

# Introduce Yourself: Georgia Mercer

## What's Your Story?



Hi, my name is Georgia Mercer. I was born in a suburb of Albany, New York to a Jewish mother and a Lutheran father. It was a small town with one Catholic church and one Congregational church. My three brothers and I were baptized Lutheran and as Christians we attended the Congregational church almost every Sunday.

Due to my father's health needs, my parents moved to St. Petersburg, Florida after I graduated high school. I went to Roanoke College in Virginia for two years where I met my Jewish husband, David. He graduated and moved back to NY. We were engaged at the time and I had transferred to the University of Florida. The distance from Florida to NY was too far so we married and moved to Brooklyn after my completing just one semester at the U of FL. Soon after, we moved to LA for business reasons and I completed my BA in education at Cal State LA. We loved LA from the minute we landed here.

Our amazingly fantastic son, Steven, was born just after our 5th anniversary. He is now 51 years old and has a wonderful wife, Nina. My very smart, adorable, and talented grandson Josh is almost 13. Steven earned his doctorate in educational leadership from UCLA and is in private practice as a college counselor. They live in Reseda.

My work experience included: teacher in the LA Unified School District; instructor at UCLA Extension in group counseling for women; and director of public affairs & communications for Planned Parenthood LA.

I've been a community and political activist most of my adult life. Some experiences include president of the LA Human Relations Commission, and member of Gov. Brown's Task Force on Civil & Religious Rights (during his first term as governor—many moons ago).

We lived in Tarzana for 37 years and I worked as Mayor Riordan's representative to the San Fernando Valley in the early 1990's before running for office myself. I was elected to the LA Community College Board of Trustees and served for 13 years before retiring.

My past volunteer involvements include the board of the CSUN Foundation, co-founder of the Juvenile Justice Connection Project, board of Valley Presbyterian Hospital, Jewish Federation Community Relations Council and coordinator for an organization called, Women For.

I was also the founding president of the New Reform Congregation that merged with Kol Tikvah in Woodland Hills. Most recently I served as a court appointed special advocate (CASA) for a foster child who has been adopted. Currently I am a docent at the Autry Museum of Western History, a consultant/coach with Executive Service Corp. of Southern California and have been a longtime member of the Women's Political Committee.

My husband, David, died three years ago after 53 years of marriage. We had a rich and full life together, lived in Tokyo, Japan for two years in the early 1970's, traveled to many states and countries with special friends. etc. I moved to an apartment

in Beverly Hills about one-and-a-half years ago and joined Temple Emanuel shortly thereafter.

Loneliness is the most challenging part of my life now and getting involved with ChaiVillageLA activities has been the best possible "medicine" for me. Thank you to the wonderful staff and all the talented volunteers who have helped to enrich my life!