

Friends Memorial Meeting Celebrating the Life of Jed Appelman

As a community who knew and loved Jed, we gather today in silence to remember and celebrate his life. We come to share our memories, thoughts and feelings. Friends believe that there is that of God in everyone. Today we seek to mark that of God that lived in Jed and to affirm those things we now carry with us.

The responsibility for the spiritual depth of this meeting rests with each attender. Those who keep silence as well as those who give a vocal message do their part when they yield their minds and hearts to the guidance of the Spirit.

As we sit in expectant silence, we may be moved to share a message. Please speak clearly and without undue length, being mindful that others may be moved to share. Everyone participates equally; all are welcome to speak. You may be moved to share prayers, poems, anecdotes or a song. Please allow a few moments of silence after someone has shared, to reflect on their message before offering yours.

We will worship for about an hour. The convener will close our worship by shaking hands with those near to her to signal all of us to shake hands with those nearby. Afterwards there will be a reception in the room next to the meeting room.

Celebrating the Life of Jed Appelman



Friends Memorial Meeting

Strawberry Creek Friends Meeting
Religious Society of Friends

June 15, 2019

2 pm - 4 pm

Berkeley Friends Meetinghouse

Celebrating the Life of Jed Appelman

November 9, 1948 – February 26, 2019

Jed grew up in Los Angeles with his father Matt Appelman, his mother Frances Helen Friedman Appelman, and his brother Dan Appelman. His father was a union organizer in the 1920s and 30s, and as a soldier he helped liberate concentration camps at the end of World War II. After the war his father owned a movie theater chain in Los Angeles and the Pacific northwest until his retirement. Jed's parents were Jewish but not religiously observant. Jed described them to one friend as former Jewish communists; and said they always considered themselves to be politically progressive. A number of his parent's friends were blacklisted during the McCarthy era.

Jed had polio as a child and lived his life with post-polio syndrome. He attended Colorado College, where he studied Philosophy. He filed for Conscientious Objector status during the Vietnam war. Jed received his PhD in clinical psychology from the Wright Institute in Berkeley.

Jed worked in the early days of Silicon Valley in computer systems development. After earning his PhD, he worked most recently at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center Vallejo as Research Manager for the Kaiser Foun-

still served Friends and his Buddhist friends as well. He continued to teach by example even while he knew he was dying. After a round of treatment he decided not to continue with it. He researched end-of-life options and chose the time he wanted to die. He chose to be buried in Fernwood, in Mill Valley, one of the 30 natural burial sites in the US.

Jed is survived by his brother Dan Appelman (Debbie Soglin), friend and ex-wife Michael Leaver, sons Soren Leaver and Simon Appelman, and dear friend Debbie Weismann. His presence will be missed.



Ordination as a Zen priest on December 10, 2018.



Board member of Center for Independent Living since 2010.

said he meditated on the structure of the galaxies down to sub-atomic particles, which led him into Emptiness. In May 2013, Jed suffered a stroke that left him with aphasia after his recovery, but which hardly impacted his commitment to Meeting as he continued his work on committees and his fellowship with Friends.

Jed learned he had stage 4 cancer in the summer of 2018. He was very open about his illness and faced his remaining time serenely. He stayed involved and engaged with the world and his friends and family. He continued going to his beloved aphasia group once a week, read both Michelle and Barack Obama's autobiographies, and enjoyed sports to the end, discussing games and players every month with his son Soren, and watching Warriors games with his brother Dan and son Simon. He talked of taking a drive across the three bridges of the Bay. He met once a week with a small support group over the last few months of his life and continued with his two spiritual practices - greeting people and worshipping with Strawberry Creek on Sundays, and sitting Zazen and serving at Berkeley Zen Center. Jed was ordained as a Zen priest in December, 2018.

Jed invited friends to visit him and made a point of saying goodbye to them even when they weren't ready to say goodbye. Throughout the time of his final illness he

dation, supporting research on strokes and stroke care. He is listed as co-author on 9 research papers. He served on the boards of the Center for Independent Living and the Berkeley Zen Center for many years.

Jed was married for a time to Michael Ann Leaver, and has two sons, Soren Eric Leaver, who teaches English as a second language in Japan, and Sean Simon Leaver Appelmann, who lives and works as a financial planner in the East Bay. He was active in raising his sons. He also loved his pets.

He honored his mother and father's Jewish history and as an adult he studied Hebrew at a Berkeley synagogue in order to have his Bar Mitzvah, which he did not do at the usual age of 13. His study occupied him for more than a year, and when he was ready, he invited friends from his spiritual communities to be present. Jed fully engaged with whatever he was doing, whether remodeling his house, setting up a food garden or serving others. He gave of himself in many, sometimes complex ways.

He loved to serve guests a cup of tea in his home and have a conversation, exploring a new line of thinking, or an idea about integrating one path of wisdom with another. Jed played the violin and guitar, and loved classical music. He studied classical Greek and read texts in Greek

with an open dictionary. Jed always took receptions quite seriously. He loved the formal presentation of delicious simple foods, introductions of people to each other, generously serving others – often from a behind-the-scenes position – and feeling the harmony of gathered people. Jed was very interested in the human condition and loved talking with people and learning about their lives. He opened his home for meetings, and he took in a young person from Youth Spirit Artworks, who lived with him quite a while.

Jed studied and practiced Buddhist Vipassana meditation before coming to the Berkeley Zen Center. He spent time at Tassajara Zen Mountain Center, where his son Soren was a resident student for 10 years. Jed held many of the usual practice positions at BZC, especially head server. Jed was also BZC's main welcomer, and would sit on the Zendo Steps and hold unhurried conversations getting to know people.

Jed had just finished his Doctorate in Psychology when he came to Strawberry Creek to “test us out.” He felt a need for a community of spirit to which he could bring his young son, Simon. Jed was introduced to Friends by David and Leslie Leonard, began attending Strawberry Creek Meeting in 1987, and became a member in 1998. He was initially drawn to the quiet of Meeting for Wor-

ship. Jed said that he decided to become a member of the Meeting when the members stood up to hold hands after a Strawberry Creek Meeting for Business, as he wanted to be a member of such a loving community. Jed was active in the life of Strawberry Creek serving as Recording Clerk and on every single committee at least once. Most recently Jed helped create and served on the Welcoming and Inclusion committee, and as co-clerk of Mutual Care Committee. He could be found most Sunday mornings greeting newcomers and welcoming people to Meeting.

Jed was an inquirer, frequently questioning various faith practices, especially Quaker, and participating in small groups which read together. He relished the Torah-study method of sitting in a small group, examining a text and adding one's own commentary. From the beginning of his joining in the life of the Meeting, he helped with hospitality, and actively participated as one seeking to explore Quaker leadings and the lives of Friends.

Many Strawberry Creek members sought his counsel and advice, and he always responded with kindness and patience. He was compassionate, generous, wise, as well as warm, whimsical, and mischievous. As a Quaker, Jed mixed science with Buddhist philosophy in his approach to worship. In Meeting for Worship, he once