

In Loving Memory

Louis Walcer

July 21, 1952 · November 14, 2026

Levayah · Funeral Service

Thursday, November 19, 2026 · 1:00 PM

Congregation Tikkun v'Or, Ithaca

Burial to follow at Lake View Cemetery

Officiating: Student Rabbi Michael Margolin

Lou

1952 – 2026

Lou Walcer, son of Abraham and Eleanor Walcer, was born in Brooklyn, New York, and raised in Lindenhurst, New York. He attended Cornell University as an undergraduate, beginning a lifelong relationship with the city of Ithaca.

After graduating with the Class of 1974, Lou earned his MBA at New York University while working as a medical copywriter. In New York City he connected with Roberta Bandel, a fellow member of the Cornell Class of 1974, and they married on April 8, 1979. He began a career in pharmaceutical marketing and product development in New Jersey for Schering-Plough, then moved to Paoli, Pennsylvania, where he worked in marketing for Wyeth Pharmaceuticals.

In Pennsylvania, Lou and Roberta welcomed their son, Marshall, and their daughter, Adrienne. The family moved to Solon, Ohio, where Lou built his entrepreneurial and business development experience. From 2006 to 2011 he was part of the Cleveland Clinic Innovations team, managing a portfolio of successful startups.

Roberta spotted a job posting for the Cornell University Center for Venture Development in the Life Sciences. Lou applied and became the center's first director, happily returning to Ithaca. Under his leadership, the center spun off many successful ventures. A fierce advocate for innovation, Lou was known as a passionate educator and mentor.

He kept working long past the point most people would have stopped, retiring in 2025. In his "retirement" he lectured for the U.S. Departments of Commerce and State's Commercial Law Development Program, and served as a visiting Professor of Practice and Executive-in-Residence at the Cornell College of Engineering.

Lou was on the Board of Directors of MedTech NY, volunteered for the Cornell Class of 1974, and sang with the Savage Club. He was widely known for his sense of humor, enjoyed science fiction, was a devoted Tolkien fan, and firmly preferred Picard to Kirk.

He is survived by the love of his life, his wife, Roberta; his son, Marshall, daughter-in-law Wesley, and grandson Ira; his daughter, Adrienne, and her partner, Andrew; his sister, Carol Finder, and her husband, Mark; his sister-in-law, Margaret Bandel; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Order of Service

Levayah · Funeral Service

Congregation Tikkun v'Or · 1:00 PM

"Be Still, My Soul" *by J. Sibelius and K. von Schlegel* — *The Savage Club*

"Life Is a Journey" *by Rabbi Alvin Fine* — *Student Rabbi Michael Margolin*

Welcome — *Student Rabbi Michael Margolin*

Psalm 23 *rendering by Stephen Mitchell* — *All*

Hespedim · Remembering Lou

Student Rabbi Michael Margolin
Friends from Cornell
Jack Roscoe, Savage Club President
Adrienne Walcer
Marshall Walcer
Margaret Bandel, for the family

"A Gaelic Blessing" *by J. Rutter, arr. W. Cowdery* — *The Savage Club*

"We Remember Them" *by Rabbis Kamens and Riemer* — *All, responsively*

El Malei Rachamim *(English; please rise)* — *All*

"Happy Endings?" *by Shel Silverstein* — *Adrienne Walcer*

"Evening Song" *arr. H. Tyrell* — *The Savage Club*

Announcements

K'vurah · Graveside Service

Lake View Cemetery · 2:30 PM

Psalm 121 — *Student Rabbi Michael Margolin*

Placing earth *(all are invited)*

El Malei Rachamim *(chanted)*

"To Love What Death Can Touch" *by Rabbi Chaim Stern* — *All, together*

Mourner's Kaddish — *Mourners and all who wish*

Announcements

Funeral Service

Readings

Life Is a Journey

Rabbi Alvin Fine

Birth is a beginning and death a destination. And life is a journey: from childhood to maturity and youth to age; from innocence to awareness and ignorance to knowing; from foolishness to discretion, and then, perhaps, to wisdom; from weakness to strength or strength to weakness, and often, back again. From health to sickness and back, we pray, to health again; from offense to forgiveness, from loneliness to love, from joy to gratitude, from pain to compassion, and grief to understanding, from fear to faith; from defeat to defeat to defeat, until, looking backward and ahead, we see that victory lies not at some high place along the way, but in having made the journey, stage by stage, a sacred pilgrimage. Birth is a beginning and death a destination. But life is a journey, from birth to death to life everlasting.

Psalm 23

Rendering by Stephen Mitchell

G-d is my shepherd: I have everything I need.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
She leads me beside the still waters;
They refresh my soul.
G-d guides me on the paths of righteousness,
so that I may serve him with love.
Though I walk through the darkest valley
or stand in the shadow of death, I am not afraid,
for I know you are always with me.
You spread a full table before me, even in times of great pain;
You feast me with your abundance and honor me like royalty,
anointing my head with sweet oil, filling my cup to the brim.
Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will live in G-d's radiance forever and ever.

We Remember Them

Rabbis Sylvan Kamens and Jack Riemer · responsive; words in bold are read together

In the rising sun and in its going down; **We remember him.**
In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter; **We remember him.**
In the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring; **We remember him.**
In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer; **We remember him.**
In the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn; **We remember him.**
In the beginning of the year and when it ends; **We remember him.**

When we are weary and in need of strength; **We remember him.**
When we are lost and sick at heart; **We remember him.**
When we have decisions that are difficult to make; **We remember him.**
When we have joy we yearn to share; **We remember him.**
When we have achievements that are based on his; **We remember him.**
For as long as we live, he too will live, for he is now a part of us, as **we remember him.**

El Malei Rachamim

Please rise, if you are able

El Maleh Rakhamim, G-d who is full of mercy and dwells on high, provide a true rest on the wings of the Divine Presence amongst the holy and pure ones who shine as brightly as the brilliance of the sky to the soul of Louis Walcer, who has gone on to his eternity; the Garden of Eden will be his resting place. We ask the Merciful One to shade him forever with divine wings and to bind his soul in the bonds of life. G-d is his heritage, and he shall rest peacefully on her bed. And let us say, **Amen.**

Graveside Service

Lake View Cemetery

Psalm 121

Shir lama'alot. Esa einai el heharim, me'ayin yavo ezri.
Ezri me'im Adonai, oseh shamayim va'aretz.

A Song of Ascents. I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains: from whence shall my help come? My help cometh from the L-RD, who made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor sleep. The L-RD is thy keeper; the L-RD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The L-RD shall keep thee from all evil; He shall keep thy soul. The L-RD shall guard thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth and for ever.
Jewish Publication Society translation, 1917

To Love What Death Can Touch

Rabbi Chaim Stern · read together

It is a fearful thing
to love what death can touch.
A fearful thing to love, to hope, to dream, to be,
to be, and oh, to lose.

A thing for fools, this,
and a holy thing,
a holy thing
to love.

For your life has lived in me,
your laugh once lifted me,
your word was gift to me.

To remember this brings painful joy.
'Tis a human thing, love,
a holy thing, to love
what death has touched.

Placing Earth

The final act of kindness we can offer Lou is to lay him to rest with our own hands. Jewish tradition calls this *chesed shel emet*, true kindness, because it is given with no expectation of return. We use the back of the shovel, to show how reluctant we are to let him go. When you finish, please place the shovel back in the earth rather than handing it to the next person, so that grief is not passed from hand to hand. All who wish may take part.

Mourner's Kaddish

Mourners rise; all who wish may join them

Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'mei raba. B'alma di v'ra chirutei, v'yamlich malchutei, b'chayeichon uv'yomeichon uv'chayei d'chol beit Yisrael, baagala uviz'man kariv. V'imru: **Amen.**

Y'hei sh'mei raba m'varach l'alam ul'almei almaya.

Yitbarach v'yishtabach v'yitpaar v'yitromam v'yitnasei, v'yit'hadar v'yitaleh v'yit'halal sh'mei d'Kud'sha B'rich Hu, l'eila min kol birchata v'shirata, tushb'chata v'nechemata, daamiran b'alma. V'imru: **Amen.**

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya, v'chayim aleinu v'al kol Yisrael. V'imru: **Amen.**

Oseh shalom bimromav, Hu yaaseh shalom aleinu, v'al kol Yisrael, v'al kol yoshvei tevel. V'imru: **Amen.**

Reception

The family invites you to join them
Thursday, November 19 · 6:00 to 9:00 PM
Carrier Ballroom, The Statler Hotel at Cornell
130 Statler Drive, Ithaca

Hotel valet and self-parking are available. The Hoy Road Garage is about a 7-minute walk, with limited metered spots on campus (ParkMobile).

In "Lou" of Flowers

The family asks that you consider a donation in Lou's memory to **NPR** (**National Public Radio**) or the **Cornell University Library**.

NPR's form has no "in memory of" option, so please mention Lou in the comment box.

Share a Memory

Service details, the full obituary, and the livestream link:
https://walcer.family/lou

All puns are welcome.

Zichrono livracha
May his memory be a blessing.

With love and gratitude,
Roberta, Marshall, Adrienne, Andrew,
and the Walcer, Finder, and Bandel families