Leon Katzen was born in New York City in 1918. He attended Brooklyn Law School and was admitted to the New York State bar in January, 1942. Several days later, he enlisted in the US Army and was discharged in the fall of 1945 as a captain. Leon served in the European Theater of operations (France and Germany), as a commander of an eight-inch howitzer (artillery) battery with 139 men and 4 officers. He received five battle stars & was the recipient of a Purple Heart. Leon arrived at Dachau concentration camp on the second day of the liberation.

Upon his return to the States, Leon opened a law office in New York in 1945. He married Betty Heller of Buffalo on March 31, 1946. They relocated to Rochester, where in 1950, Leon and Herb Lacy founded Lacy Katzen LLP, one of the leading law firms in Monroe County, which now has over 100 personnel.

During his more than 70-year legal career, Katzen earned a reputation as a passionate attorney who was committed to his clients. “Leon Katzen was a man of great character and conviction,” the firm’s Managing Partner Peter T. Rodgers said. Rodgers worked alongside Katzen for 39 years. “He was an outstanding lawyer, and he served his clients with great passion.”

Rodgers said a client of Katzen’s early in his career and now in her late 80s, actually became a life-long friend.

“She told me that Leon was one of the most important people in her life because he appreciated her and she appreciated how hard he worked on her behalf,” Rodgers said. “I thought that was remarkable. I think it’s fair to say that any person who was represented by Leon Katzen had an outstanding lawyer acting on his or her behalf.”

Throughout his life, Leon Katzen was a strong and vocal proponent of the State of Israel. In 2011 he was honored as an Ambassador of Humanity by Congregation Beth Sholom in recognition of his life-long passionate commitment to the State of Israel.

Respectfully submitted by:

Josh Katzen