



## David Alan Rush

May 11, 1940 - February 28, 2024

IN MEMORY OF:

David Alan Rush

Serving Location:

CRAIN PLEASANT GROVE-MURDALE FUNERAL HOME

31 Memorial Drive, Murphysboro, Illinois

David Alan Rush was born on May 11, 1940 and died on February 28, 2024 of complications from Parkinson's disease, just one month after his 30th wedding anniversary with Wayne Larsen and just a few months before what would have been his 84th birthday.

He was born to Florence Kaplan and Arthur Rush in Chicago, Illinois, and passed away in Carbondale, Illinois. In between, he had a full and fulfilling life.

He married his childhood friend and high school love, Fran Miles, with whom he had two children, Rebecca and Miles. He and Fran divorced but remained friends and considered each other family to this day. In his 40s, he met and fell in love with Wayne Larsen, whom he would marry and spend the rest of his life with.

David earned his doctorate in playwriting at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign and became not only an influential educator (at Texas State University, Governors State University, Columbia College, and Southern Illinois University) but also an accomplished playwright and librettist. He received critical acclaim and awards for many of his plays and saw his work produced at Mark Taper Forum, Manhattan Theatre Club, Playwrights Horizons, Chicago Dramatists, Stage Left and others. His plays explore the complexity of human relationships; many are set against backdrops of historical figures and events, while others are thought-provoking commentaries about current social issues. "Beethoven/Karl", "Leander Stillwell", "The Prophet of Bishop Hill", "Police Dear Near Far", "One Fine Day", "Nureyev's Eyes", and an adaptation of Sophocles's "Antigone" are among them. [www.davidrushwriter.com](http://www.davidrushwriter.com)

He won two Emmy awards for episodes he wrote and helped produce for a Chicago-based Jewish television program. And wrote several books about the art of playwriting.

In the late 1960s he and his artistic partner Errol Pearlman founded an off-Loop theater, Center Stage, in Chicago, where they mounted original plays and musicals. Their life-long partnership produced many pieces including "The Fools" and "The King of New London".

He spent his favorite summers at Harand Camp of the Theatre Arts in Wisconsin, directing hundreds, if not thousands, of campers in classic American musicals. Always the educator, he loved introducing new generations to the theatre, and he had a profound influence on many of their lives.

David was head of the playwriting program at Southern Illinois University for 15 years, and retired at the age of 71.

He was a voracious reader his whole life, with interests ranging from science fiction to historical biographies to theatre analysis. He sang in choirs. He was fascinated by the Civil War and spent many years as a reenactor in the Union Army. He took up piano in his 70s. And he became a Lego aficionado his last few years.

His students would describe him as intense and inspirational. His summer campers considered him devoted and enthusiastic. His friends and family knew him to be thoughtful and kind.

David is predeceased by his older brother, Henry (Sonny) but leaves behind his husband, Wayne; daughter, Rebecca; son, Miles; daughter-in-law, Miriam; grandchildren, Raphaella and Elijah; his younger brother, Sam; sister-in-law, Judy; four nephews; ex-wife, Fran Rush; her husband, Bob Branson; and many friends and admirers.

Cremation rites have been accorded. No services will be held at this time.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Crain Pleasant Grove-Murdale Funeral Home.

# Tribute Wall

CO

“ I knew David at the University of Illinois in 1959/60. We met in a play... and dated for a few months( such an old fashioned term now!). He was a kind, talented, soft spoken fellow. I am so sorry to hear of his passing in the latest issue of the Illini News. My sincere condolences to his entire family. I remember meeting his lovely parents in Chicago! May his memory be for a blessing.

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**Carol Farber Oko** - September 21, 2024 at 04:54 PM

CO

“ Carol Farber Oko lit a candle in memory of David Rush



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**Carol Farber Oko** - September 21, 2024 at 04:50 PM