



## Melvin S. Schlesinger

November 2, 1926 - September 1, 2025

Melvin S. Schlesinger,

Age 98, died peacefully in his home on September 1, 2025, in Boca Raton, Florida.

Mel was born on November 2, 1926, in Chicago, the only son of Walter Schlesinger and Molly Lobelson. His close relationship with his paternal grandparents, Isadore and Lily Schlesinger, restaurant owners in Chicago's North Side, fostered the values that would shape his life: love; hard work; and accountability. As a child, Mel was an avid baseball player and became a star first baseman for the Senn High School Bulldogs. In 1945, his hometown Chicago Cubs offered him a contract to play in their minor league system, but he elected instead to enlist in the U.S. Navy during the final months of World War II. He served on a ship in the Pacific Ocean that was preparing for the invasion of Japan when the war ended. After being honorably discharged from the Navy, Mel worked in Los Angeles before returning to Chicago and starting his family. It was then that Mel went to work at "Z" Frank Chevrolet as a car salesman, which would be the start of a lifelong career in the automobile business.

Several years after losing his first wife Carole to cancer, Mel married Iris Gold and moved his young family to Milwaukee to accept a management position

with University Dodge. In 1972, Mel realized his dream of owning his own dealership when he started Schlesinger Chevrolet. Mel became a “local celebrity” for his television commercials featuring catchy jingle and an animated likeness of himself in construction attire under the tag line “Mel Schlesinger is Building a Big Name for Himself.” He acquired a Toyota dealership in Glendale and successfully ran both dealerships for over twenty years. His son, Andy, purchased the dealerships after Mel’s retirement in 1993.

Retirement brought great adventures for Mel and Iris. They enjoyed a second home in Acapulco and ultimately moved to Boca Raton, Florida. Mel spent his years in Florida perfecting his golf game, traveling the world with friends, telling jokes and stories, and hosting his children and grandchildren on regular visits to their home at St. Andrew’s Country Club. In his early 90s, Mel was shooting rounds of golf below his age. He avidly followed the Milwaukee Brewers, rarely missing a game on television. In July 2025, Mel and Iris celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary. Theirs was a love that everyone aspires to have.

Mel is survived by his loving wife, Iris, his children Linda, Roberta, Donald (Aeisha), Andrew (Jill), and Richard (Kate), his grandchildren Cari (Brian), Bradley, Sam, Caitlin, Ethan, Avery, Molly, Mathieu, Sarah, and Elijah, his great-grandchildren Mason, Lauren, and Benjamin and his sister Helene (Geoff) Seaman. His first wife Carole Baer, sisters Gloria Levy and Sally Schlesinger, and his grandchildren Israel and Daniel preceded him in death.

Private services were held at Spring Hill Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations to be made to Jewish Family Services in his memory.

# Cemetery Details

## **Spring Hill Cemetery**

166 S. Hawley Ct.  
Milwaukee, WI 53214

# Tribute Wall

JP

“ Dear Iris, Linda, Bobbi, Donny, Andy, Rick and family, it was with great sadness hearing of Mel’s passing. Almost like losing my father again as they were so close and we got to know Mel and family so well. They were good times. Mel’s passing marks the end of an era. All my dad’s close male friends are all gone. I miss them all and Mel was at the top of the list.

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**Jeff Perelman** - September 14, 2025 at 09:42 PM

JH

“ On behalf of the staff and board of Jewish Family Services, we extend our heartfelt condolences to Iris, Andy and the entire Schlesinger family. May Mel’s memory be a blessing. Our thoughts are with you at this difficult time.

*We are also deeply honored and profoundly grateful to be named as a beneficiary in his memory. Gifts to Jewish Family Services Milwaukee are a meaningful tribute to the community who knew him well.*

*Jewish Family Services, Inc.  
[www.jfsmilw.org](http://www.jfsmilw.org)*

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**Jenny Steinman Heyden** - September 10, 2025 at 05:49 PM