

Randi Friedman from Howie Bernstein

This week my lifelong friend, Randi Friedman, lost her battle with Multiple Myeloma.

Randi and I grew up together. Our parents were great friends, and lived near each other in the North Bronx. Randi was born in December of 1958, and I followed quickly in January of 1959.

We moved from the Bronx in 1964; both our families moved at around the same time, to Rochdale Village, in Queens. We attended the same elementary school, and I think we were in the same class for most if not all the years of elementary school at PS 80. We both went to the same junior high, IS 72, and we both got a variance to attend Jamaica High School, instead of our zoned Springfield High School.

We shared our lives during those years. We were friends. Sometimes great friends, sometimes less, but never not friends. We both went to shule in Rochdale, taught by Carl Wasserman and (maybe) Harris Saltzberg. In high school we did share some classes. We always rode together on the bus in the morning.

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During the summers starting in 1967 we both attended Camp Kinderland, which we both really loved. We performed in plays together, danced and sang together, played softball and soccer, swam... had fun. The summer of 1969, for some reason our parents sent us to Camp Trywoodie. There were several other Kinderland kids at Trywoodie that summer, but I only lasted half the summer before they kicked me out (after falling behind on a hike and hitchhiking back to camp... yeah, I was 10) and returned to Kinderland for the rest of the summer. The summer of 1971 was the last summer we were at Camp Kinderland in Hopewell Junction, NY.

We parted ways after high school, which only makes sense: Randi to Harpur College in Binghamton, where she met the love of her life Lester, and me to CCNY, then SUNY Buffalo. After college Randi and Lester moved to the Boston area. Eventually I moved to Belmont where I met the love of my life, and then not long after that I moved into the same building in Somerville as Randi and Lester. Like old times. I was on the second floor, and they were on the third floor.

Our friendship only matured over the years, as did we. We both had kids, older boys and younger girls. My kids recalled their relationship with Randi like that of an Aunt. Our kids built a relationship with Randi and Lester's daughter Sari in Camp Kinderland.

Randi was an amazing person, full of love, and care, and interest in other people. She built amazing friendships over the years that I'm certain will help carry the family through this difficult time.

I will miss you terribly Randi. You left us too soon.