



## Louis Irwin Gordon

August 17, 1928 - June 25, 2022

Louis (Lou) Irwin Gordon died in his sleep Saturday night, June 25th at his residence at Timberhill Place in Corvallis, Oregon, at the age of 93. His graveside funeral was held 11am Monday, June 27th at Waverly Jewish Cemetery in Albany, OR.

Lou and his younger brother, Fred, were born to Morris and Ella Gordon in Los Angeles CA. Lou graduated from North Hollywood High School and subsequently attended UCLA where he met his wife-to-be, Jacqueline (Jackie) nee Wright at the UCLA Masonic clubhouse.

After receiving a B.S. in Chemistry, Lou heard about the great break room at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla from a recruiter. Lou thought it sounded good, and he liked swimming in the ocean, so he signed up for the M.S. program in Oceanography. Seasickness was an unpleasant surprise, but he was already hooked on Oceanography and said it was only the first two weeks of a cruise (and during storms) that were unpleasant.

While at Scripps, Lou worked on the stable oxygen and hydrogen isotopic composition of water. With Professor Harmon Craig, Lou formulated the isotope fractionation during the phase change of water, known as the Craig-Gordon model, a cornerstone in isotope geochemistry.

Lou was drafted during the Korean War and served his term stateside in the Chem Corps working QC for chemical weapons, finding safe ways to disable North Korean dirty bombs, and setting up a nuclear bomb test site. In his words, Glory glory glory, that was a firework lovers dream!

After his military service, Lou and Jackie moved to La Jolla, CA, where they started a family and helped start a Jewish community group that later became a synagogue. After Lou received his M.S. in Oceanography, they moved to Corvallis, OR. In Corvallis, Lou and Jackie helped found the Beit Am Jewish Community.

Lou earned his PhD in Chemical Oceanography and then became an Associate Professor at OSU. He mentored many students whose studies focused on the distribution and cycling of nutrients, carbon, and trace gasses in coastal and deep-sea environments. Lou contributed to the development of improved methods for the analysis of nutrients and gasses in seawater and participated in numerous research cruises in many of the worlds oceans. In 1977, Lou was one of the researchers who pioneered the exploration of submarine hydrothermal activity in the Galapagos Rift where he took part in the deep-sea dives of the submersible Alvin. In the lightless depths on the seabed, the researchers discovered life, causing a stir across the scientific community. Lou named one of the features a bed of tube worms that looked like a garden of flowers The Garden of Eden a subtle reference honoring his wife: Jackie.

Later in his career, Lou participated in many cruises around Antarctica observing first hand when a seasonal ozone hole appeared over the pole and grew over years to become a permanent hole. Over the course of his career, Lou co-authored 59 publications and received 7959 citations.

A life-member Freemason of over 65yrs, and recipient of the Hiram Award, Lou was a Past Master of both Marys River Lodge #221 in Corvallis and St. Johns Lodge #17 in Albany. He was initiated 10/16/1956 at East San Diego Lodge #561, AF&AM of CA.

Lou enjoyed fishing, camping, target practice, reading, gardening, and attending concerts and plays. His love of gardening started during WWII with a Victory garden. He produced fruit and vegetables in every backyard he owned, and continued gardening in a plot at Timberhill Assisted living.

Lou is survived by his wife, Jackie; daughters, Judy and Dee; and his son,

Justin; as well as a number of grandchildren, step-grandchildren, and several great-grandchildren and step-great-grandchildren. Donations in Lou's honor may be made to: Beit Am Mid-Willamette Valley Jewish Community, or Marys River Masonic Lodge for the Benton Community Foundation.

# Cemetery Details

## Waverly Jewish Cemetery

Albany, OR 97321

# Tribute Wall

JU

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Judy** - July 03, 2025 at 08:14 PM

JU

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Judy** - July 03, 2025 at 08:13 PM

JA

“ I was sorry to hear about Lou's passing. I worked across the hall from Lou for many years. We also went on some oceanographic research cruises together.

*When I think of Lou, I immediately think of his broad smile and his hearty laugh.*

*He played King Neptune during our shipboard initiation ceremonies after we crossed the Antarctic Circle. Lou took this role very seriously and spent some time before the cruise rounding up the appropriate costume with wig and crown. He about lost his voice from yelling at us “unclean polywogs” who appeared before him on our knees to beg forgiveness for trespassing into his royal realm.*

*My fondest memory of Lou is of how he always smiled when referring to Jackie and called her “my bride” with great pride and love.*

*May the love of your family and friends and your memories give you comfort.*

*Julie Arrington*

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**Julie Arrington** - July 12, 2022 at 08:21 PM