

Mensch means "a person of integrity and honor." According to [Leo Rosten](#), the author of [The Joys of Yiddish](#), "mensch" is "someone to admire and emulate, someone of noble character."

The key to being 'a real mensch' is nothing less than character, rectitude, dignity, a sense of what is right or ethically imperative. The term is used as a high compliment, expressing the rarity and value of that individual's qualities.

Eileen was a real mensch. It was just who she was. She led her life with integrity and a dose of fun and adventure.

Eileen was all about stories. She loved to tell them and she loved to hear them.

One of my favorite stories that she shared with me was one from her childhood. Before the High Holidays, her family would get a chicken and they would practice *Kapporois*. This is the act of swinging a chicken around your head and symbolically transferring one's sins to the chicken. I was fascinated by this story. And of others that she shared. These were Jewish myths I had heard of, but Eileen, she experienced them. Eileen brought and shared so many traditions of Judaism to life.

Need a question answered about a Jewish tradition?, you called Eileen. Need a question answered about just about anything, you called Eileen. She was always a maven, willing to share her knowledge and wisdom with others.

Need a teacher for Hebrew or history? She was your woman. Each year, the Religious School participates in a Grade level Shabbat. Every grade learns a specific prayer. Sometimes she taught the Amidah, sometimes the Viahatah in addition to other prayers. Eileen would always worry her class would not be ready. She would work tirelessly and patiently with her students to make sure that they were prepared. And each year, they were. Afterwards, I think, she would kvell more than the parents of her students.

She took such delight in her current and former students accomplishments. If you bumped into Eileen, after not seeing her for awhile, she would always inquire about how your children or grandchildren were doing. She truly cared about all of her students and their Jewish education and beyond.

In 2013, she was interviewed for the Sisterhood Shabbat by Pat Wolkow. "Eileen feels she will be remembered for the many years as a sisterhood member, and for the many offices she filled in her 10-year service on the Temple Board. But most of all, she would like her legacy to be her teaching career in Religious School"

I believe it will be so.

Eileen's teaching era spanned about 35 years. She did take a hiatus from time to time, but when called to service, she answered. She has taught multi-generations of families here at Temple Adas Shalom. Some of us, and our children referred to her as bubbe (Yiddish for grandmother).

She was part of our extended family: Friday night services, Holiday celebrations, baby namings, b'nai mitzvahs, confirmation, funerals, and shiva houses, Senior luncheons, Sisterhood, committees, knitting night, bridge, You name it she was always there. She impacted our lives on so many levels and was such an incredible friend to so many of us.

Our synagogue has an award, called the Nord , that we bestow on a deserving individual for service. Requirements include, service to our congregation for an extended period of time, involvement in at least two major areas of synagogue life, leadership, and a significant donation of personal time and energy.

Eileen has earned this award and later this year, we will celebrate her accomplishments.

Eileen was all about stories, and her interests included them. From her favorite TV shows, movies, to her library trips. From her family vacations with Jenn, David and Ethan, her trips up to Phillie to visit with her brother and his family, her exploration of different restaurants, her escapades with her new friends from Bulle Rock, a knitting project, bridge, there was always a story to tell.

She would call me or we would meet and Eileen would almost start with "what's doing?"

She was truly interested in the story of others. She was an awesome listener. She would seek you out, and ask questions to know you better. During the High Holidays she would give out honors. I was always so impressed that she knew each person by name and she knew something about them. If she and I were at an event, and I didn't recognize someone, I would ask Eileen and sure enough she would know.

Some people might have seen her as stoic, but in truth she was a softie, especially when it came to her family. She was especially proud of Ethan, her grandson and it didn't matter the topic.

There was always a story to tell and Eileen helped enrich our story of our lives. Please later, share your stories about Eileen with her family and each other.

One of my favorite memories of Eileen, was during Ethan's Bar Mitzvah Not only did Ethan read from the Torah for the first time, so did Jenn. All 3, Eileen, Jenn and Ethan, 3 generations, all read Torah. L'dorV'dor . from generation to generation. And Eileen read a prayer to Ethan.

This, If you listen to the words, this is how Eileen lived her life.

Insert "what I wish for you"

To Eileen, with my love
~Amy