



David A. Brener

January 18, 2026

David A. Brener of Ephrata, Pennsylvania, passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, January 18, 2026, at the age of 80. Born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, he was a proud Lancasterian. David will be remembered for his devotion to family, friends, and the Lancaster Jewish Community. David lived his life with integrity, warmth, and a deep sense of responsibility to others. His presence will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

David was the fifth generation of German Jews who settled in Lancaster in the 1870's. His parents were Fannie Jacobs Brener and Sydney David Brener. He graduated in 1967 Cum Laude from Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Upon graduation from college, David became an officer in his family's business, United Twine and Paper Company. He also served with the 103rd Medical Battalion, 28TH Division, of the Pennsylvania National Guard from 1967 through 1973.

In 1967, he married Kathleen Sherman of Coldwater, Michigan. They had two sons, Scott David Brener and Michael Keith Brener. David and Kathe were married for 26 years.

In 1983, David left the family business and, with a partner, purchased

Harrisburg Glass Company, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

In 1993, David decided to take a different direction with his personal and professional life and sold his interest to his partner and relocated to St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

While in St. Thomas, he was associated with REMAX. In 1995, he went to work for the U.S. Small Business Administration's Low Interest Disaster Loan Program for victims of natural disasters. He worked as a Loan Officer and Supervisor in FEMA aid stations at various disaster sites within the United States and its Territories. During his time with FEMA, he received numerous awards and recognition for his outstanding service with the organization.

In 1999, he moved to Fargo, North Dakota, and there he married Suzanne Johnson Craig. He then worked for Sanford Hospital as a Unit Clerk/Certified Nurse Assistant on the Inpatient Psychiatric Unit for eleven years.

In 2013, David and his wife, Suzanne, moved to Omaha, Nebraska. Unfortunately, two years later, Suzanne passed away. After Suzanne's passing, David decided to return home to Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Upon his return to Lancaster, he married Elizabeth (Betsy) White, who survives him.

David was actively involved in numerous civic and religious organizations. For 25 years, he served as Board Member, held various offices, and later became President of Congregation Shaarai Shomayim. He was the fifth generation of his family to hold that office. He served on the Board of the Lancaster County Historical Society and on the National Board of the American Jewish Historical Society. In 1979, he wrote *The Jews of Lancaster, Pennsylvania: A Story With Two Beginnings*, published jointly by the Congregation and the Lancaster

County Historical Society. He was active in preserving the heritage of the congregation by creating a digital archive. David was recognized by Congregation Shaarai Shomayim in 1977 with a Man of the Year Award, in 1993, as Congregant of the Year, and in 2021 with the Temple Brotherhood Andy Yerman Award for distinguished service.

He entered burial information and tombstone photographs of the almost 700 graves in the Shaarai Shomayim Cemetery into several databases. It is the fourth-oldest Jewish cemetery in the United States.

David had many varied interests, including being a long-suffering Phillies and Eagles Fan. He enjoyed visiting various baseball stadiums. He was a Mah Jongg player and collected baseball cards. He researched his family genealogy. His diverse interests reflected his ever-engaging curiosity. David is preceded in death by his parents, wife Suzanne, and son Scott.

He is survived by his loving family, his wife Betsy with whom he resided in Ephrata, PA; son, Michael of Fargo, ND; his brother, James Brener, Lancaster, PA; Kathleen Brener of Las Vegas, NV; stepchildren: Nicole Craig of Fargo, ND, Aaron Craig of Omaha, NE and Tina Cunningham of Annville, PA and step grandchildren: Venus and Gavin Craig of Omaha, Kadence Munns and Elizabeth Burnham of Fargo and Morgan Cunningham of Ephrata.

The Funeral and Burial Service will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory can be made to the Shaarai Shomayim Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund, 75 E. James Street, Lancaster, PA 17602.

Tribute Wall

NR

“ My deepest sympathy to the family of David Brener. Long time since I have connected with David. His Mother "Fannie & my mother Annie Watt Davis Clure were great friends. My mother used she many memories of the two in school. David & I went to MTHS. His family for some time during the MTHS years lived in MT. I believe it was the 900 block of Skyline Drive. And lived next door to my grandfather, Dr. Henry B. Davis, MD. My mother & Fannie renewed their friendship. I was so surprised when one summer David sent me a small ceramic horse from the Jersey shore. I believe it is still in my attic with my MTHS items. Forgive me for the tardiness of this sympathy note. My deepest sympathy and may the family always remember his kindness.

Nancy. N. Clure Groff, RN/BSN
MTHS 1960

Nancy C. Groff RN/BSN - February 19 at 01:53 PM

SG

“ David's contributions to documenting the history of Jews in Lancaster as well as the friendship he showed to our family will always be remembered.

Steve Geisenberger - January 25 at 09:48 PM

SW

“ To Michael, I was always impressed by how much your father loved you and Scott. I am so sorry for your loss.

Susan Wittenberg - January 22 at 03:20 PM

SL

“ To Michael and the extended Brenner family, David and I were good friends in elementary and junior high school. I also had the opportunity to briefly renew our acquaintance after I received my Ph.D. Please accept my sincere condolences. May he rest in peace.

Steve Lindenberg, Ph.D.
MTHS Class of '63

Steven Lindenberg - January 21 at 02:10 PM

RL

“ I remember Mr. Brenner for his devotion and dedication to the Jewish Community of Lancaster and his love for our home synagogue Shaarai Shomayim.

Rabbi Steven M Leapman - January 20 at 04:23 PM