



Richard Howard Fagin

FEB 12, 1944 - NOV 2, 2024



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Obituary

Richard Howard Fagin (2/12/1944-11/2/2024)

Rich “Richie/Richard” Fagin’s philosophy on life was “What’s it all about if not to have a

good time?” Richard Howard Fagin, 80, of Delray Beach Florida, died at his home of causes associated with Primary Progressive Aphasia on November 2, 2024.

He was born in 1944 and raised on Pelham Parkway in the Bronx, NYC, to Jean, a homemaker, and Sam Fagin, a house painter. Richie was the baby in the family who worshiped his late older brother, Billy and adored and was adored by his late older sister,

Carol. He grew up close to his aunts, uncles, and cousins on both sides.

He had fond memories of growing up a “Bronx kid.” Among his buddies, he was known as

the “4th toughest,” and he was street smart. For instance, he figured out how to game the

concession stand at the local movie theater to get a free popcorn. First, he’d spy which

popcorn box was marked on the bottom as the “freebee,” and then he would time his place

in line just right, so he could get the free popcorn and feign surprise. His nickname was

“The Eternal Athlete,” and he enjoyed playing stickball as a kid and all kinds of sports throughout his life, especially golf (achieving two holes-in-one) tennis, and softball.

He

was the commissioner of the summer softball league at our Catskills bungalow colony, a



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highly revered position.

He graduated from Christopher Columbus High School and met his future wife, the love of

his life, Diane Becker a.k.a. Diane King, in Spanish class at City College of New York.

He fell

head over heels and by the second date, he knew she was “the one.” He poured his heart

out to Diane in love letters, wooed her in his old Chevy nicknamed “Betsy,” and told her he

loved her by playing “There I Said It Again” by Bobby Vinton. They married on June 19th,

1965.

Married for 59 years, theirs was a love story for the ages. Partners in life and in show business, Rich managed Diane’s singing career and eventually even joined the act as her

conductor - even though he couldn’t read a note of music. They were a fiercely handsome

dynamic duo, with her exceptional talent and his show business acumen and intuitive

musicality, Rich and Diane successfully navigated a unique balancing act:

simultaneously

having a happy marriage and family life as parents to children David and Stephanie in Fair

Lawn, NJ; a decades-long successful career in show business; and a successful career as

an entrepreneur and business owner in the early days of the computer industry.

Rich was the “leader of the band” in everything he did. He worked hard to play hard.

He

started his first successful business at the tender age of 8 peddling newspapers,

having

procured a loan in the amount of fifty cents from an aunt, underselling the



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competition by

one cent, proudly spending the profits on his favorite Saturday morning cartoons at the

local movie theater. As an emerging adult, to be eligible to graduate from college with a

secure job, he needed to maintain a 3.4 GPA and needed an A + in all his classes in his final semester. He took the initiative, spoke with his professors, and wore a jacket and tie every

day to class for the entire semester, graduating with all A+'s and a good job working for the

Bell Telephone Company.

A self-starter into adulthood, his ambitions led to his role as Project Manager at Complex

Systems, Inc.; Senior Analyst at J.C. Penney Co., and in 1972 he was elected Assistant Vice

President in data processing and technical support at Manufacturers Hanover Trusts Bank,

where he met his lifelong friend, business partner, and softball teammate Les Rogoff, with

whom he founded Reserve Systems International, a software consulting firm. In the early

80s, at the onset of the computer boom, and on the heels of the success of RSI, Rich, Les

and partners became co-owners of Computerland of New York and New Jersey. They would eventually own and operate six stores, including their flagship stores on

Maiden

Lane and Third Avenue in NYC.

After selling the business, Rich semi-retired to Florida where he continued managing Diane's singing career and conducting her orchestras. He was such an innately

commanding presence that he was offered the job of full-time conductor of the 70-piece



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Coral Springs Orchestra, to which, he humorously quipped, “If you do my wife’s music.”

Rich eventually re-entered the business world, co-founding Advertrailer, a pioneering mobile billboard business retaining clients such as the Miami Heat and the New York Yankees. On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, He was crossing the Hudson on a ferry to a

meeting with AOL, which would have given Advertrailer a major boost, and witnessed the

planes flying directly overhead. We all know what happened next.

Rich was also a leader in his personal life. Known to his family and friends as “Captain

Caterer,” Rich spared no expense on celebrations and was the life of the party, holding

court recounting, with perfect comic timing and spot-on dialects, his encyclopedic knowledge of classic jokes and stories amassed over decades working with legendary Catskill comedians such as Red Buttons, Milton Berle, Jackie Mason and Henny Youngman.

He and Diane enjoyed traveling the world together, performing on cruise ships like the QE2, casinos, resorts, etc. Along with friends, they would plan wondrous adventures

everywhere from a ski lodge to the Caribbean, as well as to exotic places such as Thailand, Jordan, Tahiti, Australia and New Zealand.

Throughout much of his life, Rich and family spent many years in upstate New York, where

he established lifelong friendships and lasting memories at bungalow colonies such as

Kozan’s and Fair Oaks. He absolutely loved food and could be found every summer Sunday

manning the bar-b-q with a pitcher of pina coladas at the ready for his friends.

He was a devoted son-in-law to his in-laws, the late Abe and Kay Becker, always there



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to

help both physically and financially, treating them as his own parents, as well as a devoted

son to his father, Sam, all of whom received his generosity, love, and supportive advocacy in their later life nearby in Florida. In addition, he was a devoted father to his son David,

teaching him how to pitch on his little league team, as well as championing his career as a

gifted singer-songwriter/musician, and to his daughter Stephanie, whom he supported in

her academic career toward becoming a clinical psychologist.

In later life, he became known and beloved as “Grandpa Rich” to his twin grandsons, Alex

and Zachary, whom he adored and enjoyed spoiling and playing with throughout their

childhoods into their early adolescence.

In 2012, Rich was diagnosed with Primary Progressive Aphasia-Logopenic Type, a progressive neurodegenerative disease that impacts the speech and language area of the

brain. Over time, he gradually lost the ability to speak, to communicate, and to function

independently. But despite being burdened with this incurable ailment, Rich, always one to

see the big picture, gave his loved ones a profound gift, approaching the illness not with

self-pity, but with grace, shrugging “It is what it is,” and giving the “thumbs up” for as long as

he was humanly capable.

He will be deeply missed, and his memory will be an eternal blessing to his loved ones.

Richard was preceded in death by his mother Jean; his father Sam; his brother



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William; his
sister Carol, and is survived by his wife, Diane, his son David and his girlfriend Paula;
his
daughter Stephanie and her husband Michael Jones; and his grandsons, Alexander
and
Zachary.

Donations in memory of Richard Howard Fagin to The Association of
Frontotemporal

Degeneration (AFTD) would be greatly appreciated.

<https://www.classy.org/fundraiser/5368877>




Events


Richard Howard Fagin

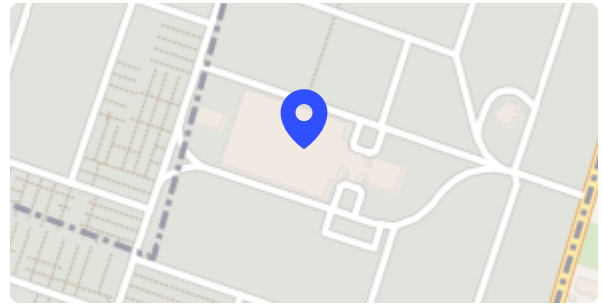
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Cedar Park Cemetery Chapel Paramus, NJ


 **Sunday**, November 10, 2024

 1:15 PM ET

 **Cedar Park Cemetery**
735 Forest Ave, Paramus NJ 07652



Cemetery Details

 **Cedar Park Cemetery**
Paramus NJ





Memories only last if you share them

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



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