

On Dad

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Jonas Rappeport, my dad, was not only devoted to the profession of forensic psychiatry but also dedicated to living life as fully as possible. He loved to build things out of wood, catch a big fish, cook and eat gourmet food paired with a fine wine, travel across the globe, listen to opera, and follow the Orioles, Colts, and Ravens. Jonas refused to drive fancy cars, though he did buy a creamy-yellow Mustang convertible in 1967. He collected Medieval prints as well as any art that he admired while traveling with my mother, Joan. Eventually he joined the Print and Drawing Society of the Baltimore Museum of Art and became friendly with the chief curator. Together, Joan and Jonas instilled in their 3 daughters, Sandra (Sandy), Sue, and me (the youngest), a love for art and animals, sports and exploring new places, good food, and a sense of humor. Jonas stenciled on the side of our sky-blue station wagon, $2J + 3S = 5R$ (Joan and Jonas plus Sandy, Susan, and Sally equals five Rappeports), and he delighted when people would pull up next to him at a traffic light to ask about it.

Jonas shared his love of opera, food, the outdoors, travel, and a sense of humor. The family went camping all over the East coast, with longer trips into Canada, through Europe, and across the United States. Annually, we camped along the Eastern shore of Maryland with a view of Assateague Island. We would fish, crab off the dock with chicken wings on a string, swim in the ocean, and explore around by bicycle. Jonas was active in protecting wildlife on Assateague Island and attended the signing of a bill protecting the area by Lyndon Johnson, receiving a Presidential pen that day.

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Jonas and Joan

After the kids were grown, J&J (Joan & Jonas) ventured often and far across the globe. Dad helped to organize several trips, including to the Soviet Union to review forensic hospitals in the U.S.S.R., and remained friends with some of the people they met on that trip for many years. Jonas and Joan visited Vienna, Joan's birthplace, with and without children. As a couple, they returned to Alaska and found the cabin where Jonas spent a summer after his first year of medical school, counting fish for the U.S. Fish



Jonas Rappeport

and Wildlife Department. With the entire family, we returned to Alaska via cruise ship for their fiftieth wedding anniversary.

Joan nurtured my dad's love of classical music; they were regulars at the Baltimore Symphony and made regular trips to New York City to go to the Metropolitan Opera as well as many art museums. After Joan passed in 2007, my father enjoyed the HD live broadcasts from the Metropolitan Opera, shown at a movie theater near his residence. He would drive all the opera lovers from his elder community to the theater up until he stopped driving after dark at 92.

Jonas clearly had a talent for organizing groups of people who shared his passions beyond just AAPL and opera. For years, he scheduled dates with his favorite fishing captain on the Chesapeake Bay and took groups of colleagues and friends out at least six to eight times from late spring into fall. He'd make his lists of who was interested and start making calls to arrange the dates in the winter. If someone dropped out, there was always a wait list to join the small expeditions. I joined him most often on these trips in the early 1970s. We would arrive home from fishing with 60 to 80 bluefish fillets after a day on the Bay. He and my mother would start calling friends and neighbors to stop buy and pick up fresh fish. We would delight in bluefish for dinner that night and freeze what wasn't given away. Jonas was never happier than with a fishing rod in his hand. As a kid, I never thought my mother really enjoyed

fishing, but to my surprise, when the kids had grown and moved on, she joined him, and she always caught the biggest fish! As many of you know, when Jonas was hired for a speaking engagement, his preference was to be taken fishing in lieu of an honorarium.

Jonas arranged with a local colleague who also had three daughters to "time-share" our car and camper so we could take five weeks to travel across the country to the West coast, and the colleague's family flew out to California and drove our camper back to Baltimore while we flew home. He built 5 cubbies in the camper, one for each of us, and we even shared some of our clothing with the other family.

Joan and Jonas shared a joyful sense of humor and a love for teasing and irony. As they aged, they both mellowed out. Joan might have been a bit quiet initially, but once she grasped someone's warmth, she would open up. She was known for her crackly laugh after an astute quip, taking down any ego that swelled beyond her ability to contain her wit. Together J&J were avid football fans, so Sundays at home involved brunch with opera in the morning and the afternoons with the Colts (until they fled by dark of night and the Ravens roosted in Baltimore). In the 1960s, Johnny Unitas was a hero in our home, surpassed only by JFK.

Jonas nurtured an amazing annual and perennial garden. His dahlias were triumphant and inspired many. He grew robust tomatoes and peppers as well as grapes for years, and when I became interested in eating fresh vegetables in my teens, he expanded the garden to include cucumbers, zucchini, broccoli, and corn on the cob, fervently using black plastic ground cover to ward off the weeds. Jonas could be tough; we were punished if we shirked our chores, like weeding the flower garden or gathering the trimmings from the pruning of the forsythia which grew along the driveway. Somehow my hatred of chores as a kid transformed into a love of gardening as an adult.

Jonas loved doing carpentry. He had an incredible workshop. When he and Joan moved to Broadmead, a senior community, the resident in charge of the wood shop came to see if any of Jonas' tools were better quality than what they already had at Broadmead. They took Jonas' entire workshop. He built our dining table with leaves when they first got married, and we kept it until they moved to Bolton Hill 30 years later. He also made toys for his four grandchildren and delighted in their exploits and accomplishments.

Along with collecting fine quality tools, he collected beer cans and small boxes. The boxes (which were perfectly ordinary small boxes of different sizes) were saved just so he would have the perfect one for when he might need to mail something. When my parents left for Broadmead, he had a collection of over 500 boxes (as well as beer cans from all over the world) to part with. Jonas was so handy and thoughtful; he would often help fix something when he was visiting his daughters or loan us a tool. Every summer, as part of the ritual when our scattered extended family would meet at Dewey Beach, Delaware for a week, we would be reminded to bring our kitchen knives so he could sharpen them for us. He had quite an obsession with gadgets, which he indulged particularly postretirement. I remember visiting my parents at their last home before moving to Broadmead, and the kitchen was literally wall to wall gadgets. Needless to say, Hammacher Schlemmer was always one of his favorite haunts when visiting New York City, and he was a devotee of their catalogue.

When something sparked his interest, Jonas went out and did it. I remember he became interested in archery one year, and he built a target platform in our back yard so he could practice. He went bow hunting only once and was not captivated by killing deer, so he let that hobby go.

Joan was an amazing cook. She grew up with the breadth of Austrian cuisine and incorporated

American style into her cooking as a mother. Every Saturday, Jonas would go to Lexington Market in downtown Baltimore for seafood, coming home with fresh shrimp, mussels, clams, oysters, and other delights to stimulate Joan's culinary exploration. It was a treat to go with him, and at every stall, the proprietors knew him well and clearly were fond of him. Jonas mainly focused on grilling when the family was young, but he became interested in fine wines and made a point to dine at all the gourmet restaurants in the Baltimore/Washington area as well as in New York City and while traveling. After retirement, he started to take over in the kitchen more. He was devoted to Cook's Illustrated, buying a subscription for each of his daughters and making many of the gourmet foods that for years he had enjoyed eating.

During Joan's final years, he devoted himself to taking care of her and their home at Broadmead. After she passed, he found a warm and caring partner in Alma Smith. Alma seemed to know everyone who was anyone in Baltimore County, just as Jonas had connections throughout Baltimore City. They enjoyed sharing friends, crabs, and the Ravens and Orioles, as well as travel, theater, art, and music.

When I describe my father to someone, I proudly describe his many professional successes but often first say that he was an incredible character with a lust for life and a generous spirit. May he be remembered for each of these fine qualities.