



## Gerald Jay Gleicher

January 31, 1939 - August 4, 2016

Breaking curfew was never a good idea for Gerald Gleicher's children. From the end of the cul-de-sac, one could see the porch light, the living room light and the chandelier in the stairwell from beyond the open front door. Drawing nearer, a figure could be seen sitting calmly on the front steps. Finally, upon stepping quickly from the friend's car, the late child heard the unmistakable sounds of a loud aria or overture. The stage was set for the master to pass judgment, although he never spoke harshly. He always claimed he simply couldn't sleep until we were all home safe and sound. Not one of his three children willingly broke curfew more than once, although he continued his vigil throughout the rest of his life, ending finally on August 4th, 2016.

Gerald Jay Gleicher was born on January 31st, 1939 in Brooklyn, New York to his parents David and Sadie (Mayer) Gleicher. He lived in Brooklyn during his youth, but commuted via subway to Manhattan to attend Stuyvesant High School. Perhaps his favorite teachers grew weary of his frequent pranks and elaborate lines of questioning; he graduated at the age of sixteen in 1955. He earned his Bachelor's degree from Brooklyn College in 1959. His Masters and Doctoral (1963) degrees in Chemistry were awarded from the University of Michigan. He did postdoctoral work at the University of Texas at Austin and Princeton University.

In 1966 he married the love of his life, Mary Katharine Schmidt, and they

spent the next 45 years together raising their family until her death in 2011.

Jerry and Mary Kay headed to Oregon on their honeymoon where Jerry had accepted a faculty position in the Oregon State Chemistry Department. The couple settled in Corvallis and welcomed the arrival of Abby, Tom, and finally, James. The children were raised listening to creative stories, going to the beach for impromptu picnics, and gathering knowledge from his virtually inexhaustible stores of facts. Jerry loved to plan intricate gourmet dinners and the menus would span the globe, feasts pulled together from his large collection of cookbooks. Family, friends and many wayward graduate students were the grateful beneficiaries of his culinary genius.

Jerry was a lover of history and classical music. His sharp memory and laser wit could weave together the intricate history of any country in the western hemisphere, and he would often delve into his extensive music collection to score his impromptu lectures. He was an avid model railroader, and over his life he took over the better part of the two-car garage with a detailed layout of the New York, Wisconsin and Western railroad. The cities of the railroad were named after his family members, and many a friend can find themselves immortalized with their name and a pun-infused logo on one of the HO-scale businesses.

Late in life, Jerry made sure to establish a legacy of generosity. His philanthropy extended from small, local non-profit organizations to national causes. His daily activities in recent years included frequent stops around town to drop off small donations and check in with the recipients. He truly loved doing this.

Jerry is survived by his brother Jules (Joan) Gleicher of Rockford, Illinois; his children Abby (Chuck) Britton of Tigard, Tom Gleicher of Portland, and James Gleicher of Corvallis; his nephews David Gleicher of Chicago, Illinois, Matt

(Lianne) Schmidt of Renton, Washington, and his niece Meredith (Todd) Fisher of Dayton, Ohio. He doted on his two grandchildren, Vivian and Levi Britton. His parents and his wife predeceased him.

If you care to make a small donation to a charity of your choice, know that he would approve of your efforts and would tell you it's even more fun to do it in person.

# Tribute Wall

CD

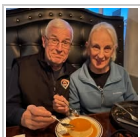
“ Dear Abby, Tom, James and Family:

*Gerry and I were sorry to hear of Jerry's passing and want to send our condolences to the family. Jerry was the first person I met on entering Gilbert Hall in September, 1967. I was a new assistant professor at Oregon State and Jerry had already been there for a year. He greeted me warmly and made me feel welcome. His wit and historical knowledge were legendary in the Chemistry Department. Many years after we had both retired I had the pleasure of speaking with a former student of his. The student remarked how, in lecture, Dr. Gleicher spoke in paragraphs, never in isolated words or sentences. The student was impressed with his command of the material and his ability to convey a difficult subject. Our monthly Chemistry Luncheons will be the poorer for his passing. We all miss him.*

*Carroll DeKock*

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**Carroll DeKock** - September 07, 2016 at 04:37 PM



“ As a support staff member, I always found Jerry to be engaging and friendly. As a history and trivia buff, I found him fascinating. He could have been a Jeopardy champion, and one of the more entertaining ones! I'm glad he found reward in giving. His wit and wisdom will be missed. - Bob Boyer

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**Bob Boyer** - August 23, 2016 at 11:30 AM

JK

“ The OSU Chemistry Retirees Lunch group wishes to express its sincere sympathy to the Gleicher family. Jerry was a valued member of our group and his cheer and good humor (and vast knowledge of things historical) will be very much missed. His contributions to OSU Chemistry teaching and research were impressive and much valued by the many graduate and undergrad students who had the good fortune to have worked with him. Our best wishes to his family.

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**Jim Krueger** - August 22, 2016 at 06:12 PM

DS

“ The Arc of Benton County wants Gerald's family and others dear to him to know how much we appreciated his generosity. Gerald often stopped by our Admin office to share a smile and donation. it meant so much to us. Please know that we are sorry for your loss.

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**Diane Scottaline** - August 15, 2016 at 01:41 PM

PF

“ Dear Abby, Tom and James and family:

*I'm quite sad that you (and we) have lost Jerry. Jerry taught me a lot through the years in the department. We had for many years a joint research conference. If one walked by the conference room one would think there was a party going on -so the spirit was most lively. Jerry was a key factor in this providing in the end kind advice to the graduate student making a presentation. More generally, Jerry made the department an interesting place. Jerry's clever wit and talent were on display on a daily basis for those of us who worked with him. One fond memory was that if prompted, Jerry would sing a few bars from his graduate school spoof "The Thesis of Figaro" though one didn't want to hear the whole thing. I think that Jerry's family should all be proud of his accomplishments at OSU and earlier.*

*Pete Freeman*

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**Pete Freeman** - August 10, 2016 at 06:04 PM