

MAN OF THE MONTH

IRVING CAMIEL

Interviewed by Kenneth Sabanosh

Born on October 18, 1938, in Stamford, Connecticut, our Hero of the Month grew up in a close-knit family with two brothers and a sister. His father owned a small jewelry store, and many of his childhood memories revolved around helping with the family business and spending weekends at farmers' markets and antique fairs. Those early experiences sparked a lifelong appreciation for design, craftsmanship, and the beauty of well-made objects.

After graduating from high school in 1956, he pursued his artistic interests at the New England School of Art in Boston, where he studied art and interior design. A naturally creative person, he quickly discovered a passion for transforming spaces and helping people create environments that reflected both function and beauty. His education provided the foundation for a career that would span more than fifty years.

Following college, he worked as a furniture manufacturer's representative before establishing his own interior design company. Over the years, he collaborated with furniture manufacturers, design studios, and corporate clients on a wide variety of residential and commercial projects. His talent for combining aesthetics with practicality earned him numerous accolades and the respect of colleagues throughout the industry. Among his proudest accomplishments were the high-tech corporate interiors he designed, many of which received awards for innovation and visual impact.

Relationships have played an important role in shaping his life. He was married and raised three sons, all of whom have gone on to successful careers. He is also the proud grandfather of three granddaughters and two great-granddaughters, and he treasures the close and accepting relationship he shares with his family. Later in life, he found love with a talented bridal designer, a relationship that lasted more than a decade. He then shared eight meaningful years with Laurence, an educator, author, poet, and philosopher. Laurence passed away in 2023, leaving behind many cherished memories.

Giving back to the community has always been important to him. During the AIDS crisis of the 1980s, he became actively involved in fundraising and awareness efforts within the design community. He also volunteered with educational programs and charitable organizations, strongly believing in the importance of service.

Today, he enjoys antiques, architecture, interior design, classical music, opera, and travel. After moving to Palm Aire, he was introduced to Prime Gentlemen by a neighbor and quickly discovered a welcoming community of friends and activities. Looking ahead, he is excited for new adventures, continued friendships, and perhaps even a new romance.

His guiding philosophy is simple: **"Be yourself and never be afraid to love."** Those words beautifully reflect a life filled with creativity, resilience, generosity, and heart.