received enormous support and understanding from Betty, his children and many friends. His positive attitude made it such that his friends and loved ones could speak frankly and directly with him.

Marv was a brave and admirable man and Betty has been a caring, devoted and helpful partner. This was a couple who lived life on equal terms.

Marv was a man who enjoyed living. He loved fishing, he could play his banjo for hours, and he was a devotee of flea markets, dump pickings, decoys, coins, Americana and paintings.

He was curious about geography and took several exotic trips, even one to Fiji and New Zealand with his daughter Laurie. Marv loved life. He loved visits from his children, grandchildren and friends, taking them wherever he went when they visited. He especially enjoyed playing poker games with his grandson Cliff and the neighbors, and board games with all his grandchildren.

He enjoyed jokes and the English language, being a perfectionist about grammar, punctuation, spelling and pronunciation. He loved word games and a clever double entendre.

It is not often that you meet a man such as Marv, who played such a meaningful role to his family, to his friends, his community and his country. We shall miss him and treasure his memory. May he rest in peace.

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