

JDL Memorial Service

6/13/09

My name is David Levy, the eldest child of Louis and Jane.

I was born in 1958, a more innocent time, when mothers smoke and drank while pregnant. Indeed, mother used to tell me of the times when I was very young and she would take me out in my stroller, under dressed, to the distress of many other mothers.

I had two mothers. One the vibrant funny woman who was a joy to be around, who could keep you laughing all day, the other, a shell of the person she once was. It was painful watching her decline. Especially since all of us kids knew that she never would have wanted to end up that way. As we were growing up she would often say that if she ever lost her mind, just put her on an ice flow.

So it will be the first best Jane Levy I will be honoring today.

Firstly I need to acknowledge the fact that I was chronically sick as a juvenile (I had Chron's disease with some difficult times), and mother spent a lot of time, I mean a lot of time with me. Sitting in hospital rooms, talking to doctors, being my advocate, and I am sure terrified the time when things were not looking so good. That took guts and commitment. So I was pleased to have been there for her during that last week in the hospice, I am hoping that this service in some small measure paid her back for her effort. I am just sorry that it had to end with terminal cancer, and that she may have lasted a lot longer than she would have wanted.

Mother's decline lasted for so long, for the last twenty odd years, that it is difficult to tease out memories of the original.

Looking over the pictures of a young Jane Levy helped rejuvenate my best memories of her.

During these summer months mother lived in her chez lounge, in her swim suit, reading books, sitting in the sun, either here, pool side at 1016, or in Maine.

Some of my memories of those days include:

David Feldman accidentally pinching the be-Jesus out of mother when she was sitting in her chez lounge in the sun. She yelled at first, and then broke out laughing over the silliness of it all.

Sailing in the Moth in Maine, mother and son spending hours alone together on the lake.

Her attempts at leaning to play the guitar and her attempts at the song “the Fox when out on a chilly night”. I was so pleased to hear it again at the end of Deadwood episode.

Mother had a long professional career as a social worker. As a child I can remember her coming home from her classes at Bryn Mawr, where she earned her Masters in Social Work.

One of the things she always told me was that if you have one success story in your professional career then you are lucky, that you have really done something. She saw a lot of patients, who sadly did not make a lot of progress. However, she did have her one success story that she was very proud of. The woman’s name escapes me, but she was able to help one person turn their life around. She was very proud of that accomplishment. I can report to you now, that in my capacity of working with disabled Veterans that I have had several success stories, mother would have been proud.

Mother had several success stories outside of work. She made a real difference in the lives of her children. She was loving, understanding ,non-judgmental and loyal. I can see this legacy in how Stacy and Erica respond to their children, and how we children lead our lives.

Mother was a single child, and she wanted a larger family. She got one, not just the children she raised, but in the friends she gathered throughout her life. She made more of a difference than she realized.