The Marshall Plan

By Jack Sheehan

Raised in a humble immigrant family, Art Marshall forged a highly accomplished life – a wonderful marriage and family, a successful business, constant devotion to faith-based causes and his community, and a network of political connections across international boundaries. The Plan worked.
As the fastest growing city in America for much of the latter half of the Twentieth and early Twenty-First Centuries, Las Vegas didn’t happen by accident. It thrived and grew because of generations of believers that felt the city had the potential to become a truly great western metropolis. One of those believers was Art Marshall, who settled here in the 1950s with his wife Jayn and young children Todd and Cari. Coming from Cleveland and a Russian immigrant family that wanted to give its brothers and sisters and children a chance to pursue the American dream, Art took advantage of every opportunity that presented itself. Through hard work and exceptional people skills, and in concert with his brother-in-law Herb Rousso, they built a retail clothing chain that would become popular from coast to coast. Art Marshall’s devotion to his family, his Jewish faith, and his community is yet one more inspiring story that parallels the rise to the top of his adopted city.
(Inside back dust-cover jacket)

Jack Sheehan has authored 20 books on a variety of subjects and has been writing in Las Vegas for nearly four decades. He has also written three feature-film screenplays. He has been honored as “Outstanding Feature Writer in the Western U.S.,” was given the Lowell Thomas Award for Best Travel Article in the U.S., for his essay on “The Loneliest Road in America,” and was presented the Nevada Governor’s Award for Outstanding Screenplay for his script Hayden Lake. Two of his books have made the New York Times Bestseller list.
In his 60 years as a Las Vegas businessman, Art Marshall has met and mingled with a Who’s Who of well-known politicians, casino moguls, international figures who shaped public policy, artists, and entertainers spanning several generations.

A short list would include Las Vegas magnates Kirk Kerkorian, Steve Wynn, Parry Thomas and Jerry Mack, Sheldon Adelson, Gary Loveman, Terry Lanni, and Jim Murren; Nevada U.S. Senators Sawyer, Laxalt, Cannon, Reid, Hecht, and Bryan; Nevada Governors O’Callaghan, List, Miller, and Sandoval; Israeli leaders Begin, Sharon, and Netanyahu, Jewish VIPS like Edward Teller, Elie Weisel, Simon Weisenthal, and Abe Foxman; and entertainers Frank Sinatra, Red Skelton, Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme, Danny Thomas, Danny Kaye, Judy Garland, Marlene Dietrich, Shecky Greene, Orson Wells, Betty Grable, Cary Grant, Phyllis McGuire, Tony Curtis, Debbie Reynolds; and artists Erte, Yuri Kuper, Harry Jackson, and the list goes on.

Art Marshall’s story provides a template on how to live a rich and full life, taking full advantage of every opportunity to maximize each day, and giving back in equal measure for the good fortune his country and his city have provided him and his family. It is a story well worth telling, and reading.
Dedication: This memoir is dedicated to Jayn Marshall, 1929-2010, my dear wife, partner, best friend, and guide who taught us, “Always remember who you are and what you are.” She was a devoted mother, outstanding grandmother, and amazing friend to all. Whether she knew you or not, she always greeted you with the warmest smile, as if you were the only one in the room. I am blessed to have had her in my life.—Art Marshall
# Table of Contents

Introduction ................................................................................................................. 1  
Chapter One: Early Years .......................................................................................... 16 
Chapter Two: Vegas Bound ......................................................................................... 39 
Chapter Three: Business Philosophy ......................................................................... 56 
Chapter Four: Red Skelton ......................................................................................... 58 
Chapter Five: Fancy Cars ............................................................................................ 73 
Chapter Six: Moe Dalitz .............................................................................................. 85 
Chapter Seven: Eugene Warner .................................................................................. 90 
Chapter Eight: Other Friends ..................................................................................... 98 
Chapter Nine: Chic Hecht .......................................................................................... 102 
Chapter Ten: The ‘Art’ of Networking ....................................................................... 113 
Chapter Eleven: Sheldon Adelson ............................................................................ 119 
Chapter Twelve: The Nevada Gaming Commission ................................................ 128 
Chapter Thirteen: Banking On It .............................................................................. 142 
Chapter Fourteen: The World of Erte ...................................................................... 148 
Chapter Fifteen: The Family Getaway ...................................................................... 160 
Chapter Sixteen: Harry Jackson ............................................................................... 163 
Chapter Seventeen: Other Important Friends and Honorable ‘Menchens’: (In Art’s words) ......................................................................................................................... 167
Introduction

If you trace back far enough with any American family, you’ll find that the members of that family settled in the U.S. through a series of small miracles, strokes of fate, and odd occurrences.

In many cases it’s one person’s act of courage, or a carefully plotted decision to seek a better life that caused the emigrating man or woman to leave the country of birth and settle in a land of freedom and unlimited opportunity.

In the family of Arthur (Art) Marshall, the long-time Las Vegas businessman, entrepreneur, devoted patron of Israel, loving husband, father, grandfather, and all-around good man, the act that started the family’s migration to the United States started in Russia with his uncle Julius Moskowitz.

In 1905 Julius, the oldest child of eight in a Jewish family living in Dvinsk, Latvia, was conscripted into the Russian army. On the day he was to sign up, two of Julius’s uncles went with him to the stockade. Shortly after he was registered, the uncles lifted Julius over the wall of the stockade, and using all the guile and ingenuity he could muster, the young man ran off to America.

The Russian army came looking for Julius, threatening serious repercussions if he wasn’t brought back to the stockade.

Julius’s father turned the tables on the military police, threatening them with legal remedies for the crime of “losing his son.” The issue became a stalemate and eventually went away.

Art’s cousin Jan Moskowitz, whose late father David was an inspiration and guiding light for Art from boyhood onward, uses the Yiddish term “seychel,” which means wisdom or sharp thinking, to describe the family’s strategy regarding Julius’s escape.

The ripple effect of that daring act over a century ago has had a lasting impact on the city of Cleveland, where Julius settled and over time brought his seven other siblings including Art’s father Leo; and particularly Las Vegas, where over a half century later Art Marshall and his brother-in-law Herb Rousso would bring their business and people skills to a women’s clothing chain known as Marshall Rousso.
“If Julius hadn’t gone over that wall, this entire story would be different,” says Art, in one of a series of interviews for this book in 2013.

There are many important aspects to the accomplished career of Art Marshall, but he will tell you the single most important moment of his life was on the evening in Cleveland in 1953, at a casual dinner in a local restaurant, when he first laid eyes on a beautiful woman, Jayn Saltzman. If indeed there is such as thing as love at first sight, this was it. Three days after their first date Art proposed marriage to Jayn, and several weeks later they were married.

Art’s and Jayn’s was not an ordinary romance. By any measure it was an exceptional romance, one that had minimal disharmony, but was accentuated rather by unconditional support for each other.

Perhaps it was a whimsical line that Jayn Marshall uttered to her friend Phyllis Friedman, the Nevada regional director for the Anti-Defamation League, that best explained the couple’s exceptional relationship. When asked by Phyllis in 2008 what the secret was to their marriage, Jayn replied, “We’re both in love with the same guy.”

The Marshalls functioned through their 56 years together as an unbreakable team, raising two accomplished children: Todd, 57, and Cari, 53, who in turn produced three grandchildren; working closely with the Jewish community in Las Vegas and for other causes in support of the nation of Israel; and giving their time selflessly to a number of civic activities. The Marshalls were a couple who followed the straight and narrow, always looking beyond the present day to find ways to improve a Las Vegas community that has always battled image problems and a divide between perception and reality, but nevertheless has grown into an important and vibrant modern American city.

Sadly, in 2010, Jayn lost a battle with breast cancer. As was characteristic of his lifelong devotion to her, Art rarely left Jayn’s side during the nine months she was ill.

“Obviously, that was a really difficult time for my dad,” Todd says. “He was completely devoted to my mother. It was a big deal for him even to leave her to go down to check the mail. He lost a lot of weight during that time. They were so close it was as though the illness affected them equally.”
If one were pressed to find a single aspect of Art’s and Jayn’s life together where they didn’t think alike, it would be regarding medical care. Jayn Marshall didn’t go to doctors, and she was a firm believer in holistic care. This extended to her embrace of the spiritual art of Transcendental Meditation, which she adopted with her sister Este Rousso in the middle 1960s and practiced until the end of her life.

Art didn’t embrace TM, but he came to accept Jayn’s passion for it because he saw how much she cared for it. That’s what loving couples do. They respect each other’s beliefs and support them unconditionally, although their level of passion may differ greatly.

“My parents had a common bond in their dedication to their family and each other, and that was more important than anything else,” says Cari Marshall. “And that extended to all members of their family. Although my father was an only child, he had dozens of cousins that were almost like brothers and sisters.”

Very few stories came up in the course of many interviews with Art that Jayn didn’t play an integral role.

“She was a guide for me in our life together,” he says. “She was a partner in every sense—a beautiful, wise, kind, loving, and talented woman totally devoted to her family.”

Art tells the story about how shortly after they were married Jayn made sure he paid back seventy-five dollars that he owed on a draw account with a former employer. He explains that it was common in the aluminum siding business (more on that later) to draw money against future sales commissions and settle up when the jobs were completed. When Art and Jayn went to the business owner’s home to repay the money, he told them it was the only time he’d been repaid like that by an employee who left the company.

“That story is an example of what Jayn believed,” Art says. “Honesty, integrity, and truthfulness were so important to her, and she always emphasized those qualities to our children and grandchildren.”

He also says that Jayn had a gift for conversation, and she was comfortable speaking to people of all stages in life, including the powerful and the famous.

“I recall with admiration many late evenings of conversation with people (note: many of whom we will meet later in this memoir) like Abe Foxman, the
head of the Anti-Defamation League; the great Russian artist Yuri Kuper; Eric Estorick, a major world art dealer; and former Israel Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.”

Art even recalls attending a dinner party at famous fashion designer Nolan Miller’s home to honor the Marshall’s friend Erte, the renowned artist, and how Jayn engaged in a long conversation with Elizabeth Taylor. When Art asked Jayn later what they discussed, she said, “Oh nothing important. It was just girl talk.”

Art says that Jayn was always dressed immaculately when he would come home for dinner after work. “She had a terrific sense of decorum in the way she conducted her life, and it was important to her to pass that on to our children and grandchildren,” he says. “They will all tell you she was the rock of our family.”

... 

Cari feels that her father’s being an only child, and being an extremely bright young boy who was twice moved from schools to a more advanced course of study, compelled him to seek to better his life from the humble conditions of his upbringing. Cari says her paternal grandparents’ main ambition in America was surviving and staying alive, while Art’s was to accomplish all he could with the opportunities he was given. Art fully understood the sacrifices that his parents and aunts and uncles had undergone to find their way to America and provide better opportunities for their children, and he was determined to take full advantage of them. With a pleasant demeanor, an instant likeability, and a gift of gab, Art’s people skills were apparent to all he met from an early age.

Todd agrees that his father’s being an only child probably subjected him to a lot of praise within the household, and gave him the self-esteem at an early age that he could accomplish anything he set his mind to. One thing is certain. Art was always comfortable meeting important and famous people, and he had a knack for being able to nurture those introductions into long-term friendships.

Art is particularly adept in the world of politics, where his support of Israel is always in the front of his mind. And although he is a loyal Democrat, he will support and befriend Republicans who are sympathetic to Israeli causes, or whom he considers to be good people with a strong sense of integrity. As Cari’s daughter Dana Marshall Bernstein likes to say, “Grandpa has a Democratic heart and a Republican wallet.”

One of Nevada’s most enduring Democratic figures, seven-term Congressman Shelley Berkley, emphasizes this point in a recent interview:
“I can’t begin to tell you how close Art and I have been,” says Berkley. “But yet he has been equally close to Chic Hecht (a former Republican U.S. Senator) and to Sheldon Adelson (who reportedly gave over $100 million to Republican candidates in the 2012 Presidential election).

“I mean, these are not people I ordinarily break bread with,” Berkley says, “and yet Art would defend each of us to the other within an inch of his own life. There has never been a question in my mind that he loved me and would stand by me. And yet I knew that he was friends with some people that are—and I hate to use this term—enemies of mine. But that never impacted on my relationship with Art. I trusted him, and I knew that he had my best interests at heart as much as he had with Sheldon, as much as he had with Chic or anybody else. That is the sign of a true friend and a giant of a man.”

Another attribute of Art Marshall’s is that when he gets involved in a cause, he typically takes a leadership role. His work with the Anti-Defamation League earned him that organization’s Distinguished Community Leadership Award. He also received the Prime Minister’s Medal from the state of Israel in honor of his financial support for Israel Bonds. And his decades of work on behalf of the University of Nevada Las Vegas was acknowledged with his reception of a Distinguished Nevadan Citizen award.

He has also given thousands of hours of time and commitment to the Jewish Federation of Las Vegas. He coerced his friend Danny Greenspun to become involved with the Federation, and although Danny says he went, “kicking and screaming to early meetings,” he eventually became president of the organization and says the experience was “extremely educational and positive. I’ve learned that listening to Art is a wise thing to do,” Danny says. “He’s right 99 percent of the time.”

...
“The best networker I’ve ever known...Art never met a stranger...A master at putting people together to their mutual benefit....” These are the types of comments one hears over and over in discussing Art Marshall.

Long-time Las Vegan Jay Brown, who is Nevada Sen. Harry Reid’s attorney, says this: “Art has such a friendly disposition and easygoing personality that he can get along with anyone, which is a great talent to have. My feeling is that if you can’t get along with Art Marshall, you can’t get along with anybody.”

Jayn Marshall was also from a close-knit family and was extremely close to her two sisters, Malvene, who would marry a chiropractor, Dr. Herb Rowe, and Estelle (Este), who would marry a Southern California entrepreneur, Herb Rousso, who would become Art’s immeasurably important business partner. Indeed, it was the bond between the sisters that united them with their husbands and eventual children in Las Vegas half a century ago, so that they could all be close to the women’s parents, Abe and Sara Saltzman. And it was this important decision to keep the Saltzman family together that would open windows of opportunity in this rapidly growing southwestern city that Art Marshall and Herb Rousso would grasp with both hands.

In interviews with dozens of Art’s friends and business associates, there are other characteristics mentioned about him repeatedly: integrity, loyalty, common sense, an amazing ability to network and link people together in a way that is always mutually beneficial—these qualities are touched on time and again. Another is compassion. Todd Marshall says his father is a great believer in rehabilitation and giving people second chances.

“When Dad served on the Nevada Gaming Commission, he took great pleasure in giving back someone’s work permit after they’d made an earlier mistake,” Todd says. “He’s always been big on forgiveness.”

An example of this lies with Cari Marshall’s early marriage. She was wed for 10 years to prominent Las Vegas attorney Ed Bernstein, and Art welcomed Ed into the family like a second son. When the marriage ended in divorce, Art and Jayn were both hurt, and the feelings remained raw for a few years.

One day Jayn said to Art: “This war with Ed has to end. It’s too hurtful to Cari and Dana (their daughter).”
Art agreed with her reasoning, and today Art and Ed are close once again. Ed Bernstein says that Art is “like my second father. There is no one I respect more or whose advice I value more than Art’s.”

Regarding his three granddaughters: Todd’s daughters Jessica and Alexis Marshall, and Cari’s daughter Dana Marshall Bernstein, they all feel an extra special bond with Art and consider him the smartest man in the world.

“The grandkids always felt that Grandpa could do anything,” Cari says. “And he could. They knew he would always deliver for them.”

One of Art’s pet quotes, which he pulls out occasionally at family gatherings, is, “Grandchildren are God’s gift for not killing your children.”

Unless it’s overlooked, Art has a pretty keen sense of humor as well.

All three granddaughters are full of praise about the love and guidance they have received from Art and Jayn through the years.

“Grandpa is so amazing, he’s been totally involved in our lives since we were little,” says Alexis Marshall, 24, Todd’s younger daughter, who works as a production coordinator for a film studio in Los Angeles. “When we were growing up, if he couldn’t be at an event, he wanted to hear the story about what he missed. And he always remembered our friends’ names, which was pretty cool.

“Grandma was amazing as well,” Alexis says. “She taught us morals, and always to follow our gut. She created such a warm environment for us. She had great intuition and would celebrate our happiness when things were going well, and was supportive when things weren’t going well. I once got caught sneaking out with my dad’s car at night. It was late and I pulled out of a parking lot in a park that was closed and was pulled over by a cop. My dad yelled at me, which I deserved, but when it was my grandparents’ time to say something, they explained that the danger was that I was out late at night when people were drunk driving. They smoothed it over and came to it from a loving place.”

Alexis’s older sister Jessica, 27, who is a buyer for a large online shopping company in New York, remembers a story from when she was just four years old.

The Marshall Plan
She was with her grandfather at his summer home in Coronado, and she had
developed the habit of always calling him “Art.”

“There are only three people in the world that can call me Grandpa, and
you are one of them,” he told her. “I wish you’d just call me Grandpa.”

A short time later she said, “Art, I really want some ice crème.”

“Art doesn’t want to get ice crème right now,” he replied.

Little Jessica looked up at him and said, “Well then, does Grandpa want to
get some ice crème?”

Needless to say, Grandpa instantly headed for the ice crème store.

Dana Marshall Bernstein, 24, says that she determined as a young girl, just
five or six years old, that she was so proud of the Marshall name that she has gone
by Dana Marshall-Bernstein ever since.

“Because my parents divorced when I was really young, I spent a lot of
time with my grandparents, “she says. “And I formed a really close alliance with
my grandfather. If ever there was an instance of taking sides over an issue, it would
always be my mom (Cari) and grandmother on one side and my grandfather and I
on the other. He was always my best ally, and it’s always been comforting to know
that he has my back in every situation. I remember my grandfather used to laugh
and tell my cousins and me, ‘We have a common enemy: your parents.’”

... Visiting Art Marshall’s penthouse apartment is like gaining admittance to a
prestigious art gallery. The most prominent paintings on display are of course the
work of his beloved Jayn, whose artistic talents were such that on two different
occasions major figures in the art world offered to host shows of her work.

“But Mom was never interested in that,” Cari Marshall says. “She painted
because she had to express what was inside of her. She never had any interest in
selling her work or showing it off.”

In looking through photos of Art’s collection through the years, most of
which he’s dispersed, there are a number of magnificent pieces, including bronzes
from Paul Troubetzkoy, considered the greatest Russian sculptor of modern times;
the western painter and sculptor Harry Jackson; and the great Russian artist Yuri Kuper, who became close friends with Art and Jayn and with whom Art still corresponds.

Through the years he has owned terrific Faberge works, and he has a good story about each of them. One can only imagine what the response would be if Art went on a television program like *Antiques Roadshow* and revealed to a Russian history expert a pair of baby slippers that belonged to Tsar Nicholas, but that’s another story.

It’s almost as though the first name he received at birth, and the last name he chose as a teenager to become more Americanized, have in an unusual way defined one of his passions. Because Art Marshall is a man who has through his life marshaled some invaluable works of art, and he has treasured them with the understanding that they represent in their creators a brilliant sense of workmanship and an intuitive understanding of the human condition.

... 

While most of us would be pleased to know we had four or five close friends that we could count on in times of great need, it’s likely Art’s list would be five to 10 times that long. That is because nearly everyone interviewed for this memoir mentioned that Art had been beside them in a time of particular need, and they would be honored to reciprocate if he needed them. The comments of Shelley Berkley perhaps best exemplify the bonds Art is capable of forming with his friends:

“When I was growing up in Las Vegas, Art Marshall was a larger than life figure in the community, both in the secular world and the Jewish world,” Berkley says. “When I was first running for Nevada State Assembly in 1982, there was nobody that I wanted to meet more than Art. I arranged through his then son-in-law Eddie Bernstein to meet him. That was a very fortuitous meeting for me, and Art and I became as intimate as two people can be without having sex. (laughing).

“When you have a conversation with Art, it is not a small thing,” she continues. “It is a major commitment of time. That is because there is so much to share and he is so knowledgeable about so many things, and he has the most extraordinary intuitive nature of anybody I have ever met. He helped me through some very, very tough times, and he’s been with me through very, very good times. I consider him a friend and a mentor and just one of the most extraordinary people I’ve ever met.”
Others who have worked with Art on the political or business front are equally effusive in their praise of him. Here’s a sampling:

Sen. Harry Reid, the U.S. Senate Majority Leader since 2007: “My experience with Art Marshall extends over these many years, and the quality about him that most stands out is his loyalty to friends and family. And his loyalty to me. No matter what happens, he’s been there for me. You know I’ve been kicked around…popular at times, not so popular at other times, but to Art none of that matters. Whether I’m up or down, he’s always with me. He lost his wife Jayn, which was traumatic, and his granddaughter Dana has battled many health issues, but he’s always there to help whoever needs it. He has two great children, Cari and Todd, and he’s always there for them no matter what they might be going through. Art’s sense of loyalty is just exceptional.”

Jan Jones, former mayor of Las Vegas and currently Senior Vice-President of Caesars Entertainment: “What a wonderful man Art is. He supported me in my campaigns for mayor and governor, but he doesn’t let politics get in the way of friendship. He has great friends on both sides of the aisle because he is an eminently fair man. He does things out of his own good heart. Together he and Jayn were just a wonderful couple. They were their own love story.”

Sam Lionel, founding partner of the Lionel Sawyer Collins law firm, who was recently married at age 94: “Art Marshall has been my neighbor for many years and a friend for even longer than that. I don’t know anyone who knows more about the politics and personalities in Las Vegas than Art. He just has a huge knowledge of the people of the area. Most importantly, he has a good heart and he’s always willing to help people out with any problem or situation that might arise.”

Don Snyder, currently Dean of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration at UNLV: “It’s hard to quantify how many different businesses or projects Art has lent great support to. He did a lot for the Smith Center (for the Performing Arts) when we were in our formative years, and the Cleveland Clinic’s alliance with the Lou Ruvo Brain Center is in large part a credit to Art and all his connections in Cleveland. He just knows how to get things done. Also, at Bank of Nevada he was clearly the best business developer we had because it was always in his mind to discuss the bank with people. We couldn’t have had a more effective chairman. He had the maturity and wisdom to do the job, and he had great gut instincts.”
Mike Sloan, long-time prominent Las Vegas gaming attorney and currently Senior Vice-President of Government Relations with Fertitta Enterprises: “Art and I worked together so often as fundraisers that he used to tell people, ‘Mike has cost me more money than Jayn.’ And it’s probably true. A fellow named Jerry Berlin first got us together because he knew we had similar interests and abilities, and I think Art and I made a pretty good team. I remember we specifically worked together with Joe Biden and Howard Metzenbaum, and Art was invaluable because he was good friends with both of them, and with so many other powerful politicians. As everyone knows, Art’s fundraising, while it may be skewed towards Democrats, isn’t limited to them. He usually just chooses the right side of an issue and then works tirelessly for that cause. He’s a collegial guy, and he’s done a lot of his good work in a quiet way.”

Gary Loveman, CEO Caesars Entertainment: “The gaming industry, other than nuclear power, is the most exhaustively regulated industry in America, and not for very good reasons. Among gaming regulators I’ve dealt with--and our company operates in every U.S. state that has gaming--Art is unique in that he was always looking not just for problems with an application or an opportunity, but for ways to expand opportunities. He understood that his purpose as a regulator with the Nevada Gaming Commission was to prevent the worst and also to enhance the best. It is also significant that as a successful retailer he understood what drives customers into our buildings and what they want to enjoy. Most regulators are lawyers or accountants, so among regulators his was a unique perspective. Having an entrepreneur like Art on the Commission was a hugely positive thing.”

Robert List, Governor of Nevada from 1979-1983: “I’ve known Art for 40 years and just consider him a brilliant guy, and so sincere. I don’t think he has an enemy in the world. I introduced him to Sheldon Adelson when I was representing Sheldon in his purchase of the Sands Hotel and his subsequent licensing. I just felt they were two wonderful guys, both philanthropists and both devoted to Jewish causes. That has developed into a wonderful friendship. I also worked with him as attorney general to reduce the problem of shoplifting in Nevada, and I appointed him to the PERS Board (Public Employees Retirement System) when that board needed strong professional guidance and he brought leadership and expertise to that position.”

Bob Miller, Governor of Nevada from 1989-1999: “Art has always been one of the most community-minded men in Las Vegas. He has attended civic and charitable events endlessly, particularly those that are faith-based. Appointing him to the Nevada Gaming Commission was an easy decision. His highly successful
stores had placed him inside Las Vegas casinos daily, yet not as a licensee. He has always been regarded as an honest and straightforward person who says what he believes and acts as he says.”

Richard Bryan, former Governor of Nevada (1983-1989) and U.S. Senator (1989-2001): “When I ran against Chic Hecht for Senate in 1988 I knew that Art was a long-time close friend of Chic’s, so I understood and respected his loyalty to his good friend. I think he would have supported me had I not been the challenger and running against his long-time friend. I remember working with him through the Retail Merchants Association when I was attorney general of Nevada and governor. The qualities that I think of with Art are loyalty and fair-mindedness. I remember seeing Art and Jayn at so many local events, usually Bonds for Israel dinners and events for the Jewish Federation. He’s always been a class act.”

Sen. Tom Daschle, former U.S. Senator from South Dakota and former Senate Majority leader: “Art is such a dear, dear soul. I can say of all the times I’ve been picked up by a friend at the airport, the only time I got a ride in a Rolls Royce was with Art Marshall. He used to pick me up every time I came to Las Vegas. I think the first time was in the 1990s, and I was so impressed with the car he said, ‘You drive.’

“So I got in and drove and told Art to sit in the back seat, so I could chauffeur him around for once.

“He always contributed to my campaigns, every time I ran for office. I know he was supportive of many Jewish causes, and I’ve made many friends in the Jewish community through the years, and I believe I met him through those contacts. I consider Art a true friend.”

Bill Bible, former chairman of the Nevada Gaming Control Board:

“I was Richard Bryan’s budget director when he was governor and Richard pointed me to Art as a source of economic information. I would talk to Art about how his dress shops were doing on the Strip. Most people don’t recognize how politically connected Art is both inside and outside Nevada. He knows most of the influential national politicians on a first-name basis. He also has the unique talent of being able to say No to people gracefully. He has conducted himself in such a manner that I’m not sure he’s ever offended anybody.”

Bill Curran, former chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission. “Art has a Rolodex full of friends, and the chances are they all owe him favors. When I served on the Commission with him, he was a great consensus builder. If an issue
required understanding, he had it. If a vote required courage, he had it. If a matter required pragmatism, he had it. Even though he’s had great success in his own career, he always showed concern for the underdog and the disadvantaged, whether it was for the poor, the sick, or the elderly. When it came to people looking for an hourly wage job in the gaming industry, and who might have had a black mark somewhere in their life, whether it was a DUI, a shoplifting charge, or some problem with drugs, Art’s position was that it was not right to determine a person’s suitability to get a work card based on the worst single moment of his or her life. And I always admired him for that. We’re talking about a man who helped shape the Las Vegas community, and he was always very aware of the mood and heart of the entire city.”

Dr. Jim Nave, former chairman of the Nevada Athletic Commission: “Art is one of the finer human beings I’ve been privileged to know. I have great respect for people who are hard-working and honorable, and he is both of those. I think the job of Commissioner for the Gaming Board was tailor-made for Art. With his terrific work ethic, his love of reading, and his sense of fairness, he did great work for the Gaming Commission. The other thing that made him so effective was that he was not afraid to make an unpopular decision if he thought it was the right thing to do.”

A few years ago, now Nevada Supreme Court Justice Mike Cherry called Art and told him he was running for a district court judgeship and asked for his endorsement and support. Art told him he would support him on one condition: that he be a judge with a “Jewish heart.” Cherry asked him just what he meant by that term, and Art told him that if someone came before him in court who had made a mistake but was deserving of a second chance, that the judge should “give the person a leg up instead of a boot down.”

Cherry was elected and is highly regarded.

This was yet one more instance where the compassion of Art Marshall had a profound influence on another person in a role of leadership.

... 

One of the more impressive things about Art Marshall is his versatility, and the ability he has exhibited throughout his life to blend smoothly into the different worlds of business, gaming, the arts, politics, and banking.
From his early work experiences as a top salesman with the Bobbie Brooks clothing company in the Midwest, to moving across the country to take over a family business in Las Vegas and with his partner bringing it to national prominence, to his talent for bonding with community business and political leaders in his new city, to his passion for art and being able to meet and consort with some of the most prominent figures in that illustrious world, to taking over the chairmanship of a new bank and helping guide its growth, one has to be impressed with the depth and range of this man who rose from such humble beginnings.

As more than one source for this book mentioned, Art has a Rolodex of nearly all the important players in Las Vegas over the last 50 years, and he has the contact numbers of dozens of national political leaders as well. As he goes through his notes and memorabilia from his half century in southern Nevada, he can produce personal letters from dozens of prominent politicians and many of the major celebrities of our time.

Naturally, the last few years since Jayn’s death have been difficult for Art. As with anyone who has lost a lifelong mate, he has had to rediscover himself and learn how to cope with the final chapter of his life without his anchor.

He says, “Life changed forever with the loss of Jayn. Suddenly, after 56 years together I was alone, and even with the planning we’d done, I was unprepared to be without her.”

Shortly after her death Art went to their summer place in Coronado with Todd and Cari, and his three granddaughters followed.

Prior to Jayn’s illness, Todd and his friend Alesia taken photos of Jayn’s artwork, and with Dana’s assistance with written commentary they had published a book titled, “The Art of Jayn Marshall.” They also made some DVDs of her artwork.

“That gift was the single nicest tribute to Jayn ever,” says Art. “It was a true gift of love and I had never seen her more pleased.”

Music was added to the DVD and it was shown at Jayn’s memorial service and had a beautiful calming effect on everyone.

“Then came the paperwork burden that follows a death,” says Art. “I thank heaven for our estate attorney Richard Oshins, our accountant Dan Gerety, and our asset managers at Miller Russell and Russell Buckelew.”

The Marshall Plan
Art had good company in Coronado. In addition to family, he was joined by friends Vern and Dr. Morley Rosenfeld, Jane and Jon Pollack, Stacey Mycorn, Irwin and Susan Molasky, and Ed and Mona Sher. Vivica Marshall, the mother of granddaughters Jessica and Alexis, has a condo on the same floor as Art and was also very supportive.

When Art returned to Las Vegas, Burton and Linda Cohen joined him frequently for dinner, often in company with the Shers and Joe and Maureen McKenna.

Bill Boyd helped keep Art busy by asking him to join Boyd Gaming’s compliance committee, and Robert Sarver and the bank board named him Chairman Emeritus of the Bank of Nevada.

Nearly every day, Art is joined by his good friend Jerry Greenberg for lunch.

Working on this memoir was also helpful in allowing Art to reflect on so many of the wonderful moments of his life. His memory after 83 plus years on the planet proved remarkable, giving credence to the old saw about how if one continually exercises both the mind and the body, they will serve a person well in the later years of life.

(Author’s note: the dozens of hours I spent with Art in compiling the stories that follow were informative, inspirational, and fun. In addition to getting a graduate course in Las Vegas’s history over the last 50 years, and coming to appreciate that Art is no more than three degrees separated from anyone who’s lived here for more than a dozen years, I had many a good laugh, and an occasional tear, over recounting his remarkable life.

Art Marshall is the personification of a life well-lived.—J.S.)
Art Marshall describes his family’s economic condition as he was growing up in Cleveland as “lower middle class, but upwardly mobile.” That’s because although the Moskowitz family (his birth name) had little money, and the country was going through the toughest economic conditions it had ever experienced, they were all hard workers and optimists.

Art was born on September 4, 1929, just a month before the stock market crashed and the country was plunged into the Great Depression.

“My birth caused the Depression,” he jokes. “Truthfully, it didn’t affect us because we didn’t have a dime to begin with.”

Art’s parents migrated separately to the United States. His father’s family came from Dvinsk, Latvia, a province of Russia, around 1920, and his mother’s family was from the Ukraine. When the couple married in 1928, Art’s father Leo Moskowitz was in his early thirties and his mother Ann Harris was just 20.

Leo was going to night school to learn English, where he met Ann’s brother, who was in the same class, and through him met Ann. The romance blossomed quickly, they were married within a few months, and a year later their son Arthur was born.

Leo was a tinsmith and a roofer and did well enough that his wife could stay at home with their child. Ann had been a seamstress prior to meeting her husband and excelled at her craft, but she didn’t continue with it. Raising her son was a far greater priority.

In their small, single-family house on the lower east side of Cleveland, at 10821 Gooding Avenue, in a mixed Jewish neighborhood with a small African American population, there were seven family members—Art and his parents, his father’s mother, his father’s single brother, and a married sister with her husband.

Like many immigrants to the country in those years, the family unit was unbreakable and collectively pulled together so that each would have a chance to pursue his or her dreams in their new land.

Because Art was so close to his aunts and uncles and cousins, his stories often go back to one or more of his family members. With his remarkable memory, he is able to offer a verbal genealogy of nearly all of them.
"The order of arrival to America started with Uncle Julius," he says. "Then my father and his youngest brother Sol came. They were bachelors and they lived in the basement of Julius’s house, while they worked to save money to bring the rest of the family. Julius already had a family to support by then. His two sons were Wilbur and Morton. Sol and Leo then brought David over, and the three of them worked to raise enough money to bring Zalmon and his family, the three sisters and their parents.

"The oldest sister in my father’s family was Tilly, and she married Hymie Madow, and they had a daughter Gertrude," Art adds. "Unfortunately, Tilly died in the flu epidemic many years before I was born, and Hymie was left as a single dad. When the other two sisters came over, Ruth and Elizabeth, the family pushed Elizabeth to marry Hymie, which was not uncommon in those days. So Hymie married his late wife’s younger sister, and they had three children, Robert, Sylvia, and Beatrice Madow."

Art’s family lived within a three- to five-minute walk from the Madows and Art spent a lot of time at their home. He became particularly close to Bob Madow, who was a couple years older than he. Bob became a graduate engineer and went to the Case School of Applied Science, which is one of the larger engineering schools in the country. He started his own masonry construction company and built a small office building for Art and his partners in a later automobile sales venture. Bob was so ethical that after he’d finished construction on the office he returned money to Art because he realized it had cost him less to build than he’d originally estimated. Bob Madow eventually went into partnership with his (and Art’s) uncle David Moskowitz, and they became quite successful in the home-building business.

Bob Madow’s two children, Paul and Michele, now in their fifties, also stay in touch with Art. Bob’s sister Sylvia moved to Canada, and she has children and grandchildren living by her up there.

Beatrice Madow married a high school friend of Art’s, Don Kwiat, who is a dentist, and they have three children. Bea is six months older than Art, still lives in Cleveland, and stays in close touch with him. She has three children, Corey, Lisa, and Brian, who is a highly successful president of a large New York investment firm called Odyssey Partners.

As Art says repeatedly over the course of many interviews, "I may be an only child, but I have a large and great family."
Art began his education at Columbia Elementary School, but as a bright lad it was determined he was eligible for a more advanced school, so he transferred to Miles Standish Elementary, which had a major work accelerated program. With the new school, Art and his parents moved to a smaller rental unit with just the three family members. Shortly thereafter, Leo bought a home in the same neighborhood on Empire Avenue. He continued to get steady business as a small contractor.

When Art was 12, he enrolled in Patrick Henry Junior High, which also had an accelerated program. It was a long hike from their home, but one he made every day. From there, he attended Glenville High School, notable for its number of acclaimed graduates, including Hollywood motion picture magnate Lew Wasserman, composer Alan Jay Lerner (Camelot, My Fair Lady), U.S. Senator Howard Metzenbaum, comedian Steve Harvey, and film director Ross Hunter, whose real name was Marty Fuss and who was a close friend of Art’s cousin Morton. The students at Glenville were mostly first-generation Americans who came from families that were strong believers in the importance of education.

Decades after his graduation from Glenville, Art’s friendship with Howard Metzenbaum, and the respect they had for each other, would bear political fruit for Art’s future place of residence, Las Vegas.

If there was a more difficult time to be raised in America, it’s hard to imagine. The Depression that hung on through the 1930s and was slowly beginning to improve late in the decade fell under the dark cloud of conflict in Europe, and the rumors of persecution of the Moskowitzs’ Jewish people by the Nazis in Germany and Russia.

Art was just 12 years old and a new member of a Boy Scout troop when Pearl Harbor was bombed in December of 1941. But the family pushed forward, and Art stayed active in school and scouting. He enjoyed long hikes and summer camps with the scouts. He also belonged to social fraternities in both junior high and high school. He describes himself as a B-plus student, respectable considering he always held down part-time jobs during the school year and through the summers.

Among the jobs he held during his teen years was working at a woman’s specialty shop called David’s (an applicable apprenticeship for his eventual
career), working for his uncle Julius Moskowitz at a small hardware store, selling jewelry with his cousin Leonard Marshall, and working for the Cleveland Concession Company selling popcorn, hot dogs, and Coca-Cola at the Cleveland Indians ballpark.

Art’s very first job was clerking in a neighborhood drugstore for twenty-five cents an hour. He’d been employed for only a few weeks when the owner notified him that there was a shortage of fifty cents in the cash register. Rather than chalk it up to an accounting error, the owner determined that Art must be the culprit, and he took the money out of his pay.

“I quit that job because I didn’t take the money,” Art says, “and then I picketed the store on the sidewalk out front. I held up a sign that said, ‘Owner is Unfair.’ He got very upset and chased me away.”

He has a good laugh at the memory.

Art got his driver’s license when he was just 14, while World War II was in full thrust. The first car he drove, which would ignite a lifelong love affair with automobiles, was his father’s 1937 Plymouth. Also during this time he would occasionally work in his father’s tin shop, on 105th street, and sometimes type up roofing contracts and do the billing.

Both of Art’s parents learned to speak English well after taking night classes, but his grandmother spoke only Yiddish in their household. That enabled him to learn Yiddish well enough to decipher the language even today. His parents never spoke their native language at home because they wanted Art to learn English as his native language and become Americanized.

Following the lead of one of his role models, his cousin Wilbur Moskowitz, who had changed his last name to Marshall, Art did the same when he was 16 years old. His father Leo was fine with the decision. The Moskowitzes dearly loved their adopted country and all the freedoms and opportunities it afforded them and their relatives.

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Art fondly recalls two girls he dated in high school. There was Rhoda Hollander, and a particular favorite Laura Boxerbaum, with whom he stills stays in touch. She is married to Alvin Siegal, a successful mortgage broker, for whom the
Laura and Alvin Siegal College for Judaic Studies in Ohio is named. Through the years Art occasionally met the couple for dinner in Las Vegas.

His high school algebra teacher, Mr. Parker, was the father of famed actress Eleanor Parker. On one eventful day at the Olympiad Hotel in Los Angeles many years later, Art met Ms. Parker, the star of over 50 films, including *The Man with the Golden Arm* and *The Sound of Music*, and reminisced with her about enjoying her father as a teacher. Later that same day, Art met Orson Welles.

... 

One alarming and unforgettable moment for Art occurred while he was still in high school. His parents had gone to California on a visit, and he was invited to dinner with his aunt, Faye Perlberg, his mother’s sister. She lived in an apartment in Shaker Heights.

Art parked in the apartment’s parking lot, but it was a snowy night and when he went to his car to leave around 10 o’clock, he found he was blocked in by another car. He was scheduled to pick up his parents the next morning at the train depot, so he had no choice but to sleep on his aunt’s couch.

Early in the morning he was awakened by loud knocking on the apartment door. It was the building janitor’s wife, who was frantic. She grabbed Art by the shirt and pulled him downstairs into the basement. He had no idea what had happened, so naturally he felt quite a rush of adrenaline. When they got to the basement, there it was: the limp body of the janitor, suspended from a beam. The poor man had hung himself.

Art was in shock but he knew he had to do something so he ran upstairs to his aunt’s apartment, got a knife, ran back and cut the man’s body down. Meanwhile, the distraught wife had called the fire department, which was located right across the street, but when the firemen arrived it was too late to revive him.

“I just reacted purely by instinct that morning,” Art says, “and it probably wasn’t until the next morning that I could put my mind around that tragic event.”

...
Following high school graduation, Art attended Kent State University for two years, then transferred to Cleveland College, a branch of Western Reserve University. While there he accumulated enough credits to start attending John Marshall Law School in the evening. He was conflicted though, because while he’d always been attracted to law, the urgency to get out in the world and earn money had an even greater pull on him.

Art quit law school and got a job selling cars at Bass Chevrolet, where the owner, Ralph Bass, took to him immediately. The year was 1949, and Art was not yet 21 years old. A requirement was that all salesmen buy a demonstrator car. The minimum age to sign a contract was 21, but Ralph overlooked the requirement for Art because he saw his potential as a salesman. Outgoing, handsome, and with a strong work ethic ingrained by his father, Art was the type of young man who gained the trust of people quickly.

The Chevrolet Company during those years conducted for new employees what was called the Jam Handy Training Program. There would be a slide-show presentation every morning, followed by training sessions with the sales manager. These were intended to teach the salesmen about every aspect of the automobile they were selling, from stem to stern.

In addition, salesmen were given a portfolio with celluloid plates they would show to customers and allow them to see the breakdown of the car’s components. Since Art was the youngest and most ambitious of the sales staff, and he paid closer attention to the training sessions than the others, he soon had the best track record of sales at Bass Chevrolet.

“I sold people on the car, in addition to the deal,” Art says. “I wanted them to be so in love with Chevrolets, and so convinced that it was the best car on the market, that they wouldn’t mind paying another fifty or a hundred dollars to get a Chevy. And because I was so young and all my customers were older, I treated them with great respect, always using ‘Sir’ or ‘Mam’ when I addressed them.”

Art also had read Dale Carnegie’s popular book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, and it made a lot of sense to him. He used some of Carnegie’s strategies throughout his career as he progressed up the ladder. He even recalls an awkward meeting with a customer that he was able to flip into a positive relationship.

Art had sold a popular model Chevrolet that was in such great demand that it had a waiting list to a man named Riccardi. The rumor was that Mr. Riccardi, to
use a phrase from that era, was “connected.” As the wait for the car dragged on, one day Mr. Riccardi’s nephew Peter Riccardi came into the dealership and was overtly aggressive with Art, saying something like, “The Riccardis aren’t used to waiting for things, so if you were smart you would get that car for him right away.”

Rather than take offense at the man’s forceful attitude, somehow Art turned the moment into a friendly relationship, and in the early days of his next business opportunity, which was a part ownership of a used car lot, Art and his partners gave Peter Riccardi’s gravel company a contract to do all their gravel work.

Surprisingly, the older salesmen at Bass Chevrolet didn’t resent young Art’s performance record. He was so likeable they actually got a kick out of his success, and he became good friends with many of them.

As he found his comfort level at the car dealership, Art started to socialize after hours with some of the other salesmen, in particular Chuck Waldman, who had been an actor and radio announcer prior to selling cars. Having recently turned 21 and fully enjoying the freedoms that milestone gave him, Art would go with Chuck and others to some hot Cleveland nightspots, including the Alhambra Tavern. It was located on 105th and Euclid Avenue, close to a famous nightclub called Moe’s Main Street, where legendary singers like Nat King Cole and Tony Bennett and Ella Fitzgerald would perform.

The Alhambra was owned by a notorious character named Shonder Birns. He was born Alexander Birnstein in a section of Austria-Hungary and brought to the U.S. as an infant. Birns was once labeled as “Public Enemy No. 1” by the Cleveland Plain Dealer, but by the time Art and his friends were frequenting his establishment, the ex-con had mellowed slightly and actually went out of his way to have relationships with Cleveland police officers. On one occasion there was an issue and he and a police captain had a dispute. The cop shot Shonder and Birns beat the cop so badly that he had to be driven to the hospital, while Shonder was able to drive himself to get his wound tended to. But his reputation as a character was still intact in the early 1950s, and whenever Art was in the Alhambra he would hear another story about Shonder. One of the reasons Art frequented the place was because he was close friends with Shonder’s nephew Leonard Kater and his wife.

One tale had it that Birns was once in a pool hall in Cleveland on the second floor, and he saw some men harassing an old Jewish peddler who was
selling rags from a horse and wagon. Birns jumped out the second-story window and beat the tar out of all three of the bullies.

Another time a patron at Birns’ club had too many drinks at the bar, and he was heard to proclaim, “There’s too many goddam Jews around here.”

Shonder was within earshot, and he picked the guy up by the seat of his pants and collar, threw him up the first three steps, then threw him twice more up to the top of the stairs and out into the street, where there was heavy traffic.

For a young man who’d just reached the legal drinking age, hanging out at the Alhambra with legendary mobsters like Shonder Birns was an eye-opener for Art.

...  

Two other older friends of Art’s, Mike Weiss and Al Flagel, who had previously been in the bingo business, came to him and asked him if he’d like to partner with them in the used-car business. He was not yet 23 years old and still employed at Bass Chevrolet, but they recognized talent when they saw it.

His friends offered to put Art in the new business with their money, and at the point they hoped to get their money back, Art would own 50%. This was a great opportunity at his age.

Not certain he could operate the business by himself, Art asked his friend Chuck Waldman to join him, with the proposition that he would give Chuck half of his 50% ownership once the investors got their money back.

A couple things went wrong over the course of the next 18 months. First, was that they had chosen a cheaper location than the main used-car row to sell their cars, and their business suffered as a result. Art learned the old saw about “location, location, location” on that score.

Second, Mike Weiss had sold a little black Ford coupe off the lot one day for eleven hundred dollars cash. The following day, the car was returned and Weiss paid the temporary owner nine hundred dollars.

“The next morning, we read a report where shots had been fired out of a black Ford coupe by an illegal numbers operator,” Art says.
As the used car business continued a downhill slide, and Art and his partners got seriously in arrears, Art’s uncle David Moskowitz loaned the partnership ten thousand dollars to bail them out.

When Mike Weiss met Moskowitz, he thanked him profusely and asked how he could possible repay the debt. To which David replied, “I’ll tell you how you can pay me back: help someone else down the road. Pay it forward.”

That was just one of many lessons Art would learn from his uncle David...

Bruised but not seriously hurt from his previous venture, Art went to work for Blaushield Motors. Owner Benny Blaushield sold more Dodge cars from his one store in Cleveland than any other dealer in the country.

Art wasn’t there long before another crony from the car business, Lew Zaidman, enticed him to go into the aluminum siding business. As anyone knows, good salesmen will always find work because they are hard to find. Many of Art’s friends who had hung out with him at the Alhambra nightclub encouraged him to take the offer.

If you’ve seen the movie *Tin Men*, Art says it portrays that profession down to a tee. At a time that aluminum siding was thought to be an inexpensive way to dress up a tired looking house, and many Americans were enjoying a few years of peace and prosperity following World War II, the aluminum siding business was trendy and popular in the early 1950s.

Art’s job was to be the canvasser, the guy who went door to door and set up appointments with housewives. His pitch was that his company was looking for a house in the neighborhood on which they could exhibit their siding, and if the woman of the house would agree to tell her husband about his offer, which would be sold to them at a reduced rate, then he and his partners would return in the evening.

The men who would join Art at the later appointment were called “the closers.” (These fast talkers were hilariously portrayed by Richard Dreyfuss and Danny Devito in *Tin Men.*) Art’s two closers were his friend Lew Zaidman and a guy named Sammy Brown, who had been a performer on Vaudeville and was a great storyteller. Art says Sammy was one of the funniest men he ever met. When they would close the deal, Art would get a nice commission.
Sammy’s ability to make his co-workers laugh was both intentional and unintentional. Brown was plagued with colitis, an inflammation of the colon, large intestine, or rectum. One of his quips about his problem was: “I don’t get an urge, I get a telegram, and I have to make a delivery immediately.”

The condition was bad enough that Sammy kept a roll of toilet paper in the car on their sales visits. And if they were inside the house when the urge hit him, Sammy would say, “I have to take another measurement on the side of the house. I have to go.”

Art and Lew Zaidman would exchange knowing glances and do all they could to keep from breaking up. Sammy would go all right, usually in the back yard, and then have to devise a way to cover it up.

There was another time when Sammy had an appointment with their boss Eddie Martell in an Akron hotel. When Sammy arrived at the hotel he called the front desk to get Eddie’s room number, but as he rode up the elevator to the correct floor, he forget the exact room number. About that time he got one of his ‘telegrams.’ He ran up and down the hallway calling out to Eddie in hopes that a door would open and he could ‘make a delivery.’ When no one responded, he opened a service elevator room and did his thing on a room service tray that had been picked up earlier.

When Sammy was finally able to find Eddie’s room, his boss got hysterical hearing the story, but eventually gathered himself and said, “We’ve got to find that service room and clean it up or some guest on this floor is going to take the blame.”

But when they got there the tray was gone.

As Art talks about Sammy some 60 years later, he laughs so hard the tears roll down his cheeks. It was obviously a fun time in his life. And the truth is the sales pitch for the siding wasn’t phony because the aluminum did look nice and it improved the value of the home. If the closers were really good they would also get the homeowner to buy insulation, and even purchase fire-proof asbestos for roofing. (It would be decades later before it was determined that asbestos could be cancer-causing.)

Art says he was making a couple hundred dollars a week as a tin man, which was similar to his income in the car business, but the new job gave him more freedom and was more entertaining because of the salesmanship involved.
It was during this time that he had a meeting that would dramatically change his life for the better.

... 

A young Jewish girl, Jayn Saltzman, who was born in Cleveland, had moved to Las Vegas with her parents Abe and Sara in her teens. She finished high school at Las Vegas High, where she was classmates with a young man named Lloyd George, who would later become a prominent federal judge.

Jayn’s father and his brother Robert Saltzman had bought into a grocery store in Las Vegas, called the Market Spot, but after a few good years it suffered reverses.

Robert moved on to Los Angeles, where he opened a small store on Olympic Boulevard called Tebel’s, which sold cashmere sweaters. These garments, called irregulars, had small defects and could be sold for greatly reduced prices. Robert chose that business because his and Abe’s brother Maurice Saltzman owned Bobbie Brooks, which was one of the largest manufacturers of women’s apparel in the country. Maurice also owned fifty percent of a company called Dalton Cashmere, which at the time was among the best-selling cashmere sweater lines in the world. Maurice would send the irregulars to Robert, who three days a week sold them out of his store, and he was doing terrific business.

After Robert left for L.A., Abe Saltzman bought a few empty lots on 23rd and Mesquite in Las Vegas and built some houses. One of his first clients was Merv Adelson, who went on to be a partner in the LaCosta Resort outside San Diego with Moe Dalitz and Irwin Molasky, and later headed up Lorimar Pictures in Hollywood.

After hearing of the good business his brother was doing selling the irregular clothing in Los Angeles, Abe and Sara decided they would try selling out of their home. Maurice sent a volume of irregulars and cashmere sweaters to them, and they sold briskly to local women, particularly hotel owners’ wives, executives’ wives, cocktail waitresses, and showgirls.

The sweaters, which often had nothing more than a single dropped stitch, would sell for half the price of stores like Saks Fifth Avenue or I Magnin’s. The merchandise was moving so quickly that the Saltzmans were inundated with women coming to their door to make purchases. So Abe decided he would rent a small store, at 520 South Fifth Street, and half of the store became Sara’s Clothing.
and the other half was used by his son-in-law Herb Rowe (married to their daughter Malvene), who opened a chiropractic office.

Sara’s became so popular that the Saltzmans soon needed more space, so they moved the store down the street to 1404 Las Vegas Boulevard South. Prior to that, Jayn had gone on to Woodbury College in Los Angeles, where she studied art and design. It was made clear to her by her professors that she had the talent to become a professional artist, and do very well at it. After she returned to Las Vegas from school, before she met Art, instead of taking up art full time Jayn worked in the dress shops at the Desert Inn and the Sands, all the while continuing with her painting as an active hobby.

In the fall of 1953, Jayn Saltzman returned to Cleveland to visit her father’s relatives, including her uncle, Bobbie Brooks’ owner Maurice Saltzman. On the night of October 21st, the Saltzman clan went to dinner at Gruber’s Restaurant in Shaker Heights. That same evening, Art and his parents and other relatives were at the same restaurant celebrating Leo and Ann’s wedding anniversary. Certain members of each family knew one another and they conversed.

“I saw Jayn in their party and she blew me away,” Art says. “I was immediately attracted to her.”

One of Art’s party, a distant relative named Dave Perlberg, went over to talk with Maurice, who introduced Dave to Jayn and inquired of him whether he knew any young men that Jayn might be introduced to in Cleveland. Dave naturally thought of Art, seated at another table, and said, “As a matter of fact, I do.”

Although a personal introduction wasn’t made that night, Perlberg got a phone number for Art, and he called Jayn the next day. She accepted his offer of a date, and they went out three nights in a row. On the third night, Art asked Jayn to marry him. That is not a misprint: he asked for her hand in marriage on the third date. Not surprisingly, she said she’d have to think it over. Which she did for less than 24 hours.

The very next day Jayn accepted Art’s proposal, and just seven weeks later, on December 13, 1953, they were married at her parents’ house in Las Vegas.

The wedding ceremony was conducted by Jayn’s cousin Rabbi Richard Hirsch. He performed the ceremony under the auspices of the local cantor, who was licensed.
Rabbi Hirsch, interviewed from his home in Florida in 2013, recalls the wedding as a small affair. “I have a vision in my mind that they had some kind of plant arrangement in the house,” he says. “That was something I had never seen before. The Jewish community was very small then, as was the town.”

Rabbi Hirsch recalls that seven years prior to conducting Art’s and Jayn’s wedding, he was in Las Vegas as a young rabbinical student, and he was invited by Abe and Sara Saltzman to come and participate in a high holiday service.

“I was very close to my Aunt Sara,” he says. “She was my mother Bertha’s sister, and they were very close. In fact our family moved in with the Saltzmans in Cleveland for an entire year following the Depression when my father was out of work. So I grew up with Jaynie as though she were my sister. Between my younger brother and myself and the three Saltzman girls, we were all within a five-year age span. Our mothers joked that they bathed us all together in the same tub.”

Hirsch tells of how at that high-holiday service in ’46, members of the congregation were called up to say blessings at the Torah portion.

“Each Sabbath there’s a different Torah portion which is read,” he says. “There are four or five chapters, depending on how it’s divided, of the five books of Moses. What I remember is that they gave Moe Sedway, who I later learned was Bugsy Siegel’s cohort, the honor of saying the blessings before and after. And I remember him as this very little guy walking up, and on either side of him were these great big guys. I said to them as they came up, ‘No, no, it’s not your turn. It’s his turn.’

“And one of them said to me, ‘Listen, Brother, wherever he goes, that’s where we go. So we’re not moving.’”

[Note: Moe Sedway had a criminal record dating back to the early 1920s, and his role in Las Vegas at the time of Rabbi Hirsch’s story was to help Siegel open the Flamingo Hotel, which they did over the Christmas holiday in 1946. Sedway was a faithful lieutenant of organized crime czar Meyer Lansky, and had run the El Cortez Hotel before that. He also helped establish the Mafia’s Trans-America race wire service in Las Vegas. Within two hours of Siegel’s June, 1947, murder in the living room of his girlfriend Virginia Hill, Moe Sedway and Gus Greenbaum took over control of the Flamingo, and no one questioned their authority. Sedway has long been thought to be one of the planners behind Siegel’s murder.]
Art and Jayn then took their honeymoon in California. They drove to Los Angeles, up to San Francisco and Carmel, back to Los Angeles, and then on to Las Vegas.

Jayn had grown accustomed to the great weather in Las Vegas, and being near her parents, but Art was at a crossroads professionally. He still had the job selling aluminum siding if he chose to keep it, but that would mean going back to Cleveland.

While in Las Vegas, he applied for work at some local car dealerships, but nothing panned out, so the couple headed east. After a short stay, they escaped the cold and drove to Florida, where they visited Jayn’s elderly grandmother. While there, Jayn was able to meet her mother’s estranged brother Maurice Gusman, a very successful businessman and philanthropist.

Gusman had started a successful business in Akron, Ohio, before World War II, and it became so successful he was able to sell it after the war for $10 million, the equivalent of well over a hundred million in today’s dollars. The product: condoms, for which he became known as “the condom king.”

Gusman later moved to Miami, where he became a lover of classical music. His gift of over four million dollars in the 1960s pulled the Miami Philharmonic Orchestra out of debt, and today the concert hall in which the orchestra performs is called the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts.

It turned out that this uncle Maurice (not to be confused with her Cleveland uncle, Maurice Saltzman), who had at one time been very close to his sister Sara and had great respect for her business skills, had experienced a falling out with her. But that didn’t keep him from bonding immediately with Jayn and her new husband. As the Marshalls were leaving, Gusman handed Jayn five crisp twenty-dollar bills as a wedding gift, which helped pay for their gas on the drive back to Ohio.

A short time later, Maurice Gusman’s and Sara’s mother, Jayn’s grandmother, passed away in Miami, and when Gusman attended the funeral in Cleveland he was able to reconcile with his sister, which was a comfort to everyone involved.
Maurice told Jayn at that first meeting that her mother Sara was the brightest woman he knew. Sara had always excelled in school, and through hard work she was one of the first young women in Cleveland to own a car. Maurice did not approve of Sara’s choice of husband. Although Abe Saltzman was a hard working immigrant with limited education and would prove to be a great father, Maurice felt that he did not measure up to his sister Sara. After the marriage of Sara and Abe, Maurice and Abe had a small business dispute and Sara sided with her husband. Partly due to that, Maurice, who was accustomed to control, became estranged with her until those many years later.

This is a good time to share the story of the farmer and the potatoes, which became a landmark business lesson for our entire family.

When Sara Gusman as a young woman was working with her brother Maurice, a secretary who had more tenure at the company than Sara came into his office one day and complained that she’d heard Sara was being paid more than she was. She felt this was nepotism and wanted an explanation.

Maurice happened to look out his window and saw a farmer and a wagon. He asked the secretary to go outside and find out what the man was doing. She returned and told him he is selling potatoes.

“How much a pound?” Maurice asked.

She went back out and returned with a price.

He asked how many pounds the farmer had to sell.

Again she went out, returning with information.

Maurice then picked up the phone and asked Sara to come into his office.

When she came in he said, “There is a man with a wagon outside. Please find out that that is about.”

Sara returned and said, “He is a farmer selling potatoes for eight cents a pound and he has four hundred pounds to sell.”

Maurice turned to the secretary and said, “That’s why she is paid more.”

“We used that story in training sessions in all our businesses,” says Art.
He says, “Even though they had become estranged when we met him, Maurice told Jayn and me that if her mother had been a man, the two of them could have accomplished anything. I remember hearing from Sara that she idolized her big brother. It was wonderful that they reconciled, and Jayn was much responsible for the reconciliation.

Art adds that Sara was very wise and really had a way with people. When she retired from the Sara’s store, she took over the gift shop at Temple Beth Shalom. She was often the first person new Jewish residents would meet when they moved to Las Vegas and came to join the Temple or inquire about it. All the youngsters at the Temple school loved her.

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Shortly after their honeymoon, Art decided not to return to the siding business, but instead got a temporary job selling out the remaining inventory for the Packard Motor Car Company in Cleveland, which was going out of business. Art and Jayn stayed with his parents during that period of time.

In the interim, Art had met Jayne’s other uncle Maurice, Mr. Saltzman, the Bobbie Brooks owner.

Just 35 at the time of his meeting Art, Maurice Saltzman was already a millionaire, and he was greatly respected and admired for his business expertise and his philanthropy. He and an associate, Max Reiter, had borrowed a couple thousand dollars and launched Ritmore Manufacturing Company in 1939, when Saltzman was just 21. Their product was a dress line with the label Barbara Brooks. A year later, they changed the label to Bobbie Brooks and switched from dresses to junior sportswear, then a relatively new clothing category.

The year Art met Saltzman, Reiter left to go into his own business, and Maurice became sole owner, chairman, and chief executive officer. The company’s concept of coordinated sportswear—pieces that could be purchased separately and worn in various combinations—was highly successful and seven years later the company went public. In the 1970s, Bobbie Brooks reached $100 million in volume, a mark attained by few apparel firms up to that time.

On their first meeting, Saltzman asked Art about his background, and when Art told him about his experience as a car salesman and his time selling aluminum
siding. Maurice posed this question to him: “If every time you made a new
customer in the siding business, you wouldn’t just be selling them one time but
could be selling something to that person four or five times a year, wouldn’t that be
to better?”

“It didn’t take me long to figure out the answer to that one,” says Art.

Shortly after that conversation, Jayn’s aunt Helen Ludwig, who was
Maurice’s sister, encouraged Art to apply for a job with Bobbie Brooks.

“I don’t think Helen would have suggested that if she hadn’t already talked
to her brother about it,” he says.

When the meeting occurred, Art told Maurice Saltzman that he had come to
sell him something.

Maurice said, “And what’s that?”

“Me,” Art answered.

But he wasn’t hired immediately. Instead Saltzman told Art he would give
him a tryout by sending him on the road to Illinois with an experienced salesman
for two weeks, to determine if the job was a good fit for both Art and the company.
When he returned, Art was sent to Iowa with another salesman for two weeks.

Maurice was pleased with the reports of Art’s performance on that trip and
decided that Art should be the first enrollee in a sales training program. From
there, Art went into the Bobbi Brooks factory and worked in nearly every part of
the company, from the ordering department, to shipping, to billing.

Art readily admits that nepotism helped him get the opportunity, but he also
knows that had he not shown an aptitude and work ethic that appealed to Maurice
Saltzman, he never would have been hired.

His first solo road assignment was to cover the entire state of Michigan, all
except the major cities. Art’s parents helped him buy a new car, a 1954 Buick, and
Jayn traveled the road with him as his secretary. The business partnership of a
husband and wife team working the road worked so well that other young salesmen
followed that plan and took their wives with them.
“We had a very extensive line of merchandise at Bobbie Brooks,” Art says. “Fourteen, fifteen hundred samples. We would fill up the back of the car and the trunk from top to bottom. We had sweaters, skirts, dresses, blouses, knit goods, and more.”

Art would call on the store owner and sell him the Bobbie Brooks line. The line was so extensive that the company had pre-printed orders, which had all the sweater numbers, and all Jayn had to do was fill in that category.

“I would show the merchandise and say to the owner that if he liked that category, it comes in three colors, and what sizes do you want?” Art says. “I knew all the sizes in the various items, and with those preprinted forms, it was easy to write up orders, no matter how big. Before I was hired, in Michigan there was just one salesman for the whole state, but when that state was split up the total sales volume for the state grew immensely, because we were able to spend so much more time with each store owner.”

Art was so schooled in the methodology of Bobbie Brooks that 60 years after selling their clothing line in the Midwest, he can rattle off prices for the various lines, including single item prices, style numbers, and prices for special items.

Although he had some stops and starts working with the company between 1953 and ’59, Art says the company was hugely successful when he finally departed, and had become one of the largest volume ready-to-wear companies in the U.S.

Art also says that Maurice Saltzman was one of the most philanthropic men he ever knew. People from a variety of Jewish charities would line up at his office door at the same time each week, and he contributed something to everyone.

When Art asked him once if he ever said No to anyone, Maurice’s response was, “No, and I hope I never have to.”

Another influential relative in Art Marshall’s life was his father’s brother David Moskowitz. It is Art’s belief that there are certain people who serve as positive guides through a person’s life, and the three he mentions as most prominent in his life were his uncle David, his wife Jayn, and her uncle Maurice Saltzman.
David Moskowitz had been a rabbinical student in Russia, and like Art’s father Leo, he had little or no money. On Friday nights in his village, it was a custom for good-hearted people to invite some of these yeshiva students to dinner. On a few occasions, David would walk though muddy streets to get to his host’s home, and because the soles on his shoes were worn, mud would get between the first and second layer of the shoes, and he would occasionally leave mud on the carpet.

Another time, David’s jacket was torn, and a child at the host’s dinner table made a comment about it. The host scolded the child and sent him away from the table for humiliating their guest.

Years later David Moskowitz came to the United States, where he opened a successful furniture store, then later went into the building and construction business, where he became even more successful. With his money, David made it a lifelong mission to make certain that rabbinical students never had to wear shoes with worn-out soles, or torn jackets.

Another important life lesson was passed down to Art through his paternal grandfather Israel Moskowitz. Like Leo, his son to follow, Israel was a tinsmith. The family lived in a small basement apartment in Latvia, where they had a tin shop in front. It was a Russian ghetto, and life was hard, especially with eight children to raise.

One day Israel found a gold ten ruble piece in the street. It was more than enough to pay several months’ rent on their shop and apartment, and the family was initially very excited. But Israel said whoever lost the money probably needed it more than they did, so he inquired around the village until he found the rightful owner. He returned the ten rubles. It was a valuable lesson about honesty above all.

Decades later, Art went to a coin show at a Las Vegas Strip hotel and found a concessionaire who was selling imperial Russian gold ten ruble pieces. He purchased a small quantity of them, for around one hundred dollars apiece. When his uncle David Moskowitz came to Las Vegas to visit the family, Art gave him a big surprise one night and reminded him of the important lesson that David’s father Israel had taught the family.

“\textit{We had eaten dinner at DiMartino’s restaurant one night, and Uncle David just loved the food and asked if we could return the next night,}” Art says. “\textit{So I}
took him there the next night and told him, jokingly, that if he was a good boy and finished his meal, he would get a prize at the end of the evening.”

When Art presented him the gold ten ruble piece, David cried. He couldn’t have received a more meaningful gift.

Since then, Art has made a habit of giving others of Israel Moskowitz’s offspring gold ten ruble pieces, and he has even given them to good friends. He estimates those pieces today, with the current price of gold, would be valued at about five hundred dollars.

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In the late summer of 1955, Jayn learned she was pregnant with their first child. Everything was going well with Bobbie Brooks, Art was making the best money he’d ever made, they had a nice apartment in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to work from, and they were enjoying their time as a team on the road. But of course this news changed everything. Jayn decided to visit her parents in Las Vegas.

Being in a domestic frame of mind, and surrounded by loving family members in mild weather, Jayn decided that she no longer wanted her husband to be on the road four days and nights a week, so after having conversations with her parents about how valuable Art could be in the Sara’s store, which was doing increasingly good business, Abe and Sara Saltzman agreed that having Art move to Las Vegas was a good idea. He thought the exact opposite.

“My first reaction to the invitation was that I cried,” Art says. “I absolutely did not want to make that move. I loved my job at Bobbie Brooks, and I was doing very, very well. It was the first job that I ever made any real money at. And I was quite successful in the company.”

Art was making around twenty-five thousand dollars a year in the mid 50s, at a time when the average American was earning under five thousand annually. He says there was a point when he was 21 years old when he would have gladly signed a lifelong contract guaranteeing him five thousand dollars a year, and here he was making five times that with the projection arrow pointing upward.

He says the decision to move to Las Vegas “broke my heart,” but he knew that’s where Jayn wanted to be.
“My in-laws were wonderful people,” he says. “They were generous and they loved their children, but my father-in-law and I didn’t see eye-to-eye on anything. His feeling was that he had so much experience and worldliness that I should be a student of his for the next 30 years before I would be ready to manage a store. And I knew I was ready right then. Suffice it to say, we just didn’t get along in the business.”

Herb Rousso, who would move to Las Vegas four years later to join Art in building what would become the Marshall-Rousso chain of clothing stores, confirmed in a 2013 interview that Abe Saltzman was a man of strong opinions.

“When Abe had an idea, it was difficult to persuade him that anything else made sense,” Herb says. “Also, he was born in Poland and came to America and was really from the old school way of thinking. He didn’t have an easy life, and he was also a hard, hard worker. But you know, he was a very nice man, and a devoted family man. He just adored his wife and three daughters.”

The Marshalls’ son Todd was born in Las Vegas on April 19, 1956.

Around that same time, Art’s first effort to fit into the Saltzman family business lasted only three months. He wrote to Uncle Maurice requesting that he be taken back at Bobbie Brooks, and Maurice was delighted to take him. But Art made clear that with a new child, he didn’t want to go back on the road. In fact, his real goal was to some day become the president of the company.

Maurice accommodated Art by giving him overnight accounts, those he could drive to in the morning and be home that night. The family settled in Cleveland once again, and Art’s biggest account was in Akron, Ohio, with a May Company-owned store called M. O’Neil. There were nine stores that came with that account. Then he was given the F&R Lazarus account, which was the parent company of Federated Department Stores. Art eventually had four major accounts and was the star salesman of the company.

At that time, the Marshalls were building a home in Beachwood Village, Ohio. Once again, life was good, and stable, but every time Jayn got off the phone with her parents and her sister Malvene Rowe, Art could see the sadness in her face that she wasn’t with them and her nieces and nephews.
Art, of course, had been an only child, although he had many cousins and other family members in the Midwest, so a feeling crept in that he couldn’t ignore that he was being selfish. Once again he was torn about the direction his young family’s life should take.

A contributing factor was that Art’s father Leo, after a life of hard work as a tinsmith and a roofer, was experiencing pain from severe arthritis, which was only aggravated by the cold weather. Additionally, Jayn was pregnant with their second child.

After another long and tortuous winter in Ohio in 1958, with rain or snow or hail every day for months, the discussion was taken up again on whether to move back to Las Vegas.

Art knew that different arrangements had to be made with his father-in-law. He had to be given some assurance by Abe that he wouldn’t be treated like just another hired hand. He was, after all, the top salesman at one of the largest clothing manufacturers in the country.

Sara’s had grown into a $300,000 annual volume company in the three years since Art had worked for them, which meant with continued growth he had an opportunity to equal his Bobbie Brooks salary. In addition, the greater Las Vegas area’s population had more than doubled in the previous decade from just under 50,000 residents to well over 100,000.

The main issue was control: would Art have the chance to own the business in a short period of time?

Abe told Art that if they would return to Las Vegas, he would give him a fifty percent interest in the store, and that he would retire in a year or two and Art could have the entire business.

Maurice Saltzman cautioned Art before they left Ohio. He said, “My brother can’t change. He won’t be any easier this time than the first time.”

Art’s concern was that there would be no returning to Bobbie Brooks for a second time, however Helen Ludwig’s husband Julie, who was a vice-president in charge of shipping, told Art, who at the time had the biggest accounts at Bobbie Brooks, “Maurice likes you so much that the door will always be open for you.”
Chapter Two: Vegas Bound

The Marshalls returned to Las Vegas, where their daughter Cari was born on August 1, 1959. But Art quickly realized that Maurice was right on the money, that Abe would not move off his original position, which was a huge disappointment to him. Nothing had changed from his first stint at the store three years earlier.

Art had a heart-to-heart with his father-in-law, and told him for the second time they were going to have to leave Las Vegas. He told Abe he wasn’t sure what his next step would be, although he said he was considering moving to Los Angeles and taking a job in the garment industry.

As they talked, Art could tell that Abe in his heart of hearts didn’t want them to leave Las Vegas. Art said there was one situation that he would agree to, and that was that rather than taking the second half of the store that he was promised, if Abe would give his share of the store to Jayn’s sister Estelle (Este) Rousso, so her husband Herb could become Art’s partner, then he would stay.

Art felt that this might be the hot button that would get Abe to step aside, because it would mean that the Saltzmans could have all three of their daughters living in Las Vegas, a dream Abe and Sara had harbored for a long time.

When Abe finally consented to that arrangement, it meant that each of the three Saltzman girls, Jayn, Malvene, and Este, would own a third of the business. It was further agreed that the Marshalls and Roussos would buy out Malvene and Herb Rowe’s interest and become fifty-fifty partners. That, in effect, marked the creation of what would in time become the Marshall Rousso brand.

“It’s interesting,” Herb Rousso says, “because I’d had the clothing business under my nose for a long time. When my father-in-law Abe would come to Los Angeles to visit the garment district, he would stay with us, and my office was downtown so I would drop him off there in the morning, and then go on to my business.”

Herb and his older brother Stan had a vending machine operation in LA, which had grown to several routes and was doing quite well. But when he would drive Abe Saltzman home in the evening from his buying trips he would hear how Abe had just purchased five hundred hangers of skirts for a dollar apiece that he would sell at the Sara’s store for five dollars each.
“And here we were selling five-cent candy bars that we had to pay three cents for,” says Herb. “The margins were much better in the clothing business. Also, the smog was getting worse by the day in Los Angeles. We lived near the beach and our son Jeff, who was just five or six, would come home and drop onto the floor from breathing the smog air. And this despite the fact we were by the ocean, where the air was better than anywhere else around here. Plus, the traffic in LA after the war was really bad. When we heard that Art and Jayn were moving to Vegas, it was just too enticing for Este and I not to make the move.”

The Roussos moved to Las Vegas shortly after the deal was struck. Herb remembers the date was March 1, 1960. He was 37 years old.

Art and Herb complimented each other beautifully as partners. Herb was talented at the management side of the business and the accounting side. He took care of the records and the bookkeeping. He was a good detail man, but although he didn’t have Art’s experience on the buying side of the business, Herb had a good eye and so they could do the buying together.

Now 90, and with the clear-mindedness and energy of a man 20 years younger, Herb says in a recent interview that the partnership with Art was a successful marriage from the very beginning.

“Of course we were married to sisters who were extremely close,” Herb says, “but it was just great how well Art and I worked together. He loved the outside part of the business, meeting the public and getting locations and leases as we grew, and I tended to be more interested in the inside workings of the business, like inventory control, which Art couldn’t care less about. And so it was a perfect association, and I think we admired each other and we respected each other’s opinions.”

“As close as my mother and Este were, there was no way that the husbands of these two sisters were not going to get along,” says Todd Marshall. “That was just not going to happen.”

Cari Marshall adds, “There was perfect chemistry between these two partners. One was tall, one was short. One was conceptual and the outside person (her father), and the other was more detail-oriented and great on the inside of the business (Herb).”
Art recalls that early on when he and Herb were working at one of the Sara’s stores, the manager put a note on the cash register: “Russo tall, Marshall short,” so new employees would not misidentify their bosses.

When Herb is asked whether he and Este had any trepidation about moving from Los Angeles to Las Vegas and its “colorful” reputation, with their two young children—Stacy was just 10 and Jeff seven—Herb can only laugh.

“Not at all,” he says. “Our experience in Las Vegas before we moved here was fantastic. On holidays or long weekends, when we’d drive over from Los Angeles to visit Este’s parents, we would park our kids with them and check into a hotel. We were the ones who ruined Vegas, not the other way around. With the kids in their hands, we would go to a dinner show on the Strip, which was very inexpensive, and then we’d catch a lounge show for a drink, and then at midnight we went to a marvelous buffet for a couple bucks. And hotel rooms were like ten bucks for a lovely room. During the day we’d bring the kids to the hotel and hang out at the pool. Those were royal times.”

As Herb reminisces, he explains how he and Este met. “I’ve had a blessed long life,” he says, “but without question my greatest blessing was meeting Este.”

Herb was attending USC when during World War II he joined a Navy program and became an apprentice seaman. He was told he could stay in school, but was soon called to service and didn’t return to USC until the war had ended. He belonged to a fraternity, Zeta Beta Tau, but when he returned to finish his degree, although none of his previous friends were there, he still hung out at the frat house just for company.

Este Saltzman had seen Herb on campus, and because he was tall (six foot-one) and handsome, she had the thought to line him up with one of her sorority sisters, who was also tall and had tired of dating shorter men. As these things often happen, Herb had only one date with the friend, but was smitten by Este.

“She caught my eye, and then she caught my heart,” he says. “I was in college at 24 years old, and my thinking is that I should have graduated by then and gotten married and started a family. People did all that earlier in those days. But I was smitten and Este knocked me for a loop. We met in November or December of 1946, and we were married the following June. I didn’t propose as quickly as Art did to Jayn, but I wasn’t that far behind him.”
Sara Saltzman continued to work at her self-named store for about a year after Art and Herb took over, but the brothers-in-law made it clear early on that their eyes were on expanding the business.

The partners soon opened a second Sara’s store in the Sahara shopping center, on the northwest corner of the street across from the Sahara Hotel. Their staple product was the cashmere sweaters that had always proved so popular, along with skirts and dresses. Then a few years later they opened a third store across from the Stardust Hotel in a shopping center. All three stores continued to do well, but it was clear to Art and Herb that to really take their business to the next level they needed to have stores located in Las Vegas Strip hotels, where the constant walk-through traffic of visitors with leisure money would guarantee solid profits. Art had not forgotten the “location” lesson from his first used-car lot in Cleveland. But they knew well that breaking onto the Strip would not be easy.

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Art recalls a cute story that occurred at one of the Sara’s stores. The most prominent showgirl on the Las Vegas Strip in the early 1960s was Felicia Atkins. A true beauty in the mold of Elizabeth Taylor and with a similar voluptuous figure, Felicia had been a *Playboy* magazine centerfold and had even starred in *The Errand Boy*, a movie with Jerry Lewis.

Atkins was a regular customer at Sara’s, and would often come in during the summer months dressed simply in a bikini with a cover-up. One day when she was trying on a garment in the dressing room, she left the drapes to the changing room slightly open, and a maintenance man working on a light fixture in the ceiling was so interested in getting a peek that he fell off his ladder.

“We had a lot of glamorous women visit our stores through the years,” Art says, laughing, “but that’s one moment I’ll never forget.”

One of the summertime employees at Sara’s around this time was Susan Greenspun, the teenage eldest child of Hank and Barbara Greenspun, publishers of the *Las Vegas Sun* newspaper, who would be lifelong friends of the Marshalls.

“I’m sure my father conspired with Art to get me the job,” Susan Greenspun Fine says in a 2013 interview. “I wasn’t too valuable to the operation, I can tell you that. I remember steaming clothes part of the time and basically just looking for things to do to stay busy. I know that Sara was there all the time. She never left the store.”
From the time the Marshalls settled permanently in Las Vegas, Art got heavily involved in the Jewish community. He served on the board of Temple Beth Shalom, and became the youngest president of that board while still in his early 30s. He also contributed to the Jewish Federation, and became involved with the Anti-Defamation League on a local and national level.

In the 1950s and 60s, there were many talented and powerful Jewish men working on the Las Vegas Strip and holding important positions in the growing community beyond the Strip. Art served on the Temple board with many of them and became friends with men like Hank Greenspun, the owner and publisher of the *Las Vegas Sun* newspaper; business leader Nate Mack and his son Jerry, who with his partner Valley Bank President Parry Thomas was arranging financing for a generation of hotel-casino magnates; Moe Dalitz, who owned the Desert Inn; and Jack Entratter, a Sands Hotel executive who was bringing the biggest-name entertainers in the world to his property.

Art singles out Greenspun as deserving the most credit for introducing him to the Jewish world and the political world as it existed in Las Vegas during that era. “Hank knew everybody,” Art says, “and he was never shy about stepping up and helping me gain entrée to those worlds. I can’t emphasize enough how important he was in my finding my feet in Las Vegas.”

As Art fraternized with these men, they could quickly see his pleasant demeanor and his business acumen, and they appreciated the philanthropy and civic involvement that were so important to him.

Art acknowledges today that his involvement in so many of these causes was hugely instrumental in his access to hotel executives, which in turn helped him and Herb acquire leases to expand the Marshall-Rousso brand.

The price of land on what is now known worldwide as the Las Vegas Strip has gone from five dollars an acre at the first land auction in 1905, to as high as $30 million an acre in the boom period a century later. But even in the 1960s, being able to lease space in a Las Vegas Strip hotel was a privilege for any businessman.
The challenge for Art and Herb was to get that first opportunity, knowing they could prove their worth and expand from there.

One day in 1964, a salesman walked into one of the Sara’s stores and told Art he’d just left the Sahara Hotel and he’d heard that the gift shop was available. Art called a man named Johnny Hughes, who was well known around town and who was a small investor in the Sahara.

“Johnny was a character,” Art says, “and his wife even more of a character. After Howard Hughes moved to Las Vegas (in late 1966), Johnny’s wife would go around town telling everyone she was Mrs. Hughes, allowing them to think she was Howard’s wife.”

When Art questioned Johnny Hughes, he was told it wasn’t the gift shop that was available, but the dress shop. Naturally, that was even better news.

That same evening, Art walked across the street to the home of his neighbor Bill Boyd, a prominent attorney at the time, whose father Sam Boyd was a minority partner of principal Sahara owner Milton Prell.

Bill Boyd was receptive that evening to Art’s request to possibly setting up a meeting for himself and Herb with Mr. Prell. (Boyd was to become a lifelong friend and major factor in Art’s business career, and later on got him heavily involved in the world of banking.)

A meeting was held some days later, and it went well. Prell remarked that he’d heard good things about what Art and Herb had done with the Sara’s stores, but he wasn’t convinced those references qualified them to run a hotel shop, which had an entirely different clientele.

Art’s response, which he hadn’t rehearsed beforehand, was, “Mr. Prell, the merchandise manager and president of every major store in the United States started out in the bargain basement. That’s where he gets his training. And I bet when this property was called Club Bingo, there were people who didn’t know whether Milton Prell could run the Sahara Hotel.”

Prell pondered that answer and said, “Well, let me think about it.”

Bill Boyd sat in on that meeting, and after Art and Herb had left the room, Prell told Boyd, “I like what the kid said. I’m going to give him the store.”
Boyd, who today is executive chairman emeritus of the Boyd Gaming Company, which he co-founded with his father, says that, “Milton Prell, like most people, liked Art immediately. My father Sam was a one-point owner in the Sahara back then, and Art was a neighbor of ours, and I was just glad that I was able to do him a favor. It obviously worked out well for both parties.”

When Art and Herb heard the news they were elated. They were even more pleased when Prell’s suggestion that a good friend of his wife Debbie’s would make a good manager for the store turned out to be a great tip. Dottie Henry lived up to advanced billing.

“Of course, as part of the deal, we would have hired her on his recommendation,” Art says, “but she turned out to be a fabulous employee.”

The challenge Art and Herb faced once they had Milton Prell’s okay was to build their store from scratch, as theirs would be in a different location than the previous store. One other matter remained: they needed to borrow forty thousand dollars.

Chic Hecht, who years later became a U.S. Senator from Nevada, had been a friendly competitor of Sara’s stores with his own downtown Las Vegas clothing store, and he helped arrange the loan from Nevada State Bank. Not long after, Art became a stockholder in the bank and was eventually named to the board of directors.

They called the Sahara Hotel store MaRu, using the phonetic pronunciation of the first syllable of both last names, and that was the beginning of the idea of using Marshall Rousso as their permanent brand. The new name also marked a clean break from the three Sara’s stores that had made it all possible.

The Sahara store did very well, providing a template for Art’s and Herb’s desire to expand even farther up the Strip.

Jayn had worked for a time at the Sands Hotel dress shop before she met Art, and from early in his time in Las Vegas it had been one of Art’s dreams to own a dress shop in the Sands. With his friend Jack Entratter bringing in the best entertainers in the country to headline the showroom, and with all the cachet and buzz the Rat Pack had brought to the hotel earlier in the decade with their impromptu performances and the filming of Oceans 11, there was no more prestigious hotel on the Strip in those years than the Sands. (Caesars Palace had
just opened, the International was under construction, and the MGM Grand was not even in the planning stages.)

The Sands at the time, 1966-67, was building a new tower and the proposed dress shop was going to be in one of those towers. Word around town was that a prominent New York clothier had the inside track because he could bring in junkets of gamblers from the Big Apple’s clothing manufacturers. So the New Yorker was clearly their competition.

Art and Herb knew that although Jack Entratter was one of the bosses at the Sands, co-owner Carl Cohen would be the one to make the final decision on who would get the rights to the dress shop.

“I knew Carl, but barely,” says Art. “We had come from the same neighborhood in Cleveland, although he was considerably older than I was. But one of my close friends whom I’d met here in Las Vegas, who was one of Carl’s very close friends, was also from Cleveland. He was an interesting man named Eugene Warner. Among other things, Warner was the man on the ground in Las Vegas for the famous international businessman--and enormous gambler--Adnan Khashoggi.

“In those days, Khashoggi was considered the wealthiest man in the world, and he was coveted by every major casino because he was probably the highest roller around,” Art says. “He would win or lose millions of dollars when he gambled. Carl Cohen is the one that put Eugene Warner and Khashoggi together. So I was hopeful that was the connection that might help us get the Sands store.”

Persistent as always, Art made it a point to be at the Sands hotel every day, whether for lunch or breakfast, hoping he could see Carl and talk with him. One day Art was visiting with Herb and Eugene Warner, when Carl Cohen got out of an elevator, walked over to Art and said, out of the blue, “Do you still want the store?”

Art said, “Absolutely.”

Carl said, “Okay, I’m going on vacation. You guys go ahead and start construction and we’ll talk about the lease when I get back.”

Art and Herb went over to the Mint Hotel for lunch and to celebrate their great news, when they ran into Jerry Mack and Parry Thomas, who respectively as a prominent real estate investor and the president of Valley Bank, were as
influential as any two businessmen in Las Vegas. News had traveled fast, and Thomas and Mack had already heard from Jack Entratter that Marshall Rousso was going to build the dress shop in the Sands. Seeing as Valley Bank had previously arranged to loan the money to the New York clothier, and that deal had obviously fallen through, Jerry Mack said, “Congratulations on the Sands. We have the money you need.”

The amount of the loan was fifty thousand dollars. So it happened that Art and Herb borrowed the money to build the store, and with that they now had good accounts at both Nevada State Bank and Valley Bank. As importantly, they had strengthened their relationship with two men that everyone wanted to do business with, Parry Thomas and Jerry Mack.

Sometime in the middle 1960s, Jayn Marshall and her sister Este Rousso were introduced to Transcendental Meditation. Herb Rousso remembers that their introduction came from the mother of their neighbor on Maria Elena Street, a woman named Melinda Riley. Melinda’s mother was Helena Olson, who was an important devotee in the organization led by renowned guru Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

The story has it that Helena Olson saw the Maharishi in a grocery store in Southern California in 1959, looking distinctly out of place, but she was intrigued by his robes and beard and long hair, and said to him, “Can I help you?”

And with an otherworldly peaceful voice, he replied, “No, but I can help you.”

The two became friends, and the Maharishi soon moved into the home of Helena and her husband Roland, and she helped promote him to a point where he became a world famous figure and an eventual advisor to the Beatles and other celebrities, like actress Mia Farrow.

“Helena was giving a lecture on TM in Las Vegas in the 1960s and I remember Este couldn’t go but she was very interested,” Herb Rousso says, “so she told Jayn to attend and pay close attention so she could report back. Helena was a fabulous woman, married to a marvelous man, and she was like Maharishi’s right-hand woman in the movement. I remember her as a good speaker and a warm-hearted woman, and that Jayn came away from that first meeting very enthused. She passed her excitement on to Este, who was all fired up anyway.”
Herb also began studying meditation, and all these years later he still meditates daily. He says he thinks his acceptance of TM goes back to the influence of his father Jacques, who was born in Palestine (now Israel) and came to the United States as a teenager.

“My father was a hard worker, and he was interested in everything,” Herb says. “He actually invented the individual towel that was used in restrooms years ago. I even have the paperwork on the patent he was awarded for that towel. It was filed in January, 1912, and he got the patent in October, 1915. He did very well with that invention until the invention of roller towels later put him out of business. But my father was a man ahead of his time. He was a health nut, and he studied everything all his life including religion. I’d like to think his healthy lifestyle choices, and maybe some of his DNA, are the reason I’ve been fortunate to live a long and healthy life.”

Herb remembers driving his father to lectures held in a church of religious science, and that his dad got to know Ernest Holmes, who was the founder of that organization. Herb later became involved himself, learning at a young age to keep his mind open to other avenues of spiritual awareness.

Todd Marshall, in a 2013 interview, says, “This was such an interesting time, around 1966-67, when the Beatles were so popular and they looked to meditation as a way to expand their horizons. Maybe it was through their interest in it that my mom and Estelle, who marched to the same drummer, were looking to connect more with themselves on a spiritual level. They really embraced meditation.

“I was a kid,” Todd adds, “so I don’t remember a lot of details about that time, but I do recall that there were a lot of gatherings in our home on Maria Elena Street in Las Vegas, and a lot of different people coming to the house. That intrusion of strangers sometimes would freak my dad out. He never really embraced that side of things.”

“I was very uncomfortable with the whole meditation thing, and a lot of the people that were drawn to it,” Art says. “I really did not enjoy the people. They were all searchers. And they would search from one thing to the next thing to the next. They were people from all walks of life, which was fine. It didn’t have anything to do with their financial status. They just were not my kind of people. And frankly I was not a big believer in Transcendental Meditation.”
Art says he tried it for a time, and he did see some benefits. He once went to a dentist in Beverly Hills who was doing some work on his gums, and he remembers that he was able to meditate through the whole program without taking any anesthesia. He found meditation helpful in that regard, and he could see that Jayn reaped some benefits from it and that it was overall a positive benefit for her.

[Note: The Maharishi Mahesh Yogi developed the Transcendental Meditation technique and was the leader and guru of a worldwide organization that has been characterized in multiple ways, including as both a new religious movement and as a non-religious movement. His devotees referred to him as “His Holiness,” and because he often laughed in television interviews, he was sometimes referred to as the “giggling guru.” The Maharishi became internationally famous when the Beatles made a pilgrimage to the Indian Himalayas at the peak of their celebrity and claimed they had been eternally changed by his teachings. Some of their music on the *Magical Mystery Tour* album and other recordings reflected much of what they learned practicing TM.]

After mentioning some of the positive benefits he reaped through meditation, Art shifts gears and talks again about the negative aspects. “To be totally honest, I didn’t totally buy into the Maharishi,” he says. “For whatever reason, but probably because I’d had some success in life, one year at Lake Tahoe I was invited to partake in a board meeting with the Maharishi and some of his elders. It was at their camp. And I came back totally disillusioned. It was like going to a Temple Beth Shalom board meeting. All they talked about was money.”

Art says Jayn was appreciative of his willingness to at least look at TM, and he says he doesn’t think she expected him to embrace it in the way she and Este had.

“Jayn believed it in, and she practiced it a lot,” Art says. “Because of that I became accepting of it.”

Todd says that as an enthusiastic supporter of the Maharishi, his mother became a hostess in Las Vegas for several gatherings, and that the Maharishi even held meetings at their home.

“There was the spiritual side, but then there was the business side,” he says. “At one point they owned a small building on 3rd and Charleston, and there were some offices upstairs and my mom and Este convinced Dad that it could be used for Transcendental Meditation meetings, so I remember that went on for awhile. I think this was in the late 60s and early 70s. Mom meditated probably twice a day,
and it was just something I grew up with in our house. The sessions would last maybe 20 or 30 minutes, and Cari and I knew we had to be quiet and we couldn’t fight during that time.”

Cari Marshall remembers her father occasionally pleading to her mother when she first started practicing meditation.

“He’d say, ‘But Jayn, we’re Jewish, you shouldn’t be doing this,’” Cari recalls.

“And Mom would answer back with, ‘This isn’t religion, Art. It’s spirituality.”’

Cari’s memory coincides with her uncle Herb Rousso’s in that it was the family’s neighbor’s mother, Helena Olson, who herself was a meditator, that first peaked Jayn’s interest.

“Mom was always interested in personal growth and finding ways to better herself, and that was her initial attraction,” she says. “And I know Dad did understand the good side of meditation.”

Cari became interested as a young girl, and even was given a walking mantra to recite. “That is because kids don’t sit in the lotus position,” she says. “And then the mantra changes as you grow.”

She was initiated into the program in her teens, and still practices it daily. When a writer asks her to tell him her mantra, she sits up. “Oh, I couldn’t do that. It’s personal just to me...I guess I could tell you,” she says, with a laugh. “But of course I’d have to kill you.”

Todd says he practiced meditation for a while in his late teens and early twenties, “but then it kind of became a struggle between my mom and me,” he says. “You know how it goes. The more she pushed it, the more I didn’t want it. Let’s just say it was an interesting time in our house when all of that accelerated.”

Janie Gale, younger daughter of Hank and Barbara Greenspun, found a kinship with Jayn Marshall through their shared interest in New Age thinking and a desire for spiritual growth. “It was a time when both Jayn and Este Rousso and I were running to psychics and comparing nutritionists, and sharing diets,” says Janie. “I remember having long conversations with Jayn about my finding the Beverly Hills Diet in the early 1980s, and we would talk about the nutritionist
Ann Louise Gittleman and her fat flushing studies. (Note: *The Beverly Hills Diet* book is in fact dedicated to Janie Gale and Jayn Marshall and Este Rousso.)

“And Art, bless his heart, would kind of quietly put up with all of it because he loved Jayn so much,” she says. “I just always felt a strong connection to Jayn because of our connection to the alternative universe, and I respected and loved Art because he was so tolerant of what was interesting and attractive to Jayn”

Regarding the closeness that existed between Jayn and Este, Art recalls a fun moment from the early 1970s. It happened one evening at the Thunderbird Hotel, when the Marshalls and Roussos and their children were in the audience watching the great dancer Donald O’Connor perform with the Step Brothers. Seemingly out of the blue, O’Connor invited Jayn and Este onstage to do an impromptu soft shoe to “Tea for Two.” Then Maceo Anderson, one of the Step Brothers, dragged Cari Marshall onstage to do a tap routine. Just 13 at the time, and wearing crepe-soled shoes, Cari wowed the audience with her dancing. Maceo even placed a microphone by her feet so the audience could hear her tapping. He made the comment to her, “You may be white, but you have black feet.”

The performances weren’t nearly as spontaneous as the audience was led to believe. Cari had been taking tap dancing from Maceo, and the sisters had agreed to go onstage beforehand, without telling Art and Herb. Good friend Burton Cohen was running the Thunderbird at the time, which was under the ownership of Caesars Palace, with the idea that Caesars would transform the property and open it under a new name, the Mark Anthony. When that didn’t happen, Cohen couldn’t resist kidding Art that it was the family’s dance performance that was responsible for the deal falling through.

“Those were such great times in Las Vegas entertainment,” says Art. “You’d have Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis going out into the casino and dealing low limit blackjack, and the customers always won. And every night that Frank Sinatra performed was like New Year’s Eve.”

Long-time arts advocate, and former strip headlining dancer Nancy Houssels can only smile when recalling the vibrancy of Jayn Marshall and Este Rousso. “Those two girls together were the most fun,” Nancy says. “They just lit up a room when they were together. I smile every time I think of them.”
One of Art’s favorite suppliers during the years that Marshall Rousso continued to grow was a man named Manning Silver.

“He was an eccentric but very special guy,” Art says. “He was very good looking, reminiscent of Cary Grant, and quite the ladies’ man. He would walk over to a woman on the street and say to her, ‘You should be wearing my clothes.’ And often the woman would follow him to his factory in downtown L.A. and Manning would give them some of his designs.”

Originally, Silver represented a dress line out of Texas and a pant line called Sir for Her. It was a men’s pant house that was making pants for women. And they moved well out of Marshall Rousso stores. Art and Herb became friendly with Manning Silver, and years later he married a fashion designer in L.A. named Mar, and they created their own line of clothing under Manning’s full name. Their signature was a soft knit fabric for pants and tops, and it did well for a time, but then developed a fitting issue, and business dropped off. But Manning and his wife kept working on the line until they finally got it right.

Art and Herb started hearing there was demand for the Manning Silver line once the company had fixed their problems, and they heard about another Las Vegas clothier who approached Manning about buying the line, and he told them that his loyalty was to Marshall Rousso.

The merchant said, “But they’re not buying it.”

Manning’s response was, “Yes, but they will soon. And when they do, I will sell only to them in Las Vegas.”

That loyalty further strengthened the friendship, and soon Marshall Rousso was doing well with the Manning Silver line.

“The revised designs draped beautifully over a woman’s body,” says Art. “They designed the pantsuits with a nail-head motif that just flew out of the store, and then later a rhinestone motif. I think every entertainer that could wear something like that would come into the store and buy the pantsuits in whatever colors they offered.”

Art and Herb remained friends with Manning for the rest of his life, even after he retired from the clothing business. He actually moved to Las Vegas for a while and worked for Marshall Rousso, but he eventually moved back to LA and
became—of all things—a railroad conductor. He even received an award from Amtrak for being one of the top conductors in the company.

“As I recall, Manning was a ‘gap baby,’” Art says, “which meant he was in that age category that didn’t qualify for Social Security to supplement his income, so he needed to stay employed. I just have special memories of him because he was such a good friend and so loyal to us through the years.”

Another great friend Art made through Marshall Rousso was Adolph Schuman, president of the Lilli Ann apparel company. Like many of Art’s friends, Schuman had quite a backstory to his success. His father was a Hungarian Jewish immigrant who came to America in the 1880s and drove a milk truck in San Francisco.

Adolph at just 26 started a wholesale women’s clothing company in two rented rooms with an $800 loan. Many years later Lilli Ann reported retail sales of $40 million.

After World War II, Schuman opened a Lilli Ann showroom in Paris and promoted his line by organizing a “San Francisco to Paris Fashion Show,” with lavish runway productions in both cities. These shows brought him into personal contact with such leading French designers as Coco Chanel and Cristobal Balenciaga. At the same time, Schuman’s purchase of huge quantities of European fabrics helped revitalize the war-ravaged French and Italian textile industries in the early 1950s. Later on, he was named a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by France and received the Order of the Legion of Merit from Italy.

Schuman was well connected in Democratic Party circles and was good friends with the Kennedy family. He also was a devoted aficionado of the good life. He had a Rolls Royce limousine he used for himself and his friends in Paris, he had a Riva speedboat on the Italian Riviera, he had a horse at Longchamps in Paris, and he had a series of good-looking female associates.

“I remember at Adolph’s funeral in San Francisco (1985), his second wife Jo was there, and so were a number of younger women, some of whom would model his clothing, and they all looked like Candice Bergen,” Art says.

Art remembers a time when Schuman came to him and said he thought it was time to sell the Rolls limousine that he kept in Paris. Art told him he should
reconsider, that the limo had been used by all his friends, plus the Kennedy family and other dignitaries, and that it had become his trademark.

Adolph told Art that the maintenance costs on the car (it was a 1954 model) were becoming high, but that he would make him a proposition. He said if Marshall Rousso would double the volume of business they did with the Lilli Ann line in one year, he would give him the car. Art accepted the deal, and met with all his store managers about putting a special emphasis on selling Lilli Ann. At the end of the year, they had not only doubled the volume, but quadrupled it.

When it was time for Adolph to turn over the title of the limo, Art could tell his friend wasn’t happy about it. So he told Schuman to keep the car. Schuman’s response was that Art and Jayn could use the car for their lifetime, and it was obvious he was very grateful for Art’s graciousness. And he kept his word. Whenever the Marshalls were in Paris they had full use of the car and its driver, Michel Glickman.

Art recalls another intriguing story about Schuman. He and Jayn were at a dinner in San Francisco for Ted Kennedy that Adolph and business titan Walter Shorenstein had thrown for the senator. A younger man, Danny Benatar, introduced himself to Art as the president of Lilli Ann, and also as Adolph’s former son-in-law.

“I’m glad to know that you’re still with the company,” Art said.

Benatar said, “Well, let me tell you how that happened.”

He then explained that his wife Cynthia, Adolph’s daughter, who had been fed up with the impossibly long hours he had been keeping at work, said to him one day, “Danny, there’s not enough of you for both of us, my father and me, so you have to make a choice. It’s either me or my father.”

Benatar went to Adolph to get his advice, and his father in law said, “Divorce her. I need you more than she does.”

And so he did.

“There’s a story you won’t hear every day,” Art says.

“Adolph Schuman was just a great friend,” Art adds. “When the MGM hotel fire happened in 1980, and our store there was closed for seven months,
Adolph called and extended our credit limit to a quarter million dollars. He then offered to send us an additional two hundred fifty thousand dollars until the insurance company stepped in. We didn’t accept that offer, but that’s what kind of friend he was. Just a terrific guy… flamboyant, brilliant, fun to be with, and as loyal as could be.”
Chapter Three: Business Philosophy

“We understood as we gradually opened one Las Vegas Strip store after another that we needed to be an asset to the hotels, and never overcharge for merchandise,” Art says. “Everyone knew that you had a select clientele that would stop in your store if they were staying on the Strip, and the tendency of some store owners was to set their prices high because of that. We made a conscious effort at Marshall Rousso not to do that.”

Carl Cohen at the Sands had told Art that he didn’t want any of his good gamblers’ wives overpaying for a swimming suit or a blouse. The store’s prices had to be in line with what these women would pay for the same item in Los Angeles.

“We just weren’t going to charge more because we were in a tourist location,” Art says. “And that philosophy served us well.”

Art and Herb also adhered to the F&R Lazarus policy that “the customer is always right.”

“We took care of all customer complaints right there in our stores,” Art says. “Nothing was ever allowed to go past the store up to the hotel level. If somebody was unhappy with something, regardless of whose fault it was, we handled it right there.”

That meant that Marshall Rousso would accept all returned merchandise, even items that shouldn’t have been accepted. There were times when a woman would buy a dress or a pair of shoes for a show opening or convention dinner, wear the merchandise for the big night, then return it the next day complaining it didn’t fit.

“I learned that from Maurice Saltzman and from the Lazarus Company,” Art says. “And the truth of it was that our policy worked well, because in all the years collectively, those returns of merchandise didn’t amount to anything at all. They were minimal, and we never had to be called upstairs to a casino boss’s office because some unhappy player felt his wife had been neglected.”

Art recalls a time when a woman was caught shoplifting in their Caesars Palace store, and her husband was a big-time gambler. Rather than call security or file a police report, the husband was contacted about the situation and it was all
handled between him and his casino host so that a potentially big problem was handled internally.

There were other times that customers would make a significant purchase of several items, and then pick out another expensive item and say something to the effect, “And this is my present.” And they would not pay for it.

Adnan Khashoggi’s wife once did that with an item valued at around a thousand dollars.

“We were happy to give it to her,” says Art. “This is the way we would keep customers happy, and make certain we never created problems between gamblers and the hotel property. We knew it was a privilege to have our stores in these great hotels, and we never wanted to jeopardize those relationships.”

Art’s business philosophy of bending over backwards to keep customers happy was given a celebrity test in the mid-1980s.

In June 1983, Art purchased a treasured item from Sotheby’s to be displayed in the Caesars Palace Marshall Rousso store. Here is the Sotheby’s description of the product from a recent auction catalogue: “A rare and important Faberge jeweled gold, nephrite and translucent enamel imperial presentation table portrait from workmaster Henrik Wigstrom. It is rectangular and centered with a miniature of deposed Russian Emperor Nicholas II…”

Barbara Sinatra, Frank’s wife, was browsing in the store and fell in love with the piece. Shortly thereafter, Art received a call from Sinatra’s business manager Sonny Golden, who told him Frank wanted to buy the rare and iconic piece for his wife. Art agreed to sell it for $65,000, if the check was issued right away. Within 24 hours, the check was delivered on a flight from Los Angeles.

Three or four days later, Art and Jayn were at home having dinner, when he received a call from Golden, saying that Frank had changed his mind.

“He must have shown it to somebody who told him it was fake,” Art says. “That used to happen. Maybe it was another dealer Frank was buying from, who wanted to sell him something else. I remember Sonny telling me that Caesars’ owner Clifford Perlman’s pilot was bringing the piece back to me. In other words, he was suggesting that I not even consider not taking it back. That was the clear message. Of course we took it back.”
That same frame was sold at a Sotheby’s auction in April, 2013, for $413,000.

“More than any other art item I’ve purchased through the years,” Art says, “I wish I still had that. It’s such an important piece of Russian art, and I regret ever selling it.”

Chapter Four: Red Skelton

Art Marshall developed a lasting friendship with comedian Red Skelton in the late 1960s, a friendship that he dearly treasured, and that flourished until Red’s death in 1997.

The backstory to this friendship is important to explore because it includes details about how Art and Herb Rousso and Jayn and Este used their artistic sense to decorate their stores and add another retail component to their business.

“We had the dress store at the Sands, and we were already involved in selling antiques,” Art says. “We would trim the store with the antiques, and all of us, the Roussos and our family including the kids, would go to England every summer for a month, and we would comb the countryside looking for interesting things to trim the stores with.”

The antique purchasing had started a few years before, when Herb and Art went to Los Angeles and purchased some knick-knacks from a store that imported items from the Far East and Asia. They found when they decorated the windows at the Sahara store with these items, which included small jewelry boxes and other artifacts, that customers often wanted to buy them. There was such demand that they put price tags on them and sold them. The store that originally supplied Marshall Rousso with these artifacts was called Akron, which was similar to a present-day store like Pier One Imports.

One of Art’s regular customers at the Sahara was a big gambler, and he and his wife regularly bought antiques and other unusual pieces from the store. One day this gambler mentioned to Art that to add to his inventory he should go to London and visit Portobello Road, where there was an abundance of shops that sold unusual antiques and artwork.
Art and Herb were also told to look up a man named Herbert Klein in London, who was a prominent art dealer. They arranged to meet him at a warehouse.

Because Jayn was already an accomplished artist with a good eye for quality work, the others deferred to her judgment and on that first visit they bought around 20 paintings. These were all originals—seascapes, landscapes, paintings of horses, etc.—and all were done between 1890 and 1920. The prices were reasonable, between 40 and 100 pounds each (between $100-$250 American).

Herb Klein would reframe the paintings, clean them, varnish them, and sometimes even reline the back of the canvas to help preserve them.

When the paintings arrived at the store, Art would mark them up three times the original cost, figuring it would cost them half again as much as the cost of the trip to buy and ship them. This sticker price was still considerably less than other antique dealers in the country, who marked their antique items and artwork up four to five times their original cost.

“The result,” Art says, “was that we blew them out. Customers were getting beautiful original paintings for very good prices, anywhere from a hundred dollars to seven hundred fifty.”

While in London, Art and Herb were introduced to the Lockson Company, a full-service shipping company that made the purchase and delivery of items extremely simple. The men would take a loose-leaf book, and as they toured through the various specialty shops they would list the items they wanted to purchase. These included bronzes, pieces of silver, pocket watches, clocks, and various other collectibles.

“The way it worked was you’d go to Lockson,” Art says, “you’d write a purchase order, and you would give the purchase order to the dealer you were buying from. Lockson would then pick up the stuff, they’d get a copy of your order, they’d pay for the merchandise, then assemble it at a warehouse to ship it all at one time. So they took care of the collection, the payment, and the shipping to the United States, and they handled all the duty, custom papers, and whatever needed to be done. And they’d invoice us for the total. It was a very convenient away to do it.”

On one of those buying trips they found some wonderful old Victorian dressing cases. These were designed for a woman’s travel needs, holding crystal
and silver perfume bottles, hair brushes, and other toiletries. For a man, it was perfect for carrying shaving needs and other sundries. These cases would typically be made of wood and covered with leather. Art and Herb bought several of the cases for the Sands dress shop.

The Sands was run, as previously noted, by Art’s good friend Jack Entratter, who was a legendary and important figure in the hotel and entertainment scene. He was also an important contributor to the Jewish community, where he and Art first became acquainted.

One day Entratter was perusing the antiques in the Sands store and he picked out a lovely dressing case with crystal bottles, fitted with silver fittings, and gave it to Red Skelton’s wife Georgia as a birthday present. The Skeltons had just arrived in town for Red’s annual run of shows at the Sands. As Art remembers it, Red performed for a month at a time.

Red and Georgia Skelton were so impressed by the beautiful gift from Entratter that they came into the Sands store to see what other treasures they could find. That marked the first time that Art Marshall met Red Skelton, and from that first meeting they forged a friendship that would last for 30 years.

On that initial visit, Art mentioned to Red that many of their unique antiques were being prepared to be placed in the stores, but were for the time being housed in a warehouse they used on Highland Avenue. So they drove to the warehouse where Red picked out other items.

Shortly thereafter, Red and Art were having breakfast together at the Sands several times a week.

“Right from that first meeting, I could see that Red was a lovely guy,” Art says. “But he was suspicious of people. He had been taken advantage of over the years. He had some uncomfortable experiences in the show business world, and he’d had a business manager that took advantage of him financially. He’d had other personal issues as well, and as a result Jack Entratter had kind of taken over Red’s career and helped him back on the right path. Jack just had a great relationship with so many of the top entertainers, which is why the Rat Pack and other big stars performed at the Sands in those years. Red had complete confidence that Jack would always look out for him.”

It should be emphasized that there was no one more respected as a show producer on the Las Vegas Strip in the 1950s and 60s than Jack Entratter. Starting
as a doorman at New York’s famed Stork Club while in his 20s, the tall and muscular Entratter’s charm allowed him to move up the ladder quickly, and in 1940 he moved to the Copacabana Club, where within a few short years he became a co-owner.

In 1952 he moved to Las Vegas as the entertainment director of the new Sands Hotel, at the urging of Jake Freedman, a Texas oilman who headed the casino’s group of investors. Entratter used his personal relationships with most of the day’s top performers to lure them to the Sands. As a result, the casino boasted most of the biggest names in the entertainment industry.

Among the headliners he brought to his hotel were Danny Thomas, Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., Dean Martin, Lena Horne, Jerry Lewis, Alan King, Joey Bishop, Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme, and Red Skelton. Entratter was also instrumental in making the Sands the central location of the Rat Pack’s hit film *Oceans Eleven*, which for many people became the defining image of Las Vegas, and remains so to this very day. The film became so iconic that over 40 years later it spawned three hit films patterned after the original, and starred A-list actors like George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, and Al Pacino.

When Jake Freedman died in 1958, Entratter became the president of the hotel, with part ownership, and he remained in that capacity until Howard Hughes purchased the hotel in 1967. He stayed on even after that because Hughes understood that by that time Jack Entratter was the Sands Hotel.

About the time that Art and Herb were negotiating to build their dress shop at the Sands, in the still under-construction tower, Art was in Entratter’s office when Bernie North, who was the head of construction, informed Jack that the electricians had gone on strike. The reason for the strike was that in the final days before the new rooms were to open, the hotel bellmen were doing what they could to speed up the process and they took it upon themselves to plug in the room lamps. The electricians called that an infringement on their contractual responsibility, and they went on strike. This was not acceptable to hotel management.

Entratter asked Art to leave his office for a moment, and he asked his secretary Eleanor Grasso to make a phone call.

“I don’t know for certain who he called,” Art says, “but whoever it was that Jack called, within a short period of time the electricians were back working. That’s the way things operated back then.”
As Jack Entratter watched the friendship form between Red and Art, he entrusted Marshall to be something of a companion/protector of Skelton during the day. And Entratter would be his nighttime protector.

Jack even helped Red with many of his business dealings, including helping him unload the production studio that he had purchased in Hollywood to film his television show, which was the original studio used by Charlie Chaplin.

Art and Red would talk about antiques and art, and they shared an interest in books. In particular Red loved fore-edge-painted books, where an artist would paint pictures on the edge of a book, so they would drive around town and visit various bookstores that carried old books and fore-edge-painted books.

After he got to know Red quite well, Art would bring Todd and Cari to breakfast with them, and he remembers one time when Todd was about 12 years old that Red told Todd to pick up the phone by their table and have him paged.

Todd said, “Why?” And Red said, “So everybody will know that I’m here.”

Whether it was just for laughs or not is anyone’s guess, but Art says that unlike some celebrities who try to avoid being recognized in public, Red was very accommodating to fans who would approach him. He would often adlib a funny response or tell a joke that he knew would be repeated by the fan for years afterwards.

Red was also a lover of Rolls Royce automobiles, which will lead to another story, but Art remembers one day when Skelton was driving a Rolls Royce limousine that he owned down the Strip with Todd and Cari in the seats behind him. He had the windows down and was driving slowly, and of course everyone recognized him and some would call out his name. Red would then motion behind him and say that he was chauffeuring the Prince and Princess of Albania around Las Vegas.

“The kids got a huge kick out of that,” Art says, laughing at the memory.

Another time Art was sitting with Red and a few others having lunch, when the waitress that was serving them started scratching her backside. This went on
for a few seconds, and when she turned to leave Red asked his lunch mates, “Would you like her to toss us a salad?”

Another of Skelton’s pranks was to casually stroll through the casino at the Sands and watch people playing slot machines. When someone would get up and move away to another machine, Red would hustle over to the machine they just left, drop a coin in, and then spill a bucket of coins he had with him in the tray and shout “Jackpot!”

As all slot-players know, there’s nothing more aggravating than pouring a lot of money into a machine, abandoning it, and then watching the next player to choose that machine make a big score. Of course, Skelton would let them in on the joke, and watch the gambler’s dismay turn to laughter and a story of a lifetime when they realized they’d been pranked by the great Red Skelton.

Here’s where Art’s and Red’s mutual love of Rolls Royce automobiles took another turn.

On one of their annual buying trips to England sometime in the early 1960s, Art and Herb were on the way to see an art dealer in the St. John’s Wood area of London, and they lost their way and stopped into a gas station to ask for directions. In a room connecting to the station was a 1951 Rolls Royce Sedan on display and for sale by one of the station owner’s clients. Art fell in love with the car. He got the owner’s information and learned that the asking price for the car was 1250 pounds, the equivalent of 3300 American dollars.

That night Art and Herb were having dinner with a man named Trevor Chinn (now Sir Trevor), who owned a company, Lex, which owned and operated many parking garages for the major downtown department stores in London. Chinn was also in the car business. His Lex company owned the Volvo franchise for Great Britain, and he also had Rolls Royce dealerships.

Also in the dinner party was well-known criminal defense attorney Sydney Irmas and his wife Audrey from Los Angeles. Art had known them through the Irmas’ friendship with Herb and Este, and from work they had done together in support of the American Israeli Political Action Committee (AIPAC). Like so many other prominent people, once Art got to know Irmas, they became good friends. Irmas was a celebrity lawyer for several reasons: he defendedheiress Patty Hearst, a kidnap victim in the mid 1970s who was charged with crimes she
committed while under the control of her captors, and he got her acquitted. He also was the creator with a law school friend of the BAR refresher course that attorneys take before being admitted to their respective state BARS, and Syd and Audrey were prominent collectors of priceless paintings and world-class photography. (Audrey told Art in a phone conversation in 2013 that she had recently turned down an offer of $40 million for one of her paintings. Syd Irmas died in 1996.)

The dinner was at Les Ambassadeurs, a fancy club in London that was the former home of one of the Rothschilds. While the conversation was lively about a variety of topics, Art couldn’t resist asking Trevor Chinn for more information about the ’51 Rolls he’d fallen in love with that day. Chinn explained that the car was built by an automobile-body builder named James Young, who was considered one of the best in his trade. Those were the days when Rolls Royce would build the engine and ship the motor and chassis to a specialist to build the body of the car. The finished product was called a coach-built car. Chinn also explained that this particular car originally was very expensive, and that the asking price was reasonable.

When Art returned to Las Vegas, he called the car’s owner, a man named Asher Landau, and started negotiating. Landau was firm in wanting 1250 pounds, yet Art offered decided to haggle with him and offered $3,000. They ended the conversation pleasantly, but days later Art received a letter that said, “With every good wish, I regret I must decline your offer.”

Art was so impressed with how courteously his offer had been rejected that he called Landau and said, “Mr. Landau, I still want to pay you three thousand for the car, but I’ll pay you an additional three hundred for the letter, because you’ve just taught me how not to kill a deal. You’ve shown me a gentlemanly way to keep the door open to continue a transaction.”

Both men laughed, and the deal was consummated.

The Lockson company shipped the car to Long Beach, and Art and Todd and Herb and Jeff Rousso flew to Long Beach and picked up the car, where they had it checked out to make certain it was ready to make the drive to Las Vegas. The shipping costs from London had been about a thousand dollars, and adding in other maintenance costs Art was now into the car roughly forty-five hundred dollars.

The next morning, Art drove the car to the Sands, where he was eager to show it to his fellow Rolls-lover Red Skelton. When Red saw the car, his reaction
was as strong as Art’s at first viewing, and he asked Art if he would leave the car with him for a few days to drive it around town.

“I had no objection to it as I had a lot of things to do, and I was glad to accommodate him,” Art says.

That very afternoon Jack Entratter called Art and said, “How much do you want for the car?”

Art said that the car was not for sale, that he’d bought it for his own enjoyment. Entratter replied that Skelton was in love with the car and that if Art didn’t agree to sell it to Red, the comedian would drive him crazy.

“If Red makes me crazy, then I’m gonna make you crazy,” Entratter told Art.

That made the decision easy for Art. He explained that he had spent about forty-five hundred dollars including everything. That same afternoon, a check was delivered to Art for $6500, with a note from Skelton that said, “Here’s enough money for the car, and you now have enough to go back to England and buy another one.”

Red Skelton kept that ’51 Rolls Royce the rest of his life, through his divorce from then-wife Georgia, and into his later marriage with Lothian Toland. After his death in 1997, Art helped Lothian sell the car to a Las Vegas businessman, who still has it in his car collection.

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As reported, after Howard Hughes bought the Sands Jack Entratter stayed on at the property, and so did Red Skelton, for a while. Red later signed an agreement with the Las Vegas Hilton, performing a few weeks a year at a time when Elvis Presley was also packing the showroom.

In a situation that had a touch of déjà vu, Art Marshall bought another Rolls Royce in London that would catch the eye of his famous friend. This time it was a 1953 Silver Wraith, in a body built by H.J. Mulliner. It was accented by big P-100 separate head lamps that were all the rage among classic car aficionados. The original English license plate, that stayed on the car even through ownership changes, read LPT1.
At the time of Art’s purchase, Red was divorced from his wife Georgia and was engaged to Lothian, who was 25 years his junior. Unlike with the ’51 Rolls, Art had every intention of selling the car back in the States, and once again it was Red who bought it from him.

When ex-wife Georgia saw the car, she called Art to find out why the Rolls had Lothian (Toland’s) initials, LPT, on it. Of course, this was pure coincidence, but Art was quick on his feet and said, “Oh my gosh, Georgia, that car was originally built for Lady Park Tilford.”

It was a name he’d just pulled out of the air, but Georgia bought the story. When Red heard how Art had handled the sticky predicament, he gave him a hug and said, “Boy, Art, that was quick thinking!”

It was just another moment the two friends could laugh about.

(Lothian Toland is the daughter of Greg Toland, an Academy Award winning cinematographer. Art describes her as “a delightful woman who has remained a close friend of mine through the years. She took great care of Red through the rest of his life.”)

Sadly, Jack Entratter had a cerebral hemorrhage in his office in the Sands in March, 1971. His secretary Eleanor Grasso called an ambulance and he was rushed to Sunrise Hospital, where he died. He was just 58 years old, but he’d left an indelible impression in his 20 years in Las Vegas. Art says if any one person can be given the lion’s share of credit for making Las Vegas the Entertainment Capital of the World, it would have to be Jack Entratter, who understood the importance of having the world’s biggest stars perform on the Strip, and had the charm and the savvy to bring them here.

...  

There were several other instances where Red Skelton the comedian would adlib and crack up Art.

Skelton featured two seagulls on his television variety show, named Gertrude and Heathcliff, that he mimicked by crossing his eyes and sticking his thumbs into his armpits for wings. One afternoon he was selling autographed copies of his hand-drawn sketchbooks featuring the seagulls from a booth in the center of the Las Vegas Hilton casino. Art was assisting him.
A man walked over and said to Red, “My God, with all your money you have to sell books?”

Red didn’t miss a beat and said, “Oh no, the money from these books goes to the orphans in China.”

Skelton just made the line up, but the man walked away reassured.

As one of the biggest celebrities in the country, Skelton also made several visits to the White House. The first time was when Red was in his early thirties, and he was invited to a luncheon and seated next to President Franklin Roosevelt.

As FDR reached to pick up his water glass, Skelton put his hand on the President’s arm and said, “I’d be careful if I were you. I once got rolled in a joint like this.”

Roosevelt cracked up over the line, and from that point on Red was extended a permanent invitation to visit the White House.

Some 30 years later, when President Richard Nixon was making his first visit to China, Red was asked by Nixon to give him something clever to say.

Skelton told him, “When they ask you what you think about Red China, tell them you prefer it on a white tablecloth.”

Art’s friendship with Red lasted long past his performing days, through his semi-retirement when he would make occasional visits to Las Vegas, and to the last days of his life, in 1997.

Sometime in the mid-1970s, Art was President of the Jewish Federation of Las Vegas, and they were holding a big dinner at Caesars Palace. He asked Red if he would agree to be the honoree. It seems that a few years before Red had made a $10,000 contribution to Israel at the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War (1973), and he had never been properly thanked for the contribution. Art said this dinner would be Las Vegas’s way of thanking him.

Red asked if he would be expected to perform, and Art told him no, that it was merely to show gratitude for his donation. But when Red got to Las Vegas, he said to Art, “Is it okay if I do six minutes?”

Art was delighted that his friend wanted to perform.
Art remembers that Red did a popular pantomime routine of a tailor sowing, and one with an old man and a flag, and it was a huge hit.

The night before the dinner, Art took Red to a show at the Dunes, where Skelton was introduced from the stage and got a standing ovation. With tears in his eyes, as he sat down he said to Art, “I miss this. I really miss this.”

On another occasion that week Art and Jayn took Red to Di Martino’s restaurant, a favorite local Italian place, and the owner was overwhelmed that the great Red Skelton was in his restaurant. He kept bringing one dish after another to the table for them to try, and near the end of the meal, Red said, “Could you just pack all of this up for the dog. And put in a couple of slices of bread, in case he’d like to make a sandwich.”

Of course, Mr. DiMartino broke up at the joke.

“Red was so quick,” Art says. “He was always coming up with these great lines that people would remember.”

... 

One of the last stories Art has on Red Skelton, which occurred in the mid-Eighties and dragged on to near the end of Red’s life, concerns Art’s attempts to get a Presidential Medal awarded to Red, in recognition of his lifetime of excellence to his craft. It turned into a lengthy drawn-out process of getting then-Nevada Senator Chic Hecht, a long-time friend of Art’s, to present a bill to be voted on in the Senate and the House of Representatives to give Red this prestigious honor. The bill needed more than fifty percent approval from both bodies to pass. It passed easily in the Senate, but it got bogged down in the House because time ran out as congressmen were debating back and forth about the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

In the meantime, Hecht was defeated in his bid for reelection to the Senate, and years passed without much movement on the motion. Art says Congressman Joe Kennedy Jr., who chaired the committee that oversaw such motions, didn’t want to spend the money to do these gold medals because his father Robert Kennedy had received one and he wasn’t supportive of other candidates.

To shorten a long story, which involved Sen. Harry Reid and South Dakota Sen. Tom Daschle, who Art had befriended, it was determined eventually in 1996...
that Red would receive a special commendation from President Bill Clinton. But it was not the Presidential Medal that Art had been hoping for.

So the date is set for April 1. They are to have an hour with President Clinton. Red and his wife Lothian are flying separately, and the Marshalls are flying from Las Vegas, with Todd and Cari included, and it’s going to be a really special day.

Skelton calls Art and says, “What kind of medal am I getting?”

“It’s not a medal,” Art replies. “It’s a commendation.”

Red says, “You want me to fly to Washington for a commendation? I’m not doing all that for a piece of paper.”

“So,” Art says, “I panicked. What do I do?”

He decides to call Harry Reid and tell him that Red’s doctor won’t let him fly because he’s too ill.

So Harry Reid, in the company of Art and Todd and Brian Greenspun, flies to Palm Springs and presents the commendation to Red in a restaurant. As Harry Reid walks in, he has his head down and his hands in his pockets, as he’s known to do, and Skelton breaks up the crowd by saying, “Look at that. That’s the first time I ever saw a senator with his hands in his own pockets.”

Although politics had kept the well-deserved Presidential Medal from being awarded, the commendation from President Clinton, the only one awarded in 1996, was beautifully worded.

It read: “A natural-born comic who got his first laugh from an audience at age 10, Red Skelton has devoted a long and productive life to entertaining people of all ages. Moving from the vaudeville stage to radio, the movies, and television, he became America’s favorite clown, creating characters like Clem Kadiddlehopper and Freddie the Freeloader, who generations of Americans looked forward to seeing every week. Red Skelton has served his country well. From his days in World War II and Korea as a soldier and an entertainer for the troops, to his many years on the large screen and small, he has given to all those lucky enough to see him perform the gift of laughter and joy.”
That was the last time Art saw his friend. Red Skelton died on September 17, 1997.

The week following Red’s death a funeral was held at a cemetery in Burbank. It was a private affair, by invitation only. Art used Todd’s plane to fly over, and he took with him Frank Leone, who was a prominent musician in Las Vegas and had been Red’s piano player for many years.

Naturally, among the guests there to pay their respects were many celebrities.

Art recalls that actress and Olympic swimmer Esther Williams was there, and she looked more beautiful than ever. (note: she was 76 at the time). Esther had starred with Red in her first major feature film, called *Bathing Beauty*, and she had done her first-ever screen test with George Sidney, who in the late 1990s was a neighbor of Art’s and Jayn’s. (Small world story: George at the time was married to an actress, Corinne Cole, who had starred in the 1968 film *The Party*, with Peter Sellers. Corinne had previously been married to Jack Entratter. In the movie, Corinne plays a lady who is horribly intoxicated. Cari Marshall, as a seven-year-old, watched the movie with her parents and told them upon leaving the theater, “I can see why Mr. Entratter divorced that lady. She’s a drunk!”)

At Red’s funeral Art says he complimented Esther so often on her appearance that he wouldn’t have been surprised if her husband thought he was hitting on her. (Note: Esther Williams died at age 91, just as interviews for this book were nearing completion.)

Comedian Steve Allen spoke at the funeral, and he did a terrific job, keeping a nice balance between humor and respect for the loss of their friend.

Art remembers that he was seated in the third row of the chapel, directly behind Milton Berle, who was directly behind Bob and Delores Hope.

“Milton Berle kept tapping Bob Hope on the shoulder to get his attention,” Art says, “but Bob at the time was up in years (he was 94), and he wouldn’t turn around to acknowledge the tapping. Finally Dolores Hope said to her husband, “It’s Milton Berle!”

“Bob finally turned around and announced plenty loud enough for half the crowd to hear, ‘Doesn’t look a thing like him!’ Of course, that broke up the whole group.”
It was at Red’s funeral that Skelton’s daughter Valentina, whom Art hadn’t seen in nearly twenty-five years, approached him and reminded him of an episode that had occurred when she was a teenager. Apparently, she had gotten into an argument with her father and ran out of their Sands Hotel room. Red frantically called Art to help find her.

Not long after, Art saw Valentina walking down Las Vegas Boulevard and he pulled over in his red Corvette, and explained he was there at her father’s bequest. She got in the car and Art returned her to the Sands.

“The only reason I got in the car that day,” Valentina told Art at the funeral reception, “was because I thought the red Corvette you were driving was very cool. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have accepted the ride.”

... 

As he reflects on the award that Skelton was given, Art is reminded of a time in New York, shortly after he was given the Prime Minister’s Medal from the State of Israel Bonds organization.

“I should mention that the man who was the representative for Israel Bonds in the southwestern U.S. was a fellow by the name of Yale Stewart,” Art says. “He had fought with the American Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, and in fact had lost an arm in battle. Yale was also a guy who when the German flagship Bremen steamed into New York Harbor, he was among a group who stormed the ship and tore down the Swastika flag. He was the guy who really helped get me involved with Israel Bonds.”

With the medal he was given, Art was also given a florette, which he would wear in his lapel. Admitting that he was “more full of myself back then,” Art was wearing the florette one day when he and Jayn were at Sotheby’s, viewing items that were to be auctioned a few days later. The auction was to feature Russian art.

A young girl who was assisting them to view items was working behind a counter and taking jewelry and other items out of boxes, when she asked Art, “What’s that in your lapel?”

“It’s nothing,” he said.

“Well, if it’s nothing then why are you wearing it?”
The girl had a valid point, so Art answered, a little sheepishly, “It’s the Prime Minister’s Medal from Israel Bonds?”

The girl replied, “So what did you do, buy a bunch of bonds?”

Art said, “Yes, that’s exactly what I did.”

They had a good laugh, and they talked about the fact that medals throughout history have been awarded not only for heroic actions, but also for charitable offerings and donations. They discussed how if you built a hospital in England, you might get on the Queen’s list and get a medal. Or you might have a building named for you at a university for writing a big check.

“That young girl’s comment deflated me,” Art recalls, “but it was also a realization. She kind of told it like it was, and I got a kick out of it.”

...
Chapter Five: Fancy Cars

It’s been well established that Art Marshall is a car nut, and that he would go to great lengths to find and purchase an automobile he’d fallen in love with. One such car was a Rolls Royce Phantom II Coupe drophead (convertible). Art had purchased a number of Rolls Royces, including two different cars, as was discussed, that he in turn sold to Red Skelton. But this time he was determined that if he were fortunate to buy this particular model, it would stay in his possession.

By the middle 1960s Art had become a member of the Rolls Royce Club of England, and during one of the family’s trips to England, Art saw a Phantom II Coupe on display at the club’s annual meeting. His memory is that this was a 1933 model. He knew he had to have one.

It so happens that the Rolls Royce Club in the United States puts out a directory of all existing Rolls Royces, in addition to who owns each car and how to contact the owner. Art sent out letters to a number of owners of convertibles like the one he had seen in England. After weeks of waiting, he finally received a response from a man who worked in a jet propulsion laboratory in Pasadena. His name was Louis Divone.

The car Divone owned was built by a company called All Weather, and it was a one-off. They had never built another one. It was a 1935 model, and the chassis number was TA107. That number is as familiar to Art today as boat number PT109 is to the Kennedy family heirs.

Divone had purchased the car some years earlier and he was trying to restore it himself, but the job proved too difficult. When Art finally negotiated the purchase, for around five thousand dollars, his work was just beginning. That is because some of the car parts were still in boxes, including the motor. Art then sent all the parts to England, to the car builder FLM Panelcraft, whose owner was Knobby Frye, with whom Art had worked before. The cost for totally restoring the car was more than twenty-five thousand dollars, and it took 18 months to get the car completed and shipped to him. When it finally arrived, the result was worth it. The car was magnificent.

“Long story short,” says Art, “we had the car for about 20 years, but the truth of it is we never really drove it much. The problem with owning a car like that is that about the only place we could take it was Las Vegas Country Club. You have to keep people off it, and from touching it or banging on it or climbing in it,
because it was such a show piece. The car just lived in my garage for most of those years. When we finally sold it, around 1986, I think we received something just under a hundred thousand dollars.”

Sometime in 2012 Art was leafing through a Rolls Royce auction catalogue and to his great surprise, there was his favorite old car, the Phantom II Coupe drophead. It had been restored once more, and this time it was painted black, instead of the brown color when he owned it. The chassis number was the familiar TA107. The car sold for over five hundred thousand dollars!

With his long history of being an automobile aficionado from the time he was a teenager, Art had long harbored a dream of owning a car dealership.

“Once we had established the dress shops, I wanted to be independent of the fact that I was only a renter in these hotels,” Art says. “I wanted to have something that I owned myself, where I wasn’t subject to lease-renewal at the whim of a change of management. And I actually had a dream of owning a Rolls Royce agency but that didn’t appear likely, seeing as there wasn’t one in Las Vegas.

“However, through my purchases of those Rolls Royces in London,” Art says, “I became friendly with an Englishman named Peter Young, who was the head of Rolls Royce’s Western Region in Los Angeles. He actually received the Order of the British Empire for his work with Rolls.”

In the 1960s, Art began spending time at the Fletcher Jones dealership in Las Vegas, and he became friends with the general manager, Gary Press. He had bought a couple cars from Gary, and on slow Saturday mornings he would even go down to the dealership and as he says, “Just chew the fat with the salesmen.”

It’s a known fact that men who fall in love with cars early on retain a lifelong love affair with automobiles, and Art was no different. He also became friendly with a Fletcher Jones mechanic named John Toman, one of the best he’d ever seen at his profession.
Sometime later, Art was having his hair cut at the Sands when his barber mentioned that his friend Leon Peskin, who co-owned Calvada Motors in Las Vegas, was interested in selling the dealership.

Art immediately got a hold of Peskin and his partner Tony Trudnick, who was a boxing promoter in Las Vegas, and started negotiating a deal. It turns out that his competition for the dealership was none other than the powerful and expansive mega-car dealer Fletcher Jones, but Art and Herb Rousso, partners as always, were successful in making the deal anyway.

While Calvada Motors’ main business was selling BMWs and Volkswagens, Art wanted to expand to luxury automobiles, and when he called Peter Young he found him very interested in adding Rolls Royces to the store. Later on, Art’s treasured 1935 Phantom Coupe II drophead became a centerpiece attraction at the dealership.

The store, located at Decatur and Sahara Avenue, changed its name to Prestige Motors, and Rolls Royces, Jaguars, MGs, and Triumphs were added to the line.

Art enticed Gary Press and John Toman to leave Fletcher Jones and work at Prestige, and he gave them an ownership stake in the dealership. Art and Herb would together own 70 percent, Press 20, and Toman 10.

Fletcher Jones called Art for a meeting and rattled his cage about stealing two of his key people, but Art countered with the argument that America was a free country and nothing could stop these men from pursuing a better opportunity. The issue was quickly resolved.

Todd Marshall had completed two years of college at USC, studying pre-law, but he had inherited his father’s love of cars and even harbored dreams as a boy of becoming a Formula 1 race-car driver. Also, like his father years before, while Todd says he enjoyed college he couldn’t wait to get out and into the business world.

“I wasn’t exactly suffering at USC,” Todd says, “but I didn’t have any real money to live the way I wanted to or do the kind of stuff I wanted to do. So when Dad and Herb bought the dealership, I decided to leave school and go to work there. It was a natural way to indulge my love of cars and make some money.”
Todd says he worked the Be Shift. “That meant Be there when we open, and Be there when we close,” he says, laughing. His hours were 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. six days a week.

Jayn had told Todd when he returned to Las Vegas without finishing his college education that he could stay in the family home for three weeks, then he’d have to find a place to live. Todd got an apartment with his best friend, Brady Exber, whose father Mel Exber had been a long-time partner in downtown Las Vegas casinos and was running the Las Vegas Club. Neither Todd nor Brady were willing to go on the record with their “best” stories about that period of time, but Brady did share a couple stories about Art.

“I was best friends with Todd from the time we were in nursery school,” Brady says. “We were in a pre-school at the Jewish Temple, and as little kids if you talked too much or didn’t practice self-control, you had to stand against the wall. So that’s where I met Todd, standing next to him against the wall. Later on we were neighbors in the east Charleston neighborhood, and not long after they moved to a nice house on Maria Elena Street, and we moved right next door to them.”

Brady, who over the last 25 years has become a nationally-ranked and much-decorated amateur golfer, recalls two different times that Art came through for him as a great friend. The first was in the late 1990s, after Mel Exber had been discovered with a brain tumor and was no longer in good enough health to run the hotel. Mel’s partners in the club were putting pressure on Brady to sell out to them at a big discount.

“I was in a difficult spot, and I talked to Todd about it,” Brady says. “That very same day, within an hour, Art called and said he and Todd were coming down to the hotel to see me. It’s important to understand that Art was on the Nevada Gaming Commission at the time, and that is a powerful position.”

Brady tells how he and Todd and Art walked for a time through the casino, and made sure they were on view from the surveillance cameras, which was Art’s precise intention in visiting him. The next day, the senior partners who were pressuring Brady informed him that they were aware of the relationship. One of them said, “We saw you and your guy meeting yesterday.”

“I can tell you that took some pressure off me, just as Art knew it would,” Brady says.
Another time that Art came through for Brady was when Mel Exber died in 2002. In the Jewish faith, the tradition is to bury loved ones the very next day following death. Brady knew he would be too emotional to deliver a talk. So he called Art, and “without a moment’s hesitation, he agreed to give a eulogy,” Brady says.

After the service, many in attendance from out of town told Brady that although they didn’t know the speaker, they thought he did a terrific job.

Brady also recalls that when Jayn Marshall got involved with Transcendental Meditation, his mother Doris also became interested.

“My mom had this giant closet in our house,” he says, “and she would sit in there and meditate and light the incense and the whole deal. She practiced it heavily for around eight or 10 years. My parents separated during that time, and I think the meditation was a factor in that.”

Neither Todd nor Art go into detail about why after four years Prestige Motors was sold, other than to say there was some “monkey business going on with some of the key employees.” Another factor was that the Jaguars and Triumphs and MGs which were manufactured in Great Britain just weren’t suitable for the hot Las Vegas summers.

“Those cars would just drop dead in the street as soon as summertime came,” Todd says.

Compounding the problem was that President Jimmy Carter and others in Congress were pushing a gas-guzzler tax, which would penalize automobile manufacturers whose cars didn’t get a certain minimum miles per gallon, and that created an impossible burden for luxury carmakers of Bentleys and Rolls Royces and Jaguars.

“Besides, the overall effect of this tax was minimal in the big picture,” Art says, “because there were probably only six hundred Rolls Royces sold in the U.S. each year.”

The heads of the different luxury car manufacturers naturally did everything they could to push back on this gas-guzzler tax, and then Art became aware of the fact that his friend Senator Henry “Scoop” Jackson was a member of...
the Congressional Committee looking into the issue. Art called Jackson to lobby against the tax. He explained that Rolls Royce had engineered the first crashable cars, where the front end of the car would compress and save the lives of drivers involved in a high-impact collision.

Art pointed out that Rolls was the first manufacturer to have a double-braking system. Senator Jackson listened carefully to his friend, and initially explained that there wasn’t much he could do to help rich people buying luxury automobiles, but he promised to look into the matter further. Not long after, Jackson called Art back and told him one of the attorneys on the committee said there was a Checker Cab rule that mandated that anyone making less than ten thousand dollars a year was exempt from the gas guzzler rule. Because the international tariff agreements mandated that anything that was done for domestics had to also be done for imports, the imported luxury cars would be exempt from the rule.

“The president of BMW called me,” Arts says, “and he told me he could not believe that with all the money his company and others had spent on attorneys and lobbyists to avoid this tax, something had finally been accomplished with one phone call. Scoop Jackson told me when he called me back with the good news that he was going to make me a hero, and he did.”

In 1978, on a Rolls Royce-sponsored cruise for their American dealers, Art and Herb met Jerry Cutter, who owned a number of dealerships in Hawaii and Southern California. They had several conversations with Cutter about selling Prestige Motors, and upon their return they followed up with one of his partners, a man named Vic Weiss, who happened to be a long-time friend of UNLV basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian. Art and Herb made final arrangements with Weiss to sell the dealership, and they completed the transaction in the spring.

In a bizarre twist, shortly after the sale Vic Weiss was murdered in Hollywood. In June of that summer his body was found in the back of his maroon-and-white Rolls Royce, which was parked in a hotel garage. He had two bullet wounds in his head. It was a classic Mafia-style hit.

Weiss had just left a meeting that morning with Los Angeles Lakers owner Jack Kent Cooke, who was selling the team and its home, the Forum, to Jerry Buss. The subject of the meeting was discussing the possibility of arranging for Coach Tarkanian to leave UNLV and become the new head coach of the Lakers.
Talks broke off upon the discovery of Weiss’s body, and to this day the murder has never been solved. Even more mysterious is that three different men linked in one way or another to the Weiss killing were themselves murdered within another two years. Speculation is that Weiss’s murder wasn’t linked to his negotiations in the basketball world, but had more to do with some shady dealings he had in the gambling world, where he was known to make and handle huge wagers on sporting events.

“Although it was a grind working at the dealership, I loved it,” says Todd. “But with the ongoing customer dissatisfaction with the brands we were selling that were having so much difficulty with the heat, and the slim profit margin, it really wasn’t a very good business.”

Art adds that one of the difficulties in selling luxury cars like a Rolls Royce is that the typical customer is less than tolerant when the car would need service or repairs. Rolls had few issues, but Jaguar, MG, and Triumphs had issues.

“Most of the customers were indignant when the air conditioner wasn’t working or the electrics failed,” he says. “We had horrible problems with the electrical components in the cars. We started to refer to the maker of the electrical switches as The Prince of Darkness. Because every car came back with a failed light switch. Every single car. The customers’ attitude was that they had just bought the world’s best car, and it was supposed to operate perfectly.”

Art mentions former Hacienda and Sahara hotel owner Paul Lowden as being an exception to the dissatisfied customer rule.

“We had sold Paul and his wife Sue, who are good friends of mine, a Rolls Royce and they were wonderful to work with,” he says. “They never complained a single time. But they were clearly the exception to the rule.”

“The car business involves gaining trust at the highest level,” Todd adds. “It was a great learning experience for me, and I just took what I learned into the next phase of my business life.”

Although Todd had some reluctance to enter the family clothing business, his uncle Herb was looking to get some help in the buying end of Marshall Rousso,
and after some conversations with Herb and his father, Todd got more comfortable with the idea.

“In the automobile business, we would invest ten to forty thousand in a car to make a profit of a thousand dollars, or maybe fifteen hundred,” Todd says. “And the customer would too often be dissatisfied with the product. Whereas in the dress business, we would invest fifty dollars to sell a dress for a hundred and twenty, and then the next day the lady would want another one. The profit margin in the apparel business and the potential of it far outweighed the romance of the automobile business. So I decided to transition into sort of an assistant buyer position, working with my uncle Herb.”

On the positive side, Art says that during the three or four years they owned Prestige Motors, the Marshalls and Roussos had the privilege of knowing many of their key executives.

“We were awarded the Order of the Silver Lady for our sales performance and enjoyed several Rolls Royce trips to London,” Art says.

“We became acquainted with David Plastow, the head of Rolls Royce who was later knighted and became head of the parent company, Vickers.”

Many of the key Rolls Royce executives and their wives would be hosted by the Marshalls on trips to Las Vegas. Art recalls that when Prestige first started selling Rolls, the cars came with standard black leather dash consoles. If a buyer wanted to match the interior colors with the dash consoles, that was considered a special order and created a long delay. Jayn convinced the Rolls executives that all cars should come with matched dash console and interior, thus improving the car’s look and speeding up the process. They concurred and that became standard procedure.

A frequent visitor to Las Vegas was John Harris, the company’s West Coast executive service engineer. One morning John and Art were having breakfast at the Sands Hotel when in walked Winston Churchill III, M.P., who Art had been with the previous evening. Harris was very pleased by the introduction and remarked that Las Vegas truly was a world center.

After breakfast, Art and John went outside, where it was storming, and Art took some time combing his hair. “I explained to John that I’d recently had some hair transplants and was very self-conscious during the healing process,” Art says. “John said he understood, and told me that he had been born without ears, just
holes where they should have been, and that his life growing up was most difficult. I was shocked because his ears looked perfectly normal. He explained that he had apprenticed at Rolls Royce and was working as a service engineer in London when a customer came up to the third floor to discuss some issues with his car, that John was working on. When the owner finished the discussion, he gave John his card and said, ‘Come see me, and let me see what I can do for you.’

“The man was one of London’s chief plastic surgeons who had worked on R.A.F. burn victims during World War II,” Art says. “He made John a pair of perfectly real looking ears. Fate had brought them together, and John said it would hardly have happened had he been working at a Ford Motors garage.

“John was so well trained he could assemble things blindfolded,” Art adds. “He could walk mechanics through a repair by phone.”

Art recalls that on an earlier trip to London, when Todd and Cari were young, they managed a visit to the main Rolls Royce factory at Crewe and in London where they made the limousines and convertibles by hand.

“The facilities were hospital clean and everything was done to perfection,” he says. “Most of the employees had apprenticed at Rolls and been there a long time. Many of the car parts, like the famous grill and window frames, were made by hand and had the maker’s I.D. number on them. It was amazing to see how they matched the wood veneers and cut the leathers for the seats and trim. We saw them take sheets of metal and hand hammer a limo fender over a wooden form and smooth out a handcrafted hood.”

Art says that while his children were young, seeing this adherence to perfection gave them an appreciation for quality and skilled workmanship. Tours that were taken of museums and stately homes also had an effect. While during this time drugs were infiltrating the American and English culture, tours of these places, including the beautiful gardens at Blenheim Castle where Winston Churchill was born, gave the opportunity for Art and Jayn to explain that while drugs might temporarily make things look nice, reality eventually sets in. But the beauty and art of what they were witnessing on this trip was real, and did not need the artificial stimulus of drugs.

“The kids understood that point,” Art says, “and they were most helpful when we visited antique dealers in searching for items that might work for the Las Vegas stores. They each had a budget to select
items, and they were very good at it. Both Todd and Cari appreciate those lessons from back then and they’ve passed them on to their children.

When Todd discusses his time in the automobile business, he concurs with his father’s assessment. “There is no question my mom was not happy with me being in the car environment,” he says. “The car business involves misrepresentation at the highest level. But like everything in life it was a good learning experience, and I just took what I learned into the next phase of my business life.”

Suddenly, Todd shifts gears and his face lights up with a memory from around that time. “Has my dad talked about the time the pigeon shit on him in London?” he asks. “It was one of the highlights of my young life.”

“We were antiquing in England on one of those summer trips the family took,” Todd says. “Cari and I were just schlepped along on these buying trips, where my parents and the Roussos would buy bronzes and paintings and props for the store, which became part of the business. We’re on the sidewalk going from store to store one day bored stiff when this pigeon just unloads on my dad. It was like someone had dumped a gallon of paint on him. I was on the ground rolling with laughter.”

When Art is reminded of the story at a later meeting, he says, with a twinkle, “I could have killed Todd right then. It was horrible.”

The antique store owner was kind enough to bring Art inside, and he helped clean him up in the washroom, but there was only so much that could be done. Art returned to his hotel room, where a maid was just two doors away from cleaning his room.

“I had left a diamond ring on a counter, right beside the sink, which is something I never do,” Art says. “So I looked at that pigeon possibly saving me losing that ring. I certainly don’t know if the maid would have taken it, but she might have been tempted. I looked at it as a fortuitous thing.”

“Dad didn’t stay mad at me for long,” Todd says. “Once he was cleaned up he could see the humor in it.”
Todd’s friendship with Brady Exber, which had begun when they were in pre-school together at Temple Beth Shalom, extended to all members of the Marshall and Exber family.

Jayn met Brady’s mother Doris Exber when their sons were schoolmates as youngsters, and the Marshalls and Exbers soon went to dinner together. Art instantly became friends with Mel Exber, who as was mentioned was a long-time successful casino owner with properties in downtown Las Vegas. Mel had an ownership stake in the El Cortez Hotel and Las Vegas Club with legendary hotel-casino man Jackie Gaughan, and he was a lifelong sports fan. Later on, he even included a sports hall of fame at the Las Vegas Club, where he exhibited some treasured memorabilia. Mel was regarded at being so skilled at setting a betting line that the other books would frequently follow his line.

The Exbers’ daughter Laurie was about the same age as Cari Marshall, and the girls also became close friends.

Some time shortly after Art and Mel had become friends, Art’s uncle David Moskowitz from Cleveland, who had by then become a successful businessman, was visiting Las Vegas.

David had made his money from scratch. He was the fourth brother in the Moskowitz family to be brought to America with the help of his siblings. He started out in this country with a horse and a wagon, and he sold everything from furniture and bed sheets to pots and pans through the poor neighborhoods in Cleveland. Acknowledging the impoverished conditions of his customers, he sold his wares to them on a payment plan. From that meager start he did well enough to open a small furniture store, and later on two more stores. David eventually got into the homebuilding business and over the years became a wealthy man and a shrewd investor.

Moskowitz started shopping for attractive real estate in Las Vegas because he could see that the city was in a great growth pattern. One of David’s favorite sayings to Art was “Only God can create land,” and because it was a limited resource he enjoyed spending time researching attractive land deals.

David had met a real estate broker, Joe Collett, at the Desert Inn hotel, and Collett showed him a five-acre parcel adjacent to the McCarran Airport entrance. David bought the parcel and was ecstatic about it, telling Art there was no more...
attractive place to buy real estate than Las Vegas because of its terrific growth trends. When that particular deal started to develop some snags shortly before closing, Art employed his attorney David Goldwater to make sure the deal went through.

Seeing David Moskowitz’s enthusiasm for purchasing more Las Vegas land, Collett showed him a parcel on the west side of Paradise Road and Harmon. It was a plot of five acres, not far from the Las Vegas Strip and close to UNLV. David encouraged Art to get involved and to bring some other trusted friends into the deal because he was convinced that buying land in Las Vegas was a surefire investment, and he thought this was a great way for Art to expand his portfolio. The price was fifty thousand dollars, and Art was able to bring Mel Exber and Jackie Gaughan and his brother-in-law Herb Rowe into the deal.

Later on, a nine-acre parcel became available near that same five acres on Paradise. It was owned by the estate of the radio personality Ma Perkins, and the proceeds of any money earned by her estate were designated to go to university endowments. This time, the partnership consisted of Art and Herb Rousso, Mel Exber and Jackie Gaughan. They paid two hundred fifty thousand for the nine acres. Between the two parcels was another small parcel, with a wash running through it.

After a few years, both parcels for which the partnerships had paid close to three hundred thousand dollars, were sold for seven hundred fifty thousand. The purchaser was a man they never met, but in his short time in Las Vegas he had purchased a huge amount of land. His name: Howard Hughes.

Gaughan often told people that Art was the best partner he every had because unlike most partners, who needed fresh money to keep a deal going, Art always brought him money. Today the Hard Rock Hotel sits on that property, and despite the success Jackie enjoyed with Art, he ribbed him for years about selling too soon.
Another legendary figure in the Las Vegas Golden Era of the 1950s and 60s was Desert Inn Hotel owner Moe Dalitz. If ever a man can be said to have led two different lives, it was Dalitz. Born on Christmas Day, 1899, Dalitz spent the first fifty years of his life involved in a number of criminal enterprises, primarily bootlegging during the Prohibition Era.

He once testified before a Congressional crime commission, and in response to a senator’s questioning about his bootlegging, Dalitz responded, “We wouldn’t have sold so much illegal liquor if all you people hadn’t been drinking it.”

As part of a group of so-called gangsters called the Cleveland Syndicate, Dalitz partnered with men like Louis “Lou Rhody” Rothkopf and Morris Kleinman in a variety of questionable enterprises, and was said to take his orders from Mob kingpin Meyer Lansky. Even with his background, Dalitz was never convicted of a crime.

Dalitz’s investments in Las Vegas began in the late 1940s with the Desert Inn, when the original builder of the resort, Wilbur Clark, ran out of money and Dalitz took over the construction. When the DI opened in 1950, Clark remained the public face and front man of the resort, while Dalitz remained quietly in the background as the owner and the man who called all the shots. He later also ran the Stardust resort after the death of mobster Tony Cornero.

In 1967 Dalitz sold the Desert Inn to Howard Hughes, in a deal orchestrated by Hughes’ business manager Robert Maheu and banker Parry Thomas. Originally, Dalitz was dead set against the sale, as the Desert Inn was Dalitz’s power base, but he continued to manage the resort under Hughes’ ownership, and became actively involved in other development projects around town, including the construction of Sunrise Hospital, the Boulevard Shopping Mall, Las Vegas Country Club, and a number of housing developments.

The second half of Dalitz’s adult life, up until his death in 1989 just short of his 90th birthday, was also marked by charitable involvement in a number of civic organizations like Boy Scouts, Girls and Boys clubs, local libraries, Temple Beth Shalom, the Jewish Federation, and the Anti-Defamation League. Through many of these involvements he became friendly with Art Marshall.
One evening at a wedding reception Dalitz shared an “only in Las Vegas” story with Art. It was the middle of the week sometime in the 1950s, and Dalitz had invited the Duke and Duchess of Windsor to be his guests at the Desert Inn. After having dinner at the hotel one evening, the three of them went into the casino merely for some light gambling and the amusement of watching other gamblers. As they always dressed formally, the Duke was dressed in a tuxedo, and the Duchess in an evening gown.

[Note: King Edward VIII abdicated the British throne in 1937 to marry American divorcee Wallis Simpson. His brother, Queen Elizabeth’s father, who was dramatized in the recent Oscar-winning movie The King’s Speech, took over the throne and christened his brother and his new wife as the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. They were arguably the most famous couple in the world in their time.]

Dalitz and the Duke went to an empty roulette table and simply turned the chairs around to watch the action. Meanwhile, the Duchess, who had been given a rack of chips by Moe to play baccarat, went to an adjacent table. Suddenly into the DI casino walked Nick the Greek Dandelos, who was the most famous gambler in the world at that time. Dandelos is well known for uttering the famous line, “The next best thing to gambling and winning is gambling and losing.”

[Note: Nick the Greek once asked Horseshoe owner Benny Binion who the best poker player in the world was, and Benny said it was Johnny Moss. Nick asked Benny if he could set up a head-to-head game for him against Moss, at the Horseshoe. Binion agreed, under the condition that the game could be open to viewing by the public, as Benny knew that type of attraction would help fill his casino. The year was 1949, and the two gambling giants played a continuous game that lasted five months, with time out only for sleep and food. At the end of the marathon match, Moss was up five million dollars, at which point Nick the Greek stood up and said, “Mr. Moss, I’m afraid I’m going to have to let you go.”]

Anyway, on this night at the Desert Inn Nick sat down at the roulette table where Moe and the Duke were seated and started betting huge amounts of money. The Duke turned to Moe and, obviously impressed by the fearlessness of the gambler, said, “Who is that guy?”

Moe told him it was Nick the Greek. The Duke was very excited at this news, and tried to motion to the Duchess to let her know who he was sitting with, but he couldn’t catch her eye. So he left his chair and ran over to tell her.
When he did this, Nick the Greek leaned over to Dalitz and asked, “Who’s the guy in the monkey suit?”

And when Moe told him it was the Duke of Windsor, “Nick says, “Oh, don’t shit me.”

Moe told Art that the point of the story was that the Duke and Duchess of Windsor were far more impressed with Nick the Greek than he was with them.

[Note: Moe Dalitz and Herb Rousso’s uncle Dave Wolf were friends and business associates in a laundry in Chicago.]

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In 1956, when a new Jewish synagogue was being constructed for Temple Beth Sholom, the builders ran into groundwater, causing them to spend far more money than they could afford trying to dig the footings. At the time, the Temple men’s club held an annual gin rummy tournament.

When men from the community went to Moe Dalitz for financial help to finish construction of the temple, he suggested that he would help them, and that they could move the gin rummy tournament to the Desert Inn. It turns out that proceeds from the Desert Inn gin rummy tournament paid the mortgage on the temple.

Art has another story about Moe that was told to him by Irwin Molasky. Outside of Las Vegas, the Home of the Good Shepherd was being built for wayward girls, to help them get back on the right path in life. And a number of hotels had come up with money early on to help the cause. Moe had given the largest check of all. The Dunes Hotel had pledged ten thousand dollars, but their money was slow in coming in.

Molasky told Moe about the holdup, and within a short time Moe called him back and said he’d made a stop on his travels, and that Irwin could go to the Dunes and pick up the money. It would be there. Things just happened very naturally back then, and not a lot of questions were asked.

One final anecdote about Dalitz occurred in the 1980s when Forbes Magazine listed him in its annual feature on the wealthiest people in America. When someone asked the low-profile casino owner what he thought about being in
the article, Dalitz surprised the person by jokingly responding, “Who said crime doesn’t pay?”

Shortly after that Art was having lunch with *Forbes’* owner Malcolm Forbes’ son Christopher at a private pre-Russian art sale at Sotheby’s and he shared Dalitz’s quip with him.

“My father will love that story,” Chris replied.

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Sometime around 1980, Art Marshall was appointed by Nevada Governor Bob List to the Public Employees Retirement System [PERS] Board. Art and List had become friends when List was the state’s attorney general, and they had worked together on a shoplifting bill in conjunction with the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce.

Arts says he didn’t have a good idea of what the PERS board did, and he certainly didn’t realize early on that it was a billion-dollar fund. But he found out after his first board meeting.

Schenley liquor magnet Meshulem Riklis, who in 1973 had purchased controlling interest in the Riviera Hotel for $56 million, had borrowed $25 million from the PERS Board’s fund. So the board held a first mortgage on the property. Then Riklis decided to build a convention center at the Riv, and he had arranged to borrow the $16 million for that from another source, until he was made aware that PERS had a first right of refusal and that he couldn’t do that without the PERS board’s permission.

Art had a Marshall Rousso store in the Riviera, and he of course disclosed that fact at his first PERS meeting.

Isadore Becker, Riklis’ partner and the Riviera Hotel president, appeared before the board, where it was explained to him that the rate of interest on the additional $16 million would not be the same 12 percent that was agreed on for the first $25 million. It would be 17 percent on this second loan. Not only that, but the board also decided to raise the rate on the first $25 million to 17 percent. Riklis and Becker desperately needed the money, and there was nowhere else they could get it, so the board had them in a hammerlock.
Art remembers being very quiet at his first PERS Board meeting. He was beyond surprised at the predicament the board was putting the Riviera owners in, and why they would put an affluent Strip owner in such a position.

A short time later, Art and Jayn were at the Pritikin Center in Santa Monica, partaking of a health regimen, when he got a call from Isadore Becker asking to come see him at Pritikin. When they met, Becker argued that the conditions of the loan set forth by the PERS Board were totally unfair, and he pleaded with Art as a board member to get the other members to be reasonable.

“Of course as a new member, and with just one vote, there was nothing I could do by myself,” Art says.

Riklis soon thereafter appeared in front of the board. He owed around $14 million in back payments, and he offered to clear it all up if the board would reduce the interest rate to somewhere around 10 or 11 percent. The board refused, at which point Art resigned from the board.

He remembers having a heated telephone exchange with Will Keating, who was running the PERS Board. Art argued that they should take Riklis’ offer because if they didn’t he was going to file bankruptcy. The end of the story was that Riklis did take bankruptcy, in 1984, and the federal court took his interest rate way below what he had offered the PERS Board. So Riklis came out ahead of the game, and the Public Employees Retirement fund suffered a large loss of interest as a result. While Art says the PERS Board members were honest and hard-working, Art clearly didn’t agree with their decision. Art called Governor Richard Bryan to advise him of the situation after it developed, and Bryan was appalled.

Art was just glad to be out of the middle of that mess.
Chapter Seven: Eugene Warner

Among the many friends that Art made through the years—men whose company he enjoyed and with whom he was able to network to both parties’ mutual advantage—was the previously mentioned Eugene Warner.

As was often the case, Cleveland roots were at the center of Art’s introduction to Warner. Eugene had a twin brother who was associated with a cousin of Art’s in a Cleveland men’s store. Warner was also a boyhood friend of Art’s friend Carl Cohen, the casino executive who had helped Art and Herb in getting their Sands Hotel store.

Perhaps most significantly, Eugene Warner was the man on the ground/aide de camp in Las Vegas for Adnan Khashoggi, the Saudi Arabian businessman who had been commissioned by the late Saudi King Saud to help organize the Ministry of Defense of Saudi Arabia. In that capacity he brought in Lockheed, Northrup, Raytheon, and General Electric among others for the task of protecting the Saudi oil fields. He was in the 1970s often referred to as “the wealthiest man in the world.”

Adnan Khashoggi was born in Mecca, the son of Muhammad Khashoggi, who was the personal physician to Saudi Arabia’s King Abdul Aziz Al Saud. Adnan attended college and graduate school in America, spending time at Chico State College, Ohio State, and Stanford, then used his international political connections to befriend power brokers in several countries. Within a decade of his schooling he had become the world’s foremost purveyor of arms to a variety of countries.

As Khashoggi’s wealth grew, so did his appetite for the finer things in life, including luxury cars, yachts, high-stakes gambling, beautiful women, and throwing lavish parties for politicians and celebrities. His yacht, Nabila, named for one of his daughters, was the largest in the world and was used in a James Bond film. One of his extravagant parties was called by gossip columnist Robin Leach, “the most important event in Europe in years.”

Dunes Hotel owner Morris Shenker in the late 70s built several luxury suites at the top of his hotel specifically for the purpose of having Khashoggi and his entourage, which often included a number of glamorous young women, stay on the property and gamble in his casino.
Khashoggi’s top man regarding international affairs was Bob Shaheen, now 79, who also became a good friend of Art’s and remains so to this day.

In a 2013 interview, Shaheen expounded on those halcyon days in Las Vegas, when every hotel and shop owner coveted the business of Adnan Khashoggi, and how important Art was to all of their activities when their entourage would descend on Las Vegas.

“Art was always there for us, never in the way and never out of the way,” Shaheen says. “He had a serving heart, wanting to please us. Little did we know of his power in Las Vegas. There was no one of high political status that he did not know. When the President of the United States would come to Vegas, Art was there. When visiting dignitaries would arrive, Art was there. He was everywhere, and he never forgot us. He always made sure we were in the receiving line.”

Shaheen says that he and Adnan Khashoggi were introduced to Art by Shaheen’s mentor Eugene Warner some 50 years ago at the Sands. At the time, Khashoggi would take over the entire back end of the hotel, occupying every major suite, as well as the building next to it to house his staff and entourage.

“Howard Hughes (who purchased the hotel in the late 60s) was very welcoming to us and the sky was the limit,” says Shaheen.

He adds that Art was accommodating to all of Khashoggi’s and his unusual requests when it came to purchases from the Sands’ Marshall Rousso store. “We had no time to shop,” Shaheen says, “and when we needed to purchase some outfits, Art would send them to the suite by the racks for us to choose from.”

He once recalls calling Art at three a.m. with the request that Khashoggi wanted to take his wife and friends to the newly opened Neiman Marcus store in the Fashion Show mall (the mall opened in 1982) to do some private shopping well before the store opened.

Art facilitated a call to a store official who could help, and that person arranged for the store to be opened and fully lit. It was also quickly arranged to offer sparkling champagne and chocolate-covered strawberries to the entire party. All purchases were delivered in style to Khashoggi’s suites the very next day.

Art believes that Carl Cohen had introduced Eugene Warner to Khashoggi at some point and entrusted his friend to make sure that all of Khashoggi’s needs were met when he visited Las Vegas. Cohen’s main interest, of course, was
keeping Khashoggi loyal to the Sands Hotel, seeing as the billionaire’s gambling performance could greatly enhance the hotel’s quarterly profits.

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Art met Eugene Warner quite by chance. Warner’s main business was real estate, and one day around 1960 he came into the Sara’s store and inquired about a piece of land Art and Herb had purchased on Tropicana Avenue, adjacent to McCarran Airport. He found a buyer for the land, a man known as Captain Frank, who was a Cleveland restaurateur. Art and Herb made a nice profit on the sale, and used the money to expand their business.

“That was the beginning of my relationship with Eugene, who was quite the character,” says Art. “He was sort of a wannabe, although he was quite successful in his own right. He was a knowledgeable guy, very wise in the ways of the world. He was well educated and well read, and he had a talent for getting close to wealthy and powerful people. I’m sure Carl Cohen had this in mind when he introduced Eugene to Khashoggi.”

Eugene Warner would not only arrange all the accommodations for Khashoggi and his party when he came to Las Vegas, he also handled a lot of financial transactions for him. Because those transactions were for millions or tens of millions of dollars, Warner became a VIP himself. One is reminded of the power Bob Maheu wielded as the man who acted on behalf of Howard Hughes.

Art vividly recalls one story that typified Eugene Warner. A Jewish Federation dinner was being held at the top of the Desert Inn Hotel in the late 1970s. The guest speaker was Idaho Senator Frank Church, who was the powerful Chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The Marshalls, Hank and Barbara Greenspun, and Frank and Bethine Church were in a penthouse suite at the DI, formally dressed in preparation for the dinner, when there was a knock on the door. It was Eugene Warner, with a photographer. He wanted a picture taken of himself with Senator Church.

“The next day I’m having lunch with Warner,” Art says, “and he says to me, ‘Those pictures are worth millions to me.’

“I asked him to explain, and he said, ‘Those photographs are on their way to Adnan. He will then show them to the King of Saudi Arabia, and he’ll say to him: ‘So you see my man Eugene, Sheik Jusef? Do you see who he’s with?’”
The clear message to the King would be that Khashoggi had top-flight connections with political powers in America through his friend Eugene Warner, and therefore was of great value to Saudi Arabia.

“Eugene never missed an opportunity to take advantage of an event that would be helpful to him or anything he cared about,” Art says.

There was another time Eugene Warner came to Art seeking his advice, and it proved beneficial to all parties. Sometime in the mid-1980s Warner had met with then-UNLV President Dr. Leonard Goodall about presenting some valuable etchings and lithographs from Saudi Arabia, plus a cash donation from Khashoggi, with the idea of creating a Mideast Library at the university. It was a substantial gift, but it didn’t materialize the way Warner had hoped and he was distressed about it.

When Warner expressed his displeasure to Art, and complained that the only thing UNLV cared about was the university’s basketball team, Art said, “Why don’t you give money to the Anti-Defamation League, which cares about World Jewry and Anti-Semitism and all the things that are really important?”

Warner’s first reaction was that he could bequeath the ADL fifty thousand dollars in his will. Then Art asked him why he’d have to wait until he died, and Warner thought for a minute and responded that there was no reason to wait.

The next time Art and Jayn were in New York, they met with Kenny Bialkin, a prominent lawyer who had defended Khashoggi in a much-publicized legal battle with Lockheed in Washington D.C. Bialkin was the lay leader of the ADL.

Bialkin suggested that if Eugene Warner would be willing to give $250,000 to the ADL, they could set up a lecture series at UNLV (this was in the President Jimmy Carter era, where interest rates were as high as 18 percent), call it the Warner Lecture Series, and bring in prominent Jewish leaders and scholars from Israel and never touch the corpus (principal).

Bialkin met with Warner weeks later, and the donation was made. A terrific series of lectures ensued, with speakers like Simon Wiesenthal, Ariel Sharon, New York Mayor Ed Koch, Edward Teller, Bebe Netanyahu and others.

In mentioning Netanyahu, the current prime minister of Israel, Art is reminded of other stories about him. Art first met Netanyahu years ago, when he
was an ambassador to the United Nations. Netanyahu came to Las Vegas to speak at Temple Beth Sholom, and as past president Art was on the reception committee.

“We got along well and arranged for him and his wife Fleur and Jayn and I to have dinner the next evening,” Art says. “We were going to the Golden Nugget, but they were staying at the Sands. We went to pick them up in Jayn’s Rolls Royce, but when we arrived we had a flat tire. Embarrassing situation, but the bellmen and his crew at the hotel got that tire changed in about 10 minutes. While at dinner, we saw Steve Wynn and introduced him to Bebe.”

Netanyahu came to Las Vegas several times in the ensuing years, and he became friends with the Marshalls. One time he was speaking at Irwin Molasky’s penthouse, and running for the Israel Knesset (parliament). As conversations started around the room at how most effectively to contribute to his campaign, Netanyahu spoke up and said, “Supporting me is not tax-deductible. If you want to help me, help me.”

“He was very direct on that point,” Art says. “That’s part of his leadership style.”

Abe Foxman, the National Director of the ADL, and a close friend of Art Marshall’s, helped set up many of the Warner Lecture Series interviews.

Foxman has a fascinating life history. He was a hidden child during the Nazi occupation of Poland in the late 1930s. His parents, who were Jewish, were ordered by the Germans to enter a ghetto. His nanny, Bronislawa Kurpi, had him baptized as a Roman Catholic, and later in life he became close friends with Pope John Paul II.

When his parents were freed from incarceration they waged a long and bitter custody battle to have Abe returned to their care, and in 1950 the family emigrated to America. Abe earned a bachelor of arts degree in political science from the City College of New York and graduated with honors in history. He also holds a law degree from the New York University School of Law and did graduate work in Jewish studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and in international economics at New School University. Foxman joined the Anti
Defamation League in 1965 in its international division and became its National Director in 1987. He has devoted his entire adult life to the cause of preventing discrimination against people on the basis of gender, religion, and ethnicity.

Abe Foxman’s friendship with Art began in the early 1980s when he spoke on behalf of the ADL at a luncheon in Las Vegas honoring Moe Dalitz. Joan Rivers was the mistress of ceremonies for that event.

“I think I was sent out here because I didn’t know much about Moe Dalitz,” Foxman says, with a laugh, in a 2013 interview. “A couple years later someone called to say they’d seen me in a television documentary on Las Vegas. It showed me at that luncheon. I guess the FBI or some other organization was filming that day.”

Foxman says his relationship with Art Marshall really took off when Art introduced him to Eugene Warner in the late 1980s. Warner was a friend with ADL supporter and prominent attorney Kenny Bialkin, and as previously mentioned helped Art encourage Warner to contribute to ADL when an earlier gift to UNLV didn’t turn out the way it was planned.

“Art called me one day and said, ‘Abe, I have a guy who wants to give the ADL money. Do you have a problem with accepting cash?’ Foxman says. ‘I said, ‘Well, no, on two conditions: one, I need to declare it, and two, it’s gotta be legal and clean.’”

Art assured him the money was clean and that Warner was not looking for a tax deduction.

Abe flew to Las Vegas with an empty attache case, and returned to New York with two hundred fifty thousand dollars in cash.

That meeting kicked off the Eugene Warner Lecture Series at UNLV, which as mentioned brought great speakers and much awareness to the work of the ADL.

“All in all, Eugene Warner left us with about six or six-and-a-half million dollars,” Foxman says. “And it’s all because of Art. He made it possible, and he became our face to so many people. When we had our speakers in Las Vegas, Art was the host and he was the unofficial welcoming party. Gene Warner was more of a recluse. He didn’t want to be up front. Art is the one who facilitated our being here, he gave us the status, he gave us the connections. And although Jayn was
behind the scenes, she was very important to everything we were doing. Jayn was the straightest, most direct, most honest person I have met through my years in ADL. She didn’t tolerate stupidity, and she didn’t tolerate disloyalty. And her influence impacted Art.”

Over time, the eccentric and demanding Eugene Warner proved too difficult even for UNLV to deal with.

Art remembers a time when he was in a meeting at UNLV with Eugene Warner and UNLV attorney Lyle Rivera, when UNLV President Bob Maxson came into the room. Maxson was exasperated. He told Warner that his patience was at an end with the amount of time that Warner was requiring and that Eugene could do one of two things: he could either have his money back from the library donation, or they could use the money to build a fountain near the Claes Oldenburg Flashlight sculpture on campus, and call it the Warner Fountain. But he couldn’t do both. After saying this, Maxson turned and left the room.

“At that point Warner turned to Lyle Rivera and myself and said, ‘You heard what he said,’” Art recalls. ‘He’s gonna let me build the fountain and give me back the money.’

“Lyle and I shook our heads and said, ‘No, Eugene, that’s not what he said.’”

Eventually some of the money remaining from Warner’s donation was used to build the Warner Administration Building on campus.

“Let me be clear about Eugene Warner,” Art says. “We liked each other, and we trusted each other. But he could just be impossible at times. At one point I had the key to his safety deposit box. I never opened it, but I was given the key in case something happened to him. And then one day he got mad at me and said, ‘You’re too busy to take care of me like that. I want my key back.’

“I was one of his executors, and he fired me. He got mad at me because Shelley Berkley brought in former Secretary of State George Schultz for an ADL dinner instead of having him speak at Eugene’s lecture series. I was honored at that same dinner with Schultz, but Eugene was miffed because he wanted him for the lecture series.

“Eugene Warner had very few friends,” Art says. “I was one if not the only one in Las Vegas. He was at the Sands Hotel health club every day. He took all his
phone calls there. We had lunch two or three times a week, usually at the Sands. He was a very private man, intelligent, well read, worldly, well traveled, and he had a great understanding of the Middle East. For years he would continually say, ‘Iran, Iran, watch out for Iran because they are the danger.’ As close as he was to Khashoggi, his support of ADL and Israel was relentless. As I got more involved in other interests, I had less time for him.

“I introduced him to Norman Kaufman, who had been Director of the Jewish Federation, and Norman became his lunch partner and looked out for him as he aged,” Art says. “Eugene lived to 90. Bob Shaheen came to stay in Las Vegas for a long time when he was in the hospital. Eugene had collapsed at his home but somehow managed to call his doctor, who sent paramedics. They had to break down his door. For some reason I had been trying to call him at home that Saturday and Sunday with no answer. I had great concern and finally reached Norman, who had been away. Eugene was in the hospital for a long time. I visited him often and convinced him he could get better. We would reminisce and laugh. As I was leaving he said, ‘I love you Arthur, my friend.’ I was shocked when he said that. Norman got him the best of care, but he eventually slipped away. Another chapter in life was closed.”

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Chapter Eight: Other Friends

Another prominent Jewish businessman that Art came to meet was the Canadian-American businessman Edgar Bronfman Sr., owner of the Seagram liquor company.

Bronfman was in Las Vegas to speak on behalf of the Jewish Youth organization Hillel. Art and Jayn sat with him at lunch and found they had much in common. Not only were Art and Samuel born just two months apart in 1929, but they shared Russian heritage.

Edgar Bronfman’s grandfather, like Art’s father, had come from Russia and settled in Saskatchewan Canada. All he brought with him was a sack of tobacco seed, which he thought he could use to start a small tobacco farm. Bronfman laughed and told the Marshalls that Saskatchewan was probably the worst place in the Western Hemisphere to grow tobacco, but had his grandfather not had the courage to leave Russia and try to improve his stock in life, he felt his entire family would have ended up in a grave in Babi Yar, and that the Germans would certainly have killed them.

In his talk that day in Las Vegas, Bronfman spoke about a revelation he had one day while eating a ham sandwich on Yom Kippur.

“First of all,” Art explains, “Jews don’t eat on Yom Kippur. You fast, and eating a ham sandwich is double bad.”

Bronfman said at that moment that he felt ashamed that he hadn’t really participated in his heritage, and he decided to do something about it. So he got involved with Hillel, and he eventually became President of the World Jewish Congress.

Art and Jayn were both extremely impressed with Bronfman and his recommitment to his faith and heritage, so much so that Art gave his new friend one of the ten gold ruble pieces that he usually gave only to close relatives, and they corresponded after that.

“Edgar invited Jayn and me to visit him in New York, but we were just never able to coordinate schedules,” Art says. “But I found that meeting and his story very inspirational.”
Art recalls the special privilege of making two visits to the London estate of Eugene Mollo, an author and collector who was considered a world expert on militaria, particularly Russian military history.

“His home was like a museum,” Art says. “On that first visit I was able to buy from him a terrific Faberge 8-piece tea set. And that wasn’t easy to do, because Eugene didn’t like selling things.”

On a later trip to London, Art wanted Jayn to see Mollo’s collection, so he called the historian and reminded him that he had invited Art to come back any time. He prompted his host’s memory by reminding him that he’d purchased the tea set on an earlier visit.

“I don’t remember anything about it,” Mollo said, “but be here at 4 o’clock.”

(Note: Eugene’s son John Mollo was the Oscar-winning costume designer for the Star Wars movie series.)

Another prominent Russian-origin Jewish businessman Art came to know was Morris Shenker, who in the 1970s and 80s was an owner operator of the Dunes Hotel.

Shenker was nationally known for his legal defense of Teamsters Union boss Jimmy Hoffa and other crime figures. Morris was once described by Life magazine as the “foremost lawyer for the mob in the United States.” Despite this, he served for a time as the head of the St. Louis Commission on Crime and Law Enforcement.

Because of his ties to the Teamsters and other alleged mob connections, Shenker was investigated by the Nevada Gaming Commission and other official bodies, but he was never indicted until 1989, when a Federal grand jury accused him of conspiring to conceal hundreds of thousands of dollars from the Internal Revenue Service and from creditors from 1967 to 1973, while he was involved in bankruptcy proceedings. He denied the charges but because of failing health was unable to stand trial. He died on April 8, 1989.
Working with Todd, who was still in his twenties, Art was able to negotiate a lease for a Marshall Rousso store in the Dunes, although he considered the location second- or third-rate.

“Todd made some really astute observations as we arranged that deal,” says Art. “Although we were only mildly interested in the Dunes location, Todd pointed out that the other fellow interested in moving into the Dunes already had one store on the Strip, and if he acquired a second he would become a formidable competitor. So we pursued the lease and we got it.”

Later on a woman opened a lingerie store in the Dunes, and although Marshall Rousso had an exclusive right to sell women’s apparel, she soon started carrying apparel competitive to Marshall Rousso.

When Todd and Art went to Shenker to enforce the lease, he told them, “You have to learn to get along with your neighbors.” He refused to intercede.

Later on, one of Marshall Rousso’s clerks nearly had a heart attack when one day a large cat fell through one of the ceiling tiles above the store. Apparently, several stray cats had made their home in the level above the stores and had been feeding on mice and rats.

“It was scary,” Art recalls, with a slight laugh. “This was a very big cat. Can you imagine?”

Art recalls that Shenker had a go-to guy who worked for him named Jerry. One day Jerry came in to Shenker’s office and told him that they had caught one of the Dunes bartenders stealing money.

“Morris called the bartender into his office and told him that stealing was not acceptable,” Art says. “And Jerry was in there with them and said, ‘You’re going to fire him, right?’

And Shenker said, ‘Look, he’s already stolen enough money to buy a car, a boat, and a trailer, and if we fire him we’ll have to get a new bartender who needs a car, a boat, and a trailer. So we’ll just keep the thief we’ve already got.’”

Despite his eccentricity and odd business practices, Morris Shenker was, according to Art, “generally a good guy, who was very involved in the community. And he was actively involved in the Jewish Federation. He was an intelligent and interesting man,” he says.
“I remember one time hearing Morris speak to a group of lawyers, and he said, ‘Remember one thing: it is extremely important to keep your client out of jail. But even more important, if someone has to go to jail, make sure it’s the client and never the lawyer.’

“So that showed he had a sense of humor,” Art says.

Art recalls a time when he and Jayn were at the Dunes and riding a small elevator up to a third-floor ballroom for a fundraiser. The elevator was crowded and the man standing in front of them had wide shoulders and long hair. When the elevator stopped at the second floor to let people in, the door got stuck. As the large man grabbed the center of the doors and pulled them open with his hands, he said, “Tarzan fix!” When the people got in, Art saw that it was the great Olympic swimmer and actor Johnny Weismuller, who was the original Tarzan in Hollywood. After that moment, Art got to know the actor and they occasionally had coffee together.

One other Dunes story Art fondly recalls was when casino manager George Duckworth was approached by Cary Grant, who asked him to come into the showroom when the show was over to meet his guest, Earl Montbatten, the Viceroy of India. There was a part of the show in which sparklers lit up the backsides of the showgirls, and Montbatten asked Duckworth if he could have the girls repeat that part of the show backstage so he could take photographs.

George said, “What are you going to do with them?”

Montbatten laughed and said, “I’m going to show them to the Queen, and she’ll love them.”
Chapter Nine: Chic Hecht

Although Art Marshall was a registered Democrat, he is not hesitant to cross party lines, particularly when it comes to finding support for Israel and other Jewish causes. Two prime examples of this are his friendships with late U.S. Senator Chic Hecht, and casino mogul Sheldon Adelson, both stalwart Republicans.

We’ll start with the senator. Art’s relationship with Hecht began when they were friendly competitors in the clothing business. Hecht operated a downtown store under his family name at the same time that Art and Herb were still operating the Sara’s stores.

Being the same age, of the same faith, of the same Russian origin, and in the same profession, it was only natural that these two ambitious men would form a friendship.

“Before the relationship really developed, at a time we needed money to build our store in the Sahara Hotel, Chic helped arrange a loan at Nevada State Bank for us to build the store, and we got closer after that,” Art says.

It was in 1966, two years after the Sahara store opened, that Hecht came to Art seeking his advice on whether he should run for the Nevada State Assembly or the State Senate. Chic had never run for political office before, and he knew he would need widespread support from the Jewish community to have any chance of being elected. Art agreed to help, but when he went to other Jewish leaders in Las Vegas they were lukewarm about Hecht’s chances of being elected. While Hecht was viewed as a nice man, he was mild mannered, not in the least charismatic, was not a good public speaker, and the general sense was that he didn’t have enough fire in his belly to fight political battles.

Despite this, Art advised Chic to run for the state senate, as it was a more powerful position than the assembly, and his feeling was that the general voting public didn’t really appreciate the difference between the two offices, so why not run for the senate, which clearly had more authority.

“In short, we got Chic elected to the state senate,” Art says. “And afterwards he got me more involved with the bank.”

Always cast in the underdog role because of his short stature and his low-key personality, Hecht was in fact a bright and strong-willed person, and it was a
mistake to sell him short. He had served as an intelligence agent with the U.S. armed forces during the Korean War, and in the late 1980s was inducted into the Military Intelligence Hall of Fame. He had a quiet intelligence and resolve that was easy to overlook at first glance.

Once elected, Hecht became the first Republican to represent his predominantly Democratic district in and around Las Vegas in more than 25 years. He even served as the Nevada Senate minority leader during that time. He then stepped away from politics in 1975, after serving two four-year terms.

The Marshall-Hecht friendship served both parties extremely well over the coming years. A great example of this occurred in 1981, at a time when Nevada Senator Paul Laxalt was a force in Washington D.C., in part because he was best friends with recently elected President Ronald Reagan. By this time Chic Hecht had been out of elected office for six years, but he was close to his Republican friend Laxalt, and Chic was in fact posturing for making a run for the U.S. Senate.

In one of the biggest political upsets in Nevada history, Hecht would upset veteran four-term Nevada Senator Howard Cannon in 1982, and by virtue of Art’s loyalty to his friend through the years, his own access to the halls of power was expanded.

Art Marshall had always had a dream of attending a White House state dinner. “Why that was a dream of mine, I can’t really say,” Art says. “I just always thought that would be the height of excitement.”

Art called on Chic Hecht to see if he could help fulfill his dream. A state dinner was scheduled to be held in Washington in September, for Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Of course, Begin and Anwar Sadat had been given the Nobel Peace Prize in 1978 for brokering the Palestine-Israel Peace Treaty, and although he had led the terrorist group known as Irgun in the late 1940s, Begin was a revered figure internationally in the Jewish community. If ever there were a time that Art and Jayn could have the chance to attend a White House state dinner, this would be it.

Hecht put in a request to Paul Laxalt for four tickets to the dinner, for his brother Marty Hecht and his wife, and for Art and Jayn Marshall.

There were two separate events scheduled for the evening of September 9, 1981. There was the ultra-exclusive state dinner, at which both President Reagan and Menacham Begin would speak. That was restricted, per Nancy Reagan’s
instructions, to 96 guests, seated at 12 tables of eight. And there was a social event afterwards, with entertainment and dancing, that would allow in another one hundred or so guests. Art and Jayn were hoping to be included in the later event, knowing that demand for the dinner tickets would be extraordinary and probably out of their reach.

"Those dinner invitations were rarer than hounds' teeth," Art says. "Of the 96 seats available, most of them were taken up by public officials from either the U.S. or Israel, so there were very few spots left for lay people like us. But somehow, most likely through Paul Laxalt's influence with Reagan, Chic's brother and sister-in-law and the Marshalls were invited."

Art describes the evening as one of the most memorable of his life. He recalls Menachem Begin giving a wonderful speech, in excellent English, and speaking extemporaneously throughout, except for when he recited the words of Emma Lazarus that are printed on the Statue of Liberty. "...Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...."

To the Marshalls' surprise, the great natural speaker President Reagan used cue cards that night. (It had been just six months prior to that evening that an assassin's bullet had nearly claimed his life.)

As the Marshalls were led through a reception line to meet the President and First Lady and Begin, a young woman Marine officer whose job it was to mention the names of the guests to the people in the reception line, the first person they met was Lenore Annenberg, who was Nancy's friend and the chief of protocol.

Art mentioned to Lenore that he had bought their New York apartment from Jamie Kabler, who was her son-in-law. Lenore said, "Oh, I can't wait to call and tell him I've met you."

"I had met Begin half a dozen times before, with Hank Greenspun," Art says. "I even had pictures taken with him before. So when we got to his place in line, he recognized me, but he couldn't place where he'd met me. Begin had an organization called Friends of TelHi. Those were the widows and orphans of the Irgun, his terrorist organization during the British occupations.

"He took care of the widows and orphans because the Labor government, when they got in, did not provide for their care. So he had this organization that went around the world, and Herb Rousso and I were Friends of TelHi. When I
mentioned that to Begin, the light went on and he started pumping my hand with both his hands as a sign of his gratitude. And the White House photographer captured that very moment. You can see in the picture that everybody’s looking to see what the hell is going on. *(photo in picture section)*

“A friend of mine who worked at the White House was able to get President Reagan to sign the picture, and they then sent it on to Israel and had Begin sign it,” Arts says. “That picture is one of my most treasured possessions.”

Seated at Art’s table the night of the dinner was Donald Regan, the White House chief of staff, and Lenore’s husband Walter Annenberg, the billionaire founder of *TV Guide* and other media outlets. Walter said, “I’m glad to meet anyone who can support my son-in-law, and if I come to Las Vegas we can play the slots together.”

The protocol is to split up the husbands and wives at state dinners, so Jayn was seated at an adjoining table directly between then-Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon and U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger.

These “two kids from Cleveland,” as Art likes to refer to Jayn and himself, had clearly come a long way.

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Art has several memories of Menachem Begin other than that special evening in 1981. He remembers being in Washington in 1976 with Jayn and his friend Jack Sarver, discussing AIPAC. A prominent D.C. attorney named Jay Berman, who ran a large Political Action Committee office, was also there. In walked Mori Amitay, who was the head of AIPAC, who requested that Art and Jayn accompany him for a meeting with Senator Laxalt. The purpose of the meeting was to lobby Laxalt to help raise millions of dollars for the upcoming Camp David Peace Accords between Begin and Anwar Sadat. Amitay knew that the Marshalls were friends with Laxalt, so he was basically bringing them along for leverage. Laxalt was naturally delighted to see the Marshalls, and he said he would help with Reagan, but he also asked for a favor.

“I’ll help,” Laxalt said. “But get Begin out of town because he makes waves wherever he goes.”

Art fully understood Laxalt’s point. He remembers a time on the Las Vegas Strip when Menachem Begin was on the dais of a big dinner event, and he indeed
made waves. Senator Abraham Ribicoff was speaking at an Israel Bonds dinner, and he said something that upset Begin. The Israeli prime minister became instantly upset and started pounding his fist on the table shouting something to the effect that Jews would never again be dragged out of their houses in the middle of the night. He then walked out of the dinner. It took Hank Greenspun to chase Begin down and bring him back to the dais. At a later time when Begin was still prime minister, Art was with Hank when Begin said, “Stop yelling at me.”

Hank said, “If you’d listen I wouldn’t have to yell.”

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Another highlight of that Washington trip for the Marshalls was a chance to tour Hillwood, the estate of the late Marjorie Merriweather Post.

Socialite and philanthropist Post was the heiress to the Postum Cereal Company, which later grew into General Brands. She was acknowledged in the 1920s as the wealthiest woman in America. Among her four husbands were financier E.F. Hutton, with whom they had a daughter (the actress Dina Merrill), and Joseph E. Davies, a Washington attorney who became the second American ambassador to the Soviet Union, under Josef Stalin.

During the couple’s time in the Soviet Union, Marjorie Post and Joseph Davies acquired many valuable Russian works of art from Soviet authorities.

As avid collectors of Russian paintings and sculpture, Art and Jayn were hopeful of being able to tour Hillwood during their D.C. weekend, but when they called to try and get an invitation, they were told that it would not be possible, that reservations for tours were required months in advance. Wisely, Art told the receptionist that they were in Washington to attend a White House state dinner, and suddenly two tickets were instantly made available to them.

It was during that same weekend that Marty Hecht told Art that his brother Chic was planning a run for the U.S. Senate.

“I remember literally choking on the ice cubes in my drink when he told me that,” Art says. “I didn’t envision Chic as a potential U.S. Senator. Nobody did.”

The incumbent senator that Hecht would run against in the 1982 election was Howard Cannon, a powerful four-term senator who was an institution in Nevada politics. In a bruising Democratic primary against Congressman Jim
Santini, Cannon was wounded by charges of political corruption and links to unsavory characters in government, but he emerged with the nomination.

The perennial underdog Hecht, not given much of a chance by media and state pollsters, campaigned quietly in the background, effectively soliciting campaign support from his many Jewish friends and Republican party faithful. Although polls one week before final voting showed Hecht trailing by a significant margin, on election day, November 5, 1982, he shocked everyone by emerging victorious by 5600 votes.

As Hecht embarked on his term in the U.S. Senate he became quite involved with Orthodox Jewish religious groups, which philosophically are outside the general Jewish American public. And through that involvement, he became involved in a complex political movement to get the Refuseniks out of Russia.

Refusenik was an unofficial term for individuals, typically Soviet Jews, who were denied permission to emigrate abroad by the authorities of the former Soviet Union and other countries of the Eastern bloc.

This became a huge issue during the 1980s when Mikhael Gorbachev was urging the furtherance of the perestroika movement, which was the restructuring of political and economic policies in the Soviet Union. Russian Ambassador to the U.S. Antonin Dobrynin was leading this movement, and he had engaged the help of Los Angeles entrepreneur Guilford Glazer, who was a close personal friend of Armand Hammer, who had extremely close ties to the Soviet Union. Dobrynin asked Glazer to see what he could do through his contacts to have President Reagan give a list of names of Refuseniks to Gorbachev at the upcoming Reykjavik, Iceland Summit meeting between the two heads of state.

Through quiet meetings between Dobrynin and Glaser, and an eventual meeting between Chic Hecht and Reagan, the President was given this list, which he then passed along to Gorbachev.

It is important to understand that in 1974, the Jackson-Vanik Amendment became a provision in U.S. Federal law, and was intended to affect U.S. trade relations with countries with non-market economies (originally countries of the Communist bloc) that restrict freedom of emigration and other human rights. The amendment is named after its major co-sponsors, Art’s long-time friend Henry “Scoop” Jackson of Washington in the Senate, and Charles Vanik of Ohio in the House of Representatives.
The effect of the amendment is that it denies favored nation status to certain countries with non-market economies that restrict emigration, which is considered a human right. Permanent normal trade relations can be extended to a country subject to the law only if the President determines that it complies with the freedom of emigration requirements of the amendment.

It was critical to Mikhael Gorbachev that to improve relations with the U.S., at a time the Russian economy was in distress, he needed to make certain concessions.

At the eventual Iceland Summit, which took place in October, 1986, although the main discussion of nuclear disarmament and testing of ballistic missiles between the two countries was stalled, Gorbachev agreed to quietly release these immigrants as long as the information was not filtered to the media, and he wouldn’t have to take flak from others in the politburo.

Chic Hecht had reportedly told President Reagan that if his own mother had not been allowed to emigrate from Russia to the United States, he wouldn’t be in the Oval Office having this important meeting. It was another instance where Hecht was able to do the right thing for his people, without any fanfare or receiving any credit for his actions.

Seeing as big favors are never forgotten on Capitol Hill, Chic Hecht knew he was indebted to the President for passing the list on to Gorbachev. It wasn’t long before Hecht was called to Reagan’s office and asked to support a big arms sale to Saudi Arabia.

“The Israelis were not concerned about the arms sale,” Art says, “because all the arms that were being sold were pretty much agreed to by the Israeli government. But unfortunately on a partisan level, the Democrats made a big fuss over the issue and tried to block it in the Senate.”

Nevertheless, Reagan implored Hecht to help him get the votes to approve the sale. And Chic felt obligated to do that.

When Hecht returned to Las Vegas, he had lunch with Art and told him what he was doing for Reagan. Art told his senator friend, “If you do this, you won’t get re-elected because even though this has been approved by the Israeli government, it won’t play well with the Jewish community and you will lose Jewish fundraising and support.”
Hecht’s reply to Art was, “Even if I do lose the election, I know I’ve done the right thing for our people.”

“And that is another example of Chic’s courage,” Art says, “because he did lose the next election to Richard Bryan, and his stance on this issue was part of the reason.”

In 1990, Chic Hecht was nominated by President George H.W. Bush to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Bahamas. While this type of appointment is usually confirmed with a rubber stamp, once again Hecht found himself facing tough odds.

“There was quite a scuffle in the Senate trying to stop Chic from getting the post,” Art says. “Senator Bob Graham of Florida got up and spoke against him. They had had a falling out. So I called Chic and asked how I could help. He said he didn’t want me to bother, but I was determined to help anyway. I called my friend Howard Metzenbaum and several other U.S. senators I knew and I asked them to support Chic, and they did. And then I called Harry Reid.

“I told Harry that the word in the cloak room is that he and Richard Bryan (who had defeated Hecht), and Bob Graham were trying to stop Chic’s nomination, and if they did they’d put an end to his political career,” Art says. “I told Harry it made them look like poor winners. And with that, Harry said to me, ‘I’ll take care of it.’ The next day, Chic was confirmed. Which reaffirmed my faith that Harry Reid would do the right thing.”

Hecht had a bumpy start to his ambassador’s post when he was asked by a reporter how much he knew about the Bahamas. His answers included discussion on several issues, but he also said, “I know the Bahamas has a lot of good golf courses, and I love to play golf.”

Naturally, the press picked up on his whimsical comment and made it sound like the only reason Hecht vied for the position was so he could enjoy an extended golf vacation. But he would show over the next four years that he was every bit as committed to that job as he was to his term in the U.S. Senate. One of the biggest challenges the Administration faced with the Bahamas was its allowance of illegal drugs to flow freely through its ports into the U.S.

Bahama’s Prime Minister Lynden Pindling, who ruled his island nation with dictatorial powers, was known to accept large payoffs from drug smugglers.
like Jamiel “Jimmy” Chagra, who was thought to have ordered the assassination of Federal Judge John H. Wood in 1979, and who spent 23 years in federal prisons on various drug and racketeering charges.

Also, Carlos Lehder, co-founder of Columbia’s Medillin drug cartel, was known to brag about having Pindling on his payroll as ships from South America loaded with cocaine made free passage through the Bahamas to U.S. ports.

Working behind the scenes, Chic Hecht helped the Free National Movement in the Bahamas reduce Pindling’s authority in the 1992 elections, and by 1994 drug traffic through the Bahamas was greatly reduced.

Art mentions one particular episode that shows Chic Hecht’s good heart. In April of 1990, just four months into his post, Hecht received a phone call from an executive director of a small synagogue in Miami. Three Jewish American girls, while on vacation in the Bahamas, had been arrested for possession of drugs. They had been held for several weeks in jail without charges being filed.

As Hecht sprung into action, one of his assistants told him that Americans were in prisons all over the world for similar offenses, and that it wasn’t an ambassador’s job to intervene.

“Well, that’s not how we’re going to do it in this office,” Hecht replied. He then drove to the jail and was able to get two of the girls out that very day. He took them immediately to the airport for a flight back to Miami. The third girl, facing more serious charges, was released sometime later.

Here is the opening of a letter received by Ambassador Chic Hecht some two weeks later, from the father of one of the girls he rescued:

Dear Ambassador Hecht,

It is not easy to think of the appropriate words with which to thank someone who has given back to you the most precious thing in the world—your child. I can only say thank you from the bottom of my heart and soul. You have performed a true mitzvah beyond any that most of us are able, or willing, to perform. As a result of that there are two young women, their families, their friends, and their relations who will always be grateful to you all their lives, and will pray for you and yours. I know that you have suffered some slings and arrows in public life. I only wish that all of the people who have judged you wrongly could know what a fine heart and soul you have.
Art has a copy of the letter in his possession and feels it strengthens his long-held belief that Hecht was greatly underestimated by his critics, and that he was a decent and devoted public servant.

“Chic was very politically astute, and he had balls,” Art says. “Those two stories illustrate that.”

While he mentions Senator Harry Reid, Art is reminded of another fact behind the man who has been called the most powerful politician in the history of Nevada.

“A lot of people only know Harry Reid as being Mormon,” Art says. “But it was through my involvement buying Israel Bonds that I first got to know Harry many years ago. I was introduced to the Israel Bonds organization through Hank Greenspun, and Herb Rousso and I participated in buying Israel Bonds every year at the annual dinner. Here was Harry, this young Mormon attorney, buying these bonds that he could ill afford. Few people know that his wife Landra was born Jewish, and converted to Mormonism later, as did he.

“Harry told me once a long time ago that his children would have qualified for the concentration camps,” Art says. “Under the Nazis, if you were born to a Jewish mother, you were considered Jewish. That was not the case if your father was Jewish. In any event, Harry Reid has always been good to our people, and he’s been an especially loyal friend to me through all the years. When our granddaughter Dana was struggling with health issues, Harry called and got me in touch with Landra’s doctor, who was a specialist in the treatment of irritable bowel disease. And years later, after Jayn had been diagnosed with cancer, Harry would call often to check on her.

Art adds that in late August of 2013, Sen. Reid called to tell Art he had seen the CNN program “Weeds,” by Dr. Sanjay Gupta. The Senator said that the program told of the benefits of certain types of marijuana for Chron’s patients and wanted to make sure the Marshalls were aware of it for Dana’s sake. Art was able to tape a replay of the program so that they could follow up.

“Harry is always there for his constituents and friends,” Art says. “As busy as he is, he always makes time for them. You just can’t have a better or more loyal friend than Harry Reid.”
Former Nevada Governor Bob Miller (1989-1999) has another story about Chic Hecht, which says more about Art Marshall:

“I recall once telling Art that it was his good friend Chic Hecht who had effectively blocked me from becoming Ambassador to Mexico (after Miller had left the governor’s office). I told Art that Hecht had acted for personal reasons because he felt I had cost him his Senate reelection. Art was shocked, saying that seemed out of character for his friend. However, characteristic of Art, he was calm and deliberate, not arguing or disagreeing, just obtaining information without drawing a conclusion before further research. Which is one of the reasons I had selected him to be on the Nevada Gaming Commission in 1997. Who wouldn’t want someone like that making decisions regarding our primary industry? Nevada has been fortunate that Art chose to live here.”
Chapter Ten: The ‘Art’ of Networking

Art’s friend Burton Cohen says he knows no one that networks any better than Art Marshall. He adds there’s also no one who is better at introducing himself to people and making friends with them quickly.

Cohen, who loves to needle Art and even at 90 years old keeps that needle plenty sharp, says during a 2013 interview that the only thing he knows about Art Marshall is what he read on a flyer he saw on a post office wall. “By the way,” he says, “There’s a great picture of Art on that poster. You should use it on the cover of this book.”

Burton Cohen says that he’s never met a politician any better than Art in meeting people and instantly winning over their trust. It’s a combination of great people skills, sincerity, and warmth. It was this ability that made Art so effective in expanding the Marshall Rousso clothing business.

Long-time Las Vegas businessman, developer, attorney, and supporter of UNLV and all things that benefit his community Michael Saltman says of Art, “He knows more about more people in Las Vegas than anyone I’ve ever known. The simple mention of someone’s name will bring out one story after another about that person, and always with a positive bent. Beneath all that knowledge is a very kind person.”

Art’s former son-in-law, attorney Ed Bernstein, who is the father to Dana, says that in many European or Middle East trips they took together, Art would inevitably run into someone he knew either from Cleveland or Las Vegas.

“We were in Cairo about 25 years ago,” Bernstein says, “and it was more of a Third World country then than it is today. We were having trouble finding good food and other things, when coming down the street towards us, between a camel and a food cart, was a casino executive that Art knew who worked at the Las Vegas Hilton. He gave us some valuable tips on places to eat.

“The point is that this happened wherever we went with Art,” he says. “Whether it was in New York or Paris or London, you couldn’t go anywhere with Art that he didn’t bump into someone he knew. He’s the best networker I’ve ever known.”

As his partner Herb Rousso says, “Art was just the best at the outside part of the business, meeting new people and making things happen.”
Bernstein fondly recalls the time in the early 1980s when he and Art’s friend Syd Irmas were representing Art and Herb in a lawsuit against their insurance company. When the Marshall Rousso store was destroyed in the MGM Grand fire in 1980, they discovered their insurance policy was insufficient to cover their material and inventory losses and the eventual loss of business resulting from the hotel’s closure.

Bernstein gave an emotional closing argument to the jury about how Art and Herb had come to Las Vegas some 25 years before and taken a small women’s clothing shop that catered to an older clientele and worked diligently to build it into the most successful and modern retail clothing store in Las Vegas. He portrayed the brothers-in-law as representing the American Dream, of working hard and fairly to achieve success, and how they had every right to expect others working with and for them to do the same. He explained that it was the insurance company’s obligation to provide their business with the adequate amount of insurance to cover them in the event of such a calamity, and that the company had not done so.

The jury ruled in favor of Marshall Rousso, and Art and Herb were awarded everything they asked for.

“I remember everyone on the jury wanting to meet Art and shake his hand after the trial,” Ed says. That case is a fond memory for me because when I was talking about Art I believe the jury could tell how I felt about him, and how much admiration I had for what he and Herb had accomplished.”

... 

It is without question that Art’s true devotion to Jewish causes was a major factor in his ability to network, going back to his early working years in Cleveland and extending to Las Vegas, which had a growing community of influential Jewish businessmen and casino executives in the 1960s and 70s. Art was, as reported, extremely involved with Temple Beth Shalom, where he served on the board and as president, and the Jewish Federation. He was also an important contributor to the Anti-Defamation League, and worked political back channels on a national level on causes that would benefit the state of Israel. Through these causes, he befriended dozens of Las Vegas power brokers who respected Art for his devotion to his faith and his business acumen.

A case in point was his friendship with Billy Weinberger, who would become the president of Caesars Palace.
One day in 1966, Art received a phone call from Jayn’s uncle Maurice Saltzman, his former boss at Bobbie Brooks, telling him that a good friend of his had just moved to Las Vegas from Cleveland to become the food and beverage manager at the newly opened Caesars Palace. Saltzman told Art he should befriend Billy Weinberger and get him involved in social and civic events in the community.

Weinberger had owned Kornman’s, an important restaurant in Cleveland, which had sold out to Stouffer’s, a public company. As he was close to several Cleveland businessmen who had an ownership stake in Caesars Palace, Weinberger was deemed an ideal choice for the Caesars position. Caesars had opened with great fanfare that year, as the brainchild of visionary Jay Sarno, and the resort was soon considered one of the three most popular and successful properties in town, along with the MGM Grand and the Las Vegas Hilton.

Art called Weinberger, introduced himself, shared the names of many Cleveland people they knew in common, and invited him to join the Temple.

Weinberger told him that his wife Jean was signing up at the Temple at that very moment.

“Within a short time we became very good friends,” Art says, “and as the Temple president I had the authority to appoint him to the board of directors of the Temple, which I did.

Weinberger was promoted to the presidency of Caesars Palace just two years after arriving in Las Vegas, and by the mid-1970s a dress shop in the hotel that was underperforming became available. Art approached his friend about putting a Marshall Rousso store in the space, and they quickly reached an agreement.

Within the first year, Marshall Rousso tripled the volume of business that the dress shop had done, and the executives at Caesars were delighted with the relationship.

“There’s no question that the fact Billy and I were good friends was helpful in our getting the store,” Art says, “but if we hadn’t had a track record of performance in the other hotels, it never would have happened.”
As always, Art knew that strong connections could lead to good business opportunities, but an ongoing positive relationship was totally dependent on his company’s performing beyond expectations.

The Caesars story was a classic example of how networking and business integrity went hand in hand. Clearly, without one or the other, a business would be limited in its capacity to grow.

Art remembers the owner of a menswear store in downtown Las Vegas consulting with him one day, and explaining that he’d had little success in acquiring any space in hotels.

“This friend, who I won’t name, was asking my advice on how we’d done so well in getting our stores into Strip hotels, and I was very honest with him,” Art says. “This man was a member of the Temple, and he was always delinquent in paying his dues. And there were many hotel executives on the board, or who had previously been on the board, and they would pay attention to that because there were always fundraising issues at the Temple. Money was always a problem. And when I explained to my friend that his delinquency might be the cause of their hesitation in business, he looked at me and said, ‘I understand what you’re saying.’”

Art also recalls visiting New York with Herb on a buying trip and meeting the father of a childhood friend from Cleveland. This man had become a successful realtor in the Big Apple, but he told Art it was very slow going for him early on, so he got reconnected with philanthropies in New York, including his Temple and the Jewish Federation. Before he knew it those contacts got this man appointed to different boards, and he found himself sitting beside influential New Yorkers he was trying to do business with. Suddenly, he was being asked to partner in various deals with these men, and his career just accelerated from that point on. Then this man said to Art something he’d heard many times from his uncle David Moskowitz: “Whatever you give, God will return ten times.”

“And that is one of the most important and true lessons I’ve ever learned,” Art says.

When Art’s father Leo was ailing and near the end of his life, Art was involved as president of the Jewish Federation in Las Vegas, which was devoting time and energy to helping save the Russian Jewry. His father asked him why he was devoting so much of his time to this. Art’s response was, “I’m just doing the same thing you did. When you came to the United States as a young man, you
worked hard for years to save money to bring your family over from Russia…your parents and brothers and sisters. I’m just doing the same thing you did: I’m bringing Jews out of Russia.”

…

Art enjoys telling stories about his father Leo’s siblings, who one way or another found their way out of Russia and came to America. Regarding his uncle Julius, the one who escaped the Russian army by going over the stockade wall, Art tells of how the family had scraped together enough money to get him boat passage to America. The destination was New York City. Upon arrival, Julius didn’t know anyone, and didn’t have a clue what to do next, when a man emerged from a crowd, walked over to him and said, “Judel (pronounced Yudel), what are you doing here?”

On a one in a ten million chance, this young man had gone to Hebrew school with Julius in Dvinsk.

Julius told him he didn’t know what he was going to do next, that he had just arrived that day. The man invited him back to his apartment, where he was allowed to sleep on a couch for two weeks until he could arrange to go to Cleveland, where he had some acquaintances.

As Art points out, had all these unlikely events not occurred the way they did, his life would have turned out far differently.

Then there’s a story about Art’s father’s younger brother, Sol, who Leo paid with his meager early earnings to get to America.

“My uncle Sol, when he left Russia had a sweetheart, and she was a girl with no family,” Art says. “She was an orphan girl who was living with neighbors. My uncle Sol knew a man who was going back to Russia, and he gave him a watch to give to this girl. The implied agreement was that if she accepted the watch it would mean they were engaged to be married, and he would figure a way to bring her to America.”

The girl accepted the watch and indicated she was excited to emigrate. So Sol’s next challenge was to figure out how to get her out of Russia. He knew that the girl had an uncle living in Canada, so he ran an ad in the Jewish Forward newspaper in New York. The paper was printed in Yiddish, and was
widely read in the Jewish community, much like *USA Today* or the *Wall Street Journal* would be years later in America.

The ad was seen by someone who knew the girl’s uncle, he was contacted, and he in turn contacted Sol and asked what he wanted from him. Sol told the man that he wanted to marry his niece, who was named Mina, and that he would pay to send her to Canada, and then from there to the U.S. That is exactly what happened. Sol and Mina were married, had a family, and enjoyed a long and happy life together.

“The *Jewish Forwards* was the first Internet,” Art says, with a smile. “It was the way to stay connected among many Jewish families. Originally it was published in Yiddish only, but it’s now in English. I remember as a child my Aunt Ruth, who lived to be one hundred years and one day old, would come to our house in Cleveland and read the paper to my grandmother, who never learned to speak English.”
Chapter Eleven: Sheldon Adelson

Since 1979, the COMDEX convention had brought the largest migration of visitors to Las Vegas of any single gathering. Anywhere from 75,000 to over 100,000 so-called “computer nerds” made the fall pilgrimage to the desert every year to engage in computer business and networking.

The founder of Comdex was Sheldon Adelson, a Boston-born and raised entrepreneur then in his early 50s who had already become a multi-millionaire from a variety of businesses, including stints as a mortgage broker, an investment advisor and financial consultant, and even a charter tour business owner. But it was the ever-increasing success of COMDEX, and its eventual sale to a Japanese corporation for $862 million in 1995, that elevated Adelson to another league. On that sale alone, it is believed Adelson’s share was around $500 million.

In 1988, Adelson and his partners purchased the Sands Hotel and Casino as their entrée to the gaming world and also to expand their reach in the exhibition industry. The following year, Adelson constructed the Sands Expo and Convention Center, which was then the only privately owned and operated convention center in the U.S.

By the time of that purchase, Sheldon and Art Marshall had become good friends. They had been introduced by former Nevada Governor Bob List, and they hit it off immediately. Both men were first-generation Americans, born of Jewish parents who had emigrated to the U.S., and they both believed in fully supporting Israeli causes and the communities in which they lived. Politically, they had their differences. Art was a devoted Democrat and Sheldon a staunch Republican, but as always with Art, he never let politics get in the way of friendship.

One of the first stories Art heard from Sheldon was how Adelson’s father had always wanted to visit Israel, but by the time Sheldon made his first trip his father was not in good enough health to go. So Sheldon took his father’s shoes with him, and he wore them every time he visited a holy place so he could tell him his shoes had walked on holy ground.

“Hearing that story of how Sheldon honored his father that way so endeared me to him that it created an instant bond between us that has never been broken, and in fact has strengthened through the years,” Art says.
Art remembers getting a call from Adelson when he sold Comdex. Sheldon told Art that he was going to tear down the Sands and build a new hotel. Art replied, “If I had the money you just made on that sale, I would sit on the beach, grow a handlebar mustache, and never have to deal with people and all the headaches.”

“You don’t understand,” Adelson replied. “I will make a billion dollars.”

“You already have nearly that,” Art said. “What will you do with more?”

“I will do good things and give it away,” he said. “At this moment Miri is making a list of good things we can do and people we can help.

In 1989, Adelson reached out to Art for help. In order to get financing for all the construction he was doing, it was contingent on his hiring an experienced hotel operator to run the hotel. He chose Henri Lewin, a former Las Vegas Hilton executive, as a principal on his first management team.

Like Adelson, Lewin was a big proponent of the convention business as a driving force for a hotel-casino. But with Henri came controversy. He had been fired four years before at the Hilton, and rumors about his dismissal were rampant. There had been allegations about misbehavior with cocktail waitresses and other female employees at the Hilton, which couldn’t be totally dismissed. Adelson explained to Art that the Nevada Gaming Control Board had just denied Lewin being licensed. If the Commission did not overrule the Control Board, which required a unanimous vote, the entire Sands blueprint could go up in smoke.

This was eight years before Art was named by Governor Bob Miller to the Gaming Commission, but Art was friendly with most of the current commissioners, particularly attorney John O’Reilly, who was the chairman, and realtor Ken Gragson.

“Kenny Gragson’s father Oran was a long-time mayor of Las Vegas (16 years), and a close friend of Chic Hecht,” Art says. “And both Kenny and John were impeccably honest guys. I shared with them that the whole Sands deal was going to go away unless Henry were licensed, and that it would be a very positive thing for a man like Sheldon, with all of his success and talent, to be a big player on the Strip. I didn’t know all the background stuff on Lewin, but in this particular situation my job was to lobby for Sheldon and convince the commissioners to look...
at the big picture and give him a break. Fortunately, they agreed with my reasoning and approved Lewin, which gave Sheldon his financing.

“Unfortunately, Henri Lewin was fired nine months later, but by then Adelson had planted his flag on the Strip and he was on his way,” Art says. “The rest is history. We both knew that Henri Lewin was a component that would not last very long, but it was important to get Sheldon licensed so those existing Sands employees would not be put out of work and the hotel could stay open.”

Art shares another story about Adelson’s friendship and loyalty.

“There was a little motel on the Sands property once Sheldon had acquired it,” Art says. “Todd asked Sheldon what he was going to do with the motel, and he said he would probably keep it there for eight or nine months and then it would be torn down. Todd suggested that he could operate a gift shop out of that building and that he and the Sands would be 50-50 partners in it. The deal was made on a handshake, and Todd operated that shop for 11 years. Sheldon was just wonderful to do business with on that basis. I trust him completely.”

One other quick story that shows a humorous side of Adelson, was seen on an occasion when Sheldon and his wife Miri were having lunch at the Fashion Show mall after Rosh Hashanah services, with Art and Jayn and Cari and Dana, who was just seven years old at the time.

Adelson was making some serious points in a discussion with Jayn when in the middle of his pontificating, Dana said, “Just because you say so doesn’t make it right.”

“I was just sticking up for my grandmother because Mr. Adelson’s tone was that he was right on that issue and that’s all there was to it,” Dana says, in a recent interview.

“We were all taken aback by her comment, because it was a friendly conversation, but Dana called him on his pronouncement,” Art says. “Sheldon was quiet for a moment, then turned to her and said, ‘You’re gonna be on my board of directors.’ Everyone cracked up.”

“I can’t begin to tell you how good the Adelsons have been to Dana, with some of her health challenges,” Art says. “They’ve been great friends to her for years now.”
Art mentions that one of the many philanthropic causes that Sheldon and his wife Miriam actively support is a program called Birthright Israel. This is a non-profit educational organization that sponsors free 10-day heritage trips to Israel for Jewish young adults. Its stated goals are to diminish the division between Israel and Jewish communities around the world and to strengthen participants’ personal Jewish identity and connection to Jewish history and culture. According to published reports, the Adelsons have contributed over $200 million to Birthright Israel. Both Alexis and Jessica Marshall have taken the trip and called it a life-changing experience.

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In a 2013 interview with Sheldon Adelson, the billionaire who has been ranked as the third wealthiest American, and in the top 20 wealthiest people in the world, he concurs that Art was immensely helpful when it came to getting a gaming license for the Sands Hotel in the late 1980s.

“When I first came to Las Vegas, I remember asking Bob List who was outstanding in the Jewish community, and the first name he mentioned was Art Marshall,” Adelson says. “Early in our relationship we went to a Jewish Federation of Las Vegas fundraising event at the Las Vegas Country Club, and Art was emceeing the event. I went over to him and said that we wanted to be involved, but we didn’t want to be pretentious. We didn’t want to show off, and so I asked him not to call on me until last, after everybody else had announced their gift. We gave a nice gift, either ten or twenty thousand, which was very small compared to what major gifts were in Boston, where we were from. Back there, a major donor gave half a million. In any event, that brought us closer to Art and Jayn Marshall.”

In a 90-minute interview, Adelson says repeatedly that Art has always been the kindest, most concerning friend anyone could ever have, but he can’t help discussing their political differences.

“I’m certain that if Art started over again, and he didn’t know the difference between Republican and Democrat, he’d definitely be a Republican,” Adelson says.

The Venetian owner then explains that Art’s parents, like his own, came over to this country and automatically became Democrats because of several factors: the popularity of the party then, and FDR being such a popular president,
and the public programs that helped out immigrants to America. Sheldon himself was a Democrat early on, albeit not politically involved, until he had a long visit with his 94-year-old aunt. She talked to him about the importance of self-reliance and not wanting to be given anything by her government that she didn’t earn.

“My friend Art believes in self-reliance,” Adelson says. “His whole life has been about doing things for himself and others, and I’m sure he’s never taken anything he didn’t earn. So that’s why I say if he started off today he’d be a Republican.

“I realized when I came to Las Vegas I had to be political to survive,” he adds, “so I have been a devoted Republican for a long time now.”

One of Art’s friends who disagrees with Adelson’s views on his politics is Marybel Batcher, a top executive at Caesars Entertainment who recently left her position to become California’s secretary of government operations. Batcher has worked as chief of staff for everyone from General Colin Powell to California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Nevada Governor Kenny Guinn. About Art she says, “Although his devotion to Israel is central to so much of what he does, Art deeply cares about a totally franchised electorate. He’s a man of much broader views than today’s conservative views of the Republican Party.”

Adelson says that one of the things that endears people to Art, “is that you get the feeling from him that he’s sincerely interested in you and your life, which includes your family, and your business activities. Also, he’s never pitching you. I mean, it’s obvious to me and probably to him that whenever I would do business with him or Todd or his family that they could opportunistically take advantage of that, but that did not happen. But beyond that he has a genuine interest in you and what you’re all about.”

Sheldon Adelson also had the highest regard for Jayn Marshall. “Her strengths were her love for her family,” he says. “You know, like most women their relationship with their daughter is more accentuated than that with their son, but she was totally devoted to both her children and grandchildren. She was also a very accomplished artist, but she never boasted about it. After Jayn passed away, they gave us some of her paintings. They were extraordinary. She was a very intelligent woman.”
Art adds that when Jayn was diagnosed with cancer, the Adelsons flew her and Art and Todd and Cari to M.D. Anderson in Houston in their Boeing business jet.

“They wanted her to have a plane with a bed,” Art says. “After that visit Sheldon called and said, ‘Everything we have is at your disposal.’

“When I called to tell them of Jayn’s passing, Sheldon cried and said, ‘Don’t tell me that!’

Art remembers when he got a call from Adelson in 2004, the day that the Sands went public. Sheldon said, “Art, this is not my first call and it’s not my last call, it’s my only call. But I just had to tell somebody. I just made five billion dollars this morning.”

Art said, “Just think what would have happened if you knew anything about the gaming business.”

Art’s response was in reference to all the naysayers on the Strip who thought Adelson was crazy some years before when he decided to go from the convention business to the hotel and gaming business.

A recent trip that the Adelsons sponsored was beyond any birthday celebration Art and others had experienced.

Art provides the details: “On July 31, 2013, Sheldon and Miri took over 265 guests to Singapore to celebrate Sheldon’s 80th birthday. Todd, Alecia, Cari and I were among this happy group. From the moment we arrived at the hangar in Las Vegas we were treated like royalty. We were privately flown to LAX, where we were escorted to Singapore Airlines, where I had a first-class pod next to Rob and Cheryl Goldstein. Upon arrival in Singapore, there was a Marshall car driving us to the fantastic Marina Bay Sands, where I had a large room, a scooter, and butler services. The hotel, shopping mall, and casino are magnificent.

“We had a delightful Shabat dinner, where Sheldon and Miri made comments and we were entertained by comedian Rita Rudner.

“There were all kinds of tours available and a large hospitality area in the mid-lobby reserved for the Adelson guests. A buffet was open to us from morning through the day, where the guests could get together and visit. There were friends from Las Vegas, Boston, L.A., Israel, and elsewhere, and I knew most of them
from all the Adelson events I have been privileged to attend over the years. Sheldon and Miri were there every day warmly mingling with their guests. One night we went to see *Phantom of the Opera* and then had drinks with the Goldsteins. Sunday night was the birthday party.

Boxing promoter Bob Arum gave Sheldon a special award, and dancers and drummers entertained from three stages. There was a video presentation for each of the eight decades of Sheldon’s life with personal and world events depicted from each decade.

To top it all off Paul Anka gave the performance of his life, and the room was alive with dancing up at the stage where Paul was singing. Mike Leven and Paul did a parody to Sheldon, and it was an evening to remember. As we came into the party Miri came up to us and I told her it was the best weekend I had in three years since losing Jayn. We both had tears at that.

“Miri Adelson is a most gracious, generous, kind, caring, intelligent, considerate, and lovely women. She is a great wife-partner-mother-grandmother and friend.

As Cari went to say good-bye to Sheldon, he told her that arrangements were made that Birthright will have special trips to Israel for Crohn’s & Colitis patients, so that people like her daughter Dana will be able to go to Israel and even have a caretaker if needed. As mentioned, the Adelsons have flown Dana to the Cleveland Clinic numerous times when she had urgent medical needs, to spare her commercial travel. We love the Adelsons dearly.”

Art has a couple more stories about the Adelsons that he believes people should hear, to gain more perspective on a man that has received his share of negative publicity.

“I was at the Venetian at an AIPAC luncheon which was being teleconferenced with Washington,” Art says. “There were some serious issues being discussed. Sheldon and I were sitting together in a darkened room when he leaned over and privately said to me, ‘Art, at the end of my life the hotels and money won’t mean anything. What will count is what I have done for our people and for others.’

“This came from his heart and soul,” Art says. “This is the Boston paperboy who honored and wore his late father’s shoes as he walked in the holy places on his first trip to Israel. This is the Sheldon along with Miri who have sent...
close to 400,000 young people to Israel, have flown numerous planeloads of wounded soldiers and their families to Las Vegas, have taken numerous members of Congress to Israel, so that they can better judge the issues, who have built one of the world’s finest Jewish day schools that accepts students of all faiths, who continually gives millions for medical research requiring that the research is shared among researchers, who gives electric scooters to wounded veterans and others in need, who has for over 25 years provided free drug clinics to help addicts in Las Vegas and Israel, who by example has led the way for many good people to become involved in tzedakah, has created multi-thousands of good paying jobs and countless other good deeds, and yet is warm and kind and easy and fun to be with.”

Art recalls that fairly recently some good friends of his in the gaming industry asked him if he would talk to Adelson about internet gaming. It was known that Sheldon had some strong concerns about it, and Art’s friends hoped he might convince him to support it. Art agreed with their support because he felt that a federal internet gaming plan would be better than putting it up for ballot state by state.

Art called Betty Yurcich, who is Adelson’s long-time executive assistant. Art goes back 25 years with Betty, and the Marshall family considers her a very dear personal friend who is totally trustworthy. Art says that she is always looking out for them and assists him with a smile in her voice.

Art knew he was always welcome to visit Adelson on a moment’s notice, but he didn’t want to blindside his friend. A time was set for the meeting at the Venetian, and having arrived early, Art was going over his talking points. He started to laugh as he recalled an early scene in *The Godfather*, when a character about to request a favor of Don Corleone is talking to himself before going into the meeting.

When Betty came to get Art in the waiting room, she asked why he was laughing, and when he told her, she started laughing also. They shared their laughter with Adelson and he also got a kick out of it.

Although Art says he failed to convince Sheldon to his point of view, he did receive a concession that Adelson would stay somewhat neutral on the subject of internet gaming.

Art says Adelson has on many occasions given Art’s name as a reference to other gaming jurisdictions. The investigators will call Art and ask him to discuss his relationship with Sheldon.
“They are usually aware that I was a Nevada Gaming Commissioner for 12 years and chairman of the Bank of Nevada for 14 years, which makes them comfortable,” Art says. “They ask the usual questions, and then one that often makes both parties laugh: they’ll ask if Sheldon lives within his means.”
Chapter Twelve: The Nevada Gaming Commission

In the late 1990s, fully retired from Marshall-Rousso but actively involved in a number of civic causes and seated on several boards, Art was hearing that his friend Nevada Governor Bob Miller was going to name him to the Nevada Athletic Commission.

This board makes important rulings on a number of issues regarding athletic activities in the state, but most importantly regulates professional boxing matches. Seeing as Nevada, and particularly Las Vegas, hosts more championship fights than any other venue in the world, a board appointment to the Nevada Athletic Commission is a much coveted assignment.

As with any political appointment, there is a lot that goes into making the selection of members, and after long discussions about who should stay and who should go from the existing athletic board, it was determined by Gov. Miller that he would put Art on the Nevada Gaming Commission instead of the athletic board.

Because Jim Nave, who had been by consensus the best chairman the Nevada Athletic Commission had ever had, had been told by Miller that he was going to name him to the Gaming Commission, things got complicated when many members of the athletic commission appealed to Miller to keep Nave in his position because he was such a valuable asset.

Miller called on Frank Schreck, who was good friends with both Jim and Art, to broker the plan to keep Nave in place and instead have Art join the Gaming Commission.

“It worked out the best for all parties,” says Schreck. “I called Art and explained, in good humor, that the main reason people wanted to be named to the Athletic Commission was to get good seats at all the great fights, and because Art didn’t go to the fights anyway, he would be more valuable to the Gaming Commission. Both men agreed to the change in plans, and Jim continued to be a great chairman of the Athletic Commission and Art’s business experience with his stores was really valuable to the Gaming Commission.”

Being named to the Nevada Gaming Commission is one of the most prestigious positions a person can hold in Nevada. The Commission is a body that rules on gaming applications for any individual or corporation hoping to get into the gambling business. The Commission also rules on matters such as who should
be excluded from ever entering a casino. These notorious characters who are deemed unsuitable enter what is known as Nevada’s Black Book.

Gaming licenses are extremely privileged, and the scrutiny that applicants undergo is extensive. Almost every important activity in an applicant’s life is reviewed, so anyone hoping to be licensed must forego a sense of privacy and have a microscope put to all their tax returns, business dealings, personal relationships, and more.

Art Marshall spent 12 years--three four-year terms--on the Commission, from 1997 to 2009, and he thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Over time he was referred to by some press accounts as “the conscience of the board,” and he was not afraid to take solitary positions against other board members, regardless of the consequences, if the evidence mandated he vote a certain way.

Peter Bernhard, a Las Vegas attorney, joined the Nevada Gaming Commission in 2001, shortly after the tragedy of 9-11, and is the current chairman of the Commission as this is being written in 2013. He gave a lengthy interview about Art’s contributions to the Commission.

Bernhard had served on the Nevada Ethics Commission prior to the Gaming Commission, and he explained how Art had come to him in 1997 to get an opinion and guidance on whether his former interest in Marshall Rousso stores being tenants of various casino properties would be a prohibition against him serving on the Gaming Commission.

“That showed me how completely ethical and conscientious Art was in making sure he did everything right for the best interests of the state,” Bernhard says. “So between the two of us we put together what we thought was the definitive disclosure in compliance with the ethics law. And he used that, and now that’s become the mantra for everybody on the commission. In essence, that’s the statement that discloses everything the law requires to disclose about any potential conflicts, and the analysis of whether that would be a disqualifying conflict.”

“Art was obviously fit and qualified to be on the Commission,” Bernhard adds, “and he was very much a valued addition, but he was very concerned that anyone would question his independence and impartiality, and the research we did and the standards that were put down have become the model for ethical conduct by a public official in the gaming industry and gaming regulation.”
Bernhard further applauds Art for his willingness to take on difficult assignments that were handed to the board.

“Art was always the first to volunteer for the tough assignments,” he says. “He was the common sense person on the board, the reasonable one, and that was in large part because he was a businessman, and so he knew what the applicants were going through.

Bernhard recalls that in a 2001 legislative session, a bill was passed to allow private gaming salons. As part of that, The Nevada Gaming Commission had to draft implementing regulations. Before that, traditionally and by law, gaming in Nevada had to be conducted in public, so this bill was the first occasion where there was a major change in gaming being a public venture. Prior to this, anyone had the ability to walk in and out of a gaming venue so as to avoid the kind of places, as Bernhard put it, “where there was backroom activity where cheating could go on.”

The challenge with the new law was that Gaming Control Board agents still had to be able to go in under cover and see what was going on, to make sure that all the gambling activity was on the up and up.

As Peter Bernhard explained, the idea at that time was that there was an appetite to increase business by allowing high rollers and dignitaries and celebrities to gamble privately as they were able to do in other jurisdictions around the world, and Nevada’s mandate was to figure out regulations to do that.

“I asked Art if he would be willing to be the point person for the Commission in evaluating what were important business points for the people trying to set up these salons so that they would become successful ventures, without giving up our regulatory control,” Bernhard says.

“Art took control of that process and put together a pretty good regulation,” he says. “The end result solution required that they set up separate real-time audio-visual connections to the Gaming Control offices on East Washington Street in Las Vegas, so that our agents could sit there and watch as much or as little as they please, which preserved the anonymity without disrupting the game. There was a lot of work involved in getting that regulation together, and Art was the commissioner assigned to attending workshops where we could hear what the concerns and interests were.”

Bernhard also said that Art took the lead on determining that friends or relatives of the high roller or celebrity could also enter the private salon and make
smaller bets than the minimum limit set forth for the high roller. There would then be a time limit on how long those guests could remain in the room after the high roller departed.

There were some industry issues with these minimum wagers. Art worked diligently with Sheldon Adelson, Steve Wynn, and Terry Lanni to resolve these issues to make certain that Nevada was competitive with these other jurisdictions.

"The fact that Art had the confidence of the casino owners because of the relationships he enjoyed with them through the years was really helpful with issues like that," Bernhard says. "No one would ever have the slightest thought that Art was misusing his state-appointed position to try and benefit his family's interest in the dress shops, as Art no longer had an interest in the shops. His reputation and his relationships were such that no one would even question that."

Echoing a statement that Todd Marshall made earlier, Peter Bernhard was effusive in praising Art's proclivity for giving people a second chance in the gaming industry. Time and again, people who worked in the industry, whether as cocktail waitresses, bartenders, or dealers, would come before the Commission having lost their work card and therefore their right to work for some offense. It was the Commission's job to determine whether their right to work would be permanently revoked or whether they should be allowed back into the industry.

"These are people that are not your high-level executives," Peter Bernhard explains, "and are often at the bottom rungs of the gaming employee ladder. And they may have run into some problem in the law, or they've had some difficulty, and so there's an objection filed that prevents them from working in the industry. It could be a DUI, or possession of drugs, or it could be making mistakes at the gaming table while dealing to where either the state or patron of the location was cheated out of a little bit of revenue. It can be from nickel-dime stuff all the way up to the big stuff.

"Often, these were people who had not worked anywhere else but in gaming and had long histories of impeccable job performance with integrity, and then either slipped up or were going through tough times or maybe even were falsely accused of doing wrong. And Art was always the leader to say that we had to be the voice for these people, and we had to stick up for them.

"The legislative directive is that if we think these people are a danger in the industry we should keep them out," Bernhard says. "And Art would say, 'Look, this person made a bad mistake, but this person is not a danger to the community or
to gaming and this person has come before us to explain what happened and I think we need to give him or her a second chance.

“Art’s cliché was that the Gaming Control board, which acted first in these cases and usually would object to them being in the industry, had the job of doing justice. But the Nevada Gaming Commission’s job was to dispense mercy. That’s what I heard almost word for word from Art every time. That we should dispense mercy and give these people a second chance. That tells you a lot about Art right there.”

An example of this was an important licensing matter that came before the commission in Art’s first meeting. It dealt with Horseshoe Casino executive Ted Binion, and his hope that his gaming license, which had been suspended two years earlier, could be renewed. The issues at hand were Ted’s long history of drug use and his alliances with disreputable characters.

Ted was the second son of gaming icon Benny Binion who, like Moe Dalitz, had left behind a past filled with criminal activity and alleged associations with mobsters in Texas to build a new life in Las Vegas. Benny had purchased two downtown properties in the late 1940s and combined them into the Horseshoe Casino. Although Binion had no formal education whatsoever, he was thought to be the savviest gambler in Nevada, and his bold strategies about how to run a gambling operation proved profitable through the decades.

One of his operating mantras was that his casino should offer, “Good food, good drink, and good gamble.” Among other policies that made Benny’s establishment different from the rest was that he would accept any volume wager, no matter how high, as long as it was placed on the very first bet. The Horseshoe had also hosted some of the biggest poker matches in the world, including the previously mentioned marathon match between Nick the Greek and Johnny Moss. In the 1960s, the Horseshoe gave birth to the World Series of Poker, which has grown today into one of the major events of the year on the Las Vegas calendar.

Benny Binion had his gaming license revoked just months after he opened the Horseshoe, and while older son Jack and younger son Ted were put in charge of the casino, there was no question who had the final say on any important decisions.

Jack Binion was thought by all in the casino industry to be a straight-shooter who inherited his father’s gambling wisdom, and he proved through the years to be one of the most respected gaming executives in Las Vegas. The same
couldn’t be said for his kid brother. While Ted had a charming personality, particularly with members of the opposite sex, and was thought to have a good sense for numbers, his vices far outweighed his virtues. Problems with alcohol, drugs, and his propensity to hang out with felons and former felons had caused Ted to lose his gaming license in 1996, so when he came before the Nevada Gaming Commission two years later, it was on bended knee.

Art remembers Ted pleading with the Commission to return his gaming license to him at the hearing, saying that being involved with the Horseshoe was his whole life and without it he had nothing. His cause was bolstered by his powerful attorneys, former Federal Judge Harry Claiborne, a long-time Binion family friend, and Richard Wright, who was thought to be one of the best criminal defense attorneys in the country. Local news coverage of the hearings was extensive.

Shortly before the hearing, Art had received somewhere in the vicinity of one thousand pages of background material on Ted Binion. This included all the material that had been compiled by the Nevada Gaming Control Board, an organization of full-time employees whose responsibility it is to thoroughly investigate applicants and then turn over its findings to the commissioners, who rule on suitability.

When Ted Binion had his license revoked, there were three stipulations that he had to abide by to have any hope of getting his license renewed: he had to be drug free for one year, he could not be involved in any participation in the operation of the Horseshoe during that time, and he could not accept compensation from the family business. There was no argument about his abiding by two of the three stipulations. The Control Board investigation showed that he had not received any compensation from the company, and he had passed 160 drug tests. It was whether he had made any management decisions that came into question.

There were mounds of testimony from Ted’s brother Jack and other members of the Horseshoe organization that Ted had abided by all these requirements. Unfortunately for Ted, his sister Becky Behnen, with whom he had been estranged for years partly due to disagreements over the distribution of their father’s estate, turned over a recorded telephone conversation during which Ted threatened to fire her son, who was on the payroll of the Horseshoe. Clearly inebriated during the conversation, Ted had made other threats against his sister and her family.
It was well known that there were ongoing disputes among the Binion siblings that had gone on for years. Art once asked Jack Binion if he was in touch with his sister, and his response was, “Yes, we take depositions every week.”

The Control Board’s findings suggested that Ted Binion was still involved in some of the day-to-day operations at the Horseshoe, but those who testified before the Commission refuted that.

During the hearing, Art asked Ted whether he had indeed fired his nephew. Ted answered, No, that the threat to his sister was made when he was drunk, and that in fact he had given his nephew a nice Christmas present not long after that phone conversation. What the recording showed, Ted argued, was just an angry man making idle threats while he was intoxicated.

When the final vote was taken among four commissioners (NGC Chairman Bill Curran recused himself), Art was the only one not to vote against renewing Ted’s gaming license.

“I couldn’t see how conversations between siblings who had a history of being in disputes with each other could constitute that Ted was involved in the operation of the Horseshoe,” Art says. “Particularly when one of them was inebriated.”

Not publicly revealed at this first stage of the hearing was that an emergency suspension order had been presented by the Control Board stating that Ted had been hanging out with convicted felons. So no matter which way that initial vote had gone concerning Ted’s claim he wasn’t involved in management decisions, he wouldn’t have had his license returned to him. But that became a moot point when the 3 to 1 vote against him was registered.

By the next day, the local newspapers carried the story that Ted Binion’s sole supporter on the Commission was Art Marshall.

“That spin was obviously intended to make sure that I looked like I didn’t know what I was doing,” Art says. “But I don’t regret that vote for a minute. In fact the Chief Investigator for the Control Board, Randy Sayre, came up to me after the meeting, and I said to him, ‘I guess I’ll be in deep shit with the Control Board from now on.’ But Randy said to me, ‘Commissioner, I could lose my job over this, but I want you to know you voted correctly.’
"That not only made me feel better," Art adds, ‘But it showed me how you have to apply your own thinking in these situations.”

Just 15 months after those hearings, Ted Binion was found dead on the floor of his Pinto Lane home in Las Vegas. He was either murdered or died of an overdose of black tar heroin, depending on whose murder trial testimony you believe. His live-in girlfriend Sandra Murphy and another associate, Rick Tabish, were convicted of the murder in a nationally televised trial that also dominated local media coverage for nearly a year. However, three years later their conviction was overturned by the Nevada Supreme Court when it ruled that Clark County District Judge Joseph Bonaventure erred in deliberation instructions to the jury.

What the Ted Binion gaming hearings further validated was that an appearance before the commission, and the evidence revealed in those hearings, was very serious business and represented a great responsibility for those serving in that capacity.

“What a contentious business that Binion hearing was,” says Art. “It was a real baptism under fire for me. Ted Binion was a tragic figure, and it was hard not to feel sorry for him.”

Not long after the Binion hearing, the Gaming Commission was faced with another contentious case involving ITT Corporation’s attempt to split the Hilton Hotels Corporation into three parts without first getting shareholder approval. Art was one of the three commissioners in a 3-2 vote to rule that this attempt by ITT would have to wait until getting a ruling from U.S. District Judge Phil Pro. The first two votes were Yes, to go forward with the split. Then Art voted No, and he was followed by Curran and Gurola also voting to delay until Judge Pro ruled. Art led the way on that vote.

Attorney Tom Gallagher, who would later become the Chief Executive Officer of Park Place Entertainment, which owned Caesars Palace and numerous other properties, was representing Hilton Hotels in that hearing, and he says that it was Art’s reasonable approach to the matter that caused the Commission to defer ruling until the matter was brought before the court one week later.

Pro’s ruling, coming the same week, ruled against ITT’s plan, stating in his decision that acting without shareholder approval “has as its primary purpose the entrenchment of the ITT board.”
“I remember that the hearing was dragging on forever,” Gallagher says, “because in my opinion the ITT attorneys were up there putting on a big show and making exaggerated claims. At one point I said to the Commission, ‘If you ask a normal person to show you his ear, he will touch his ear in a conventional way.’ At that point Gallagher touched his right hand to his right ear.

‘But if you ask a lawyer to show you his ear, he will do this…’” At which point Gallagher reached his hand awkwardly over his head to touch his ear.

Art was amused by the demonstration, and he later told Gallagher that he thought the gesture perfectly summarized what was going on.

“I think it could be fairly said that Art was the conscience of the Commission in the time he served,” says Gallagher. “In many ways he was the ideal public servant because you always felt you got a fair hearing from him. Not that he always agreed with me, but I knew his decisions were without bias and always were made with what would best serve the public interest.”

Gallagher remembers a later meeting in front of the Gaming Commission, this one in 2002, when there was a big push to authorize internet gaming.

“A hearing was scheduled by the Commission, when Brian Sandoval was the chair, and it was clear to me that those appearing were pretty well stacked in support of moving internet gaming forward,” Gallagher says. “I called Art and told him I thought the hearing needed to be more balanced, and that as the CEO of Park Place I was willing to go in and talk about my concerns. I told him I wasn’t necessarily against internet gaming, but I thought we needed to take a deep breath and not rush into this.

“I was troubled by the amount of investment in bricks and mortar that would be required of Nevada gaming companies, but I also had concerns about problem gamblers and young people. We were spending all this time and energy to keep young people out of casinos, and this was going to move gambling right into people’s homes. I basically put a wrench into the steamroll and said there was a lot that needed to be thought out before this all moved forward. It was another occasion where by talking it out with Art, we were able to come to a consensus that was right for the time.

“I think today the ship has pretty much sailed regarding internet gaming, and it will now be voted on state by state,” he adds. “There are much better safeguards and controls today that weren’t in place in 2002.”
Another important hearing Art heard concerned activities at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino. The Control Board had filed a complaint about the Hard Rock, accusing the hotel of allowing immoral behavior to go on in the bar and private areas. The allegations were that exotic dancers from Club Paradise, a gentleman’s club across the street from the Hard Rock, were engaging in sex acts with hotel patrons. The board and Hard Rock executives agreed upon a fine of one hundred thousand dollars against the resort for not having more control over activities on their property and bringing disrepute to the gaming industry.

Shortly after the fine was announced, Hard Rock’s newly hired hotel president Don Marandino appeared before the Commission for licensing, and the issue of the fine was brought up. The Commission was charged with making the final ruling on the amount of the fine.

Art asked Marandino whether he had reviewed all the tapes the Hard Rock had made concerning these violations, and Marandino said he knew about it but hadn’t seen everything. Art was disturbed that he didn’t seem as concerned about this issue as he should have been. So he made the comment, “Maybe a million-dollar fine would be more appropriate than a hundred thousand.”

Marandino slumped at the podium, and clearly seemed stunned and embarrassed by the comment.

The final result was that the Commission stayed with the hundred thousand dollar fine because the alternative would have been either to go into a court battle over the matter or hold another Commission hearing, and the resulting unfavorable publicity would have been harmful to Las Vegas.

Hard Rock owner Peter Morton was unable to attend the meeting because of a family matter but called Art afterwards to assure him that he was adamantly opposed to anything like that happening again at his hotel.

Years later, in 2011, the Hard Rock was fined $650,000 by the Nevada Gaming Commission for sexual violations on the premises that were similar in nature to those they were fined for years earlier. So perhaps Art’s judgment was proved sound once again. Perhaps the $100,000 fine of 2005 didn’t have enough impact.
“These issues were never easy,” Art says. “There were typically good arguments that could be made on either side, so I felt I always had to do my homework carefully and in the end vote in good conscience.”

Among the many talented people Art worked with on the Nevada Gaming Commission was Brian Sandoval, a Republican who would go on to become the state’s attorney general, later be appointed as a Federal Judge, and then be elected as Nevada’s governor in 2010.

In yet another indication of his bi-partisan political stance, Art supported Sandoval in his run for attorney general.

“It meant the world to me when Art took the time to attend my announcement for attorney general,” Sandoval says. “I view Art as almost...would a surrogate father be the right term? He’s been an integral part of my life since I had the opportunity to meet him. Whether he got any grief [as a Democrat] for attending I don’t know, but I know he made a personal commitment to support me early on and never wavered.”

When Art and Sandoval were on the commission together early in Art’s first term, Sandoval was offered his first opportunity to be a federal judge, which he turned down. This was an extremely desirable position, which candidates rarely if ever neglect to accept. When Art asked him why he didn’t take the offer, Sandoval said he didn’t feel he was ready for the position, that he had been in federal court only a couple times, and although the money was significantly better than his current salary, he just didn’t feel right in accepting it.

Art told Sandoval, “You’re one in a million,” appreciating that the young attorney was a man of great integrity and principle.

Art Marshall thinks the world of Brian Sandoval, and knows he’s destined for even higher office than the position of governor. Art says he heard a story about when Sandoval was running for state assembly in the early 1990s, and he was campaigning door to door. Brian stopped at one house and spoke for about 10 minutes to a woman, who listened carefully to every word he said. When he was done, she said, “Young man, I could never bring myself to vote for a Republican, but you could marry my daughter.”

“That says volumes about how impressive Brian Sandoval is,” Art says with a laugh.
In a 2013 interview, Nevada Gov. Sandoval says that he’s never forgotten a story Art told him about once struggling with a question about whether he should take Todd out of high school for a single day to purchase a 1968 red Corvette in California for Jayn. Art wrestled with the question until Herb Rousso told him, “Art, Todd is going to have thousands of days where he just went off to school, and one day is like another, very forgettable. But taking him out of school to buy a great new car, and spending that time with him, is something he’ll never forget.”

That is exactly what happened. The car-buying trip to California was a terrific day for Art and Todd, and was enhanced when four years later Jayn passed the car on to Todd.

“I had a similar decision on something I wanted to do with my son, and I remembered Art’s story,” Gov. Sandoval says. “I took my son out of school that day and we shared a memory that he’ll never forget. I owe that to Art.”

... Another important licensing hearing occurred in 2007, when sisters Pansy and Daisy Ho appeared before the Nevada Gaming Commission to determine their suitability to partner with MGM Mirage (now MGM Resorts International) in building and operating the MGM Grand Macau Resort.

The two women were educated in America—Pansy at Santa Clara University and Daisy at USC—but because they were daughters of controversial Macau billionaire Stanley Ho, they had come under close scrutiny. Pansy was actually denied a gaming license in Atlantic City, and the New Jersey gaming board mandated that MGM sell their 50 percent share of the Borgata resort to their partner Boyd Gaming at some point in the future.

Stanley Ho had long fought allegations that his Macau casinos had been involved with organized crime triads engaged in money laundering, loan sharking, drug trafficking, and prostitution. He had never been convicted of any of these crimes, but the Nevada Gaming Commission felt it especially important to consider all components of his daughters’ application as the expansion of Nevada-based companies into foreign markets was becoming more commonplace.

As the proceedings developed, and an inordinate amount of attention was being paid to the activities of the women’s father, Art made this comment: “We’re not licensing Dr. Stanley Ho,” he said. “We’re determining whether or not Pansy Ho and Daisy Ho are suitable to do business with MGM.”
In recalling the proceedings recently, Art said that Pansy and Daisy were found to be independent of their father in their business dealings.

“One of the things that was brought to our attention was that after taking control of a ferry boat franchise from Hong Kong to Macau that their father owned, the daughters had acquired a second company that was a competitor,” Art says. “And much to their father’s chagrin, Pansy fired some of his people from the original company because she felt that the new people were doing a better job. Even though her father was put out by this decision, she acted independent of his wishes.

“Another thing that particularly impressed me,” Art adds, “was that in the contract between MGM and Pansy Ho, she had given up all hiring and firing authority. We also were cognizant of the fact that MGM had to perform legally in Macau, otherwise they would be jeopardizing their entire gaming license in Nevada. So that gave us a sense of relief.”

There were other critically important hearings that came before the Nevada Gaming Commission during Art’s service, including MGM’s takeover of Mirage Resorts in 2000 (which was the largest single gaming transaction in Nevada history), and five years later MGM Mirage’s takeover of the Mandalay properties. As impactful as these acquisitions were, they transpired without much controversy, as MGM under the leadership of Kirk Kerkorian had proven to be an outstanding operator, and all parties in those transactions were agreeable to the terms that had been put forth.

Art recalls that an uncomfortable moment occurred during those hearings when a group of African-American Las Vegas residents made charges against MGM, claiming the hotel lacked diversity in its hiring practices. At a break in the meeting, Kerkorian approached Marshall and expressed his disappointment at the charges, telling Art that he was the largest single contributor to the United Negro College Fund. Art was sympathetic to Kerkorian and put that fact in the record when the meeting reconvened.

“Kirk was always so quiet about his philanthropy, that a lot of his generosity was unknown to the community at large,” he says. “In the years that I’ve known Kirk, I’ve found him to be one of the most humble and unassuming men I’ve ever met. He’s a gracious gentleman and a legendary figure in the community.”
Art adds that, “When Terry Lanni took over as president of MGM, they set the bar high for diversity in their employment practices.”

Current MGM Resorts International Chairman and CEO Jim Murren recalls a moment from those year 2000 hearings, when his company was acquiring Mirage Resorts from Steve Wynn.

“I guess I looked confused at some point of the hearing,” Murren says, “because after the meeting Art put his hand on my shoulder and said that I had nothing to be worried about since I was on Kirk’s team. That was very reassuring, but typical of the way Art handles things.”

One other light moment occurred at a Commission meeting in 2007, when Art and Riviera Holdings Chairman Bill Westerman got into a debate over which well-known entertainer opened for the other in the July, 1963, opening of the Riv’s new hotel tower. Westerman said that Liberace opened for Barbra Streisand, and Art said that the songbird opened for the pianist. Westerman finally conceded that Art was correct after all. “You’re right,” he said. “You were probably there.”

The other commissioners cracked up at the exchange.”
Chapter Thirteen: Banking On It

Little did Art Marshall know as a youngster in Cleveland when he would take his ten- or twenty-dollar weekly earnings to the bank, that one day he would become a banker. But that’s the kind of opportunity that can arise if you work hard each day, seize possibilities when they come along, and lead your life with honesty and integrity.

As mentioned earlier, Art and Herb had taken a loan for forty thousand dollars from Nevada State Bank in 1964, when they opened their store at the Sahara Hotel. Art’s friend Chic Hecht, who was a member of that bank’s board, had helped arrange the loan. Bill Boyd, Art’s neighbor and friend who had set up the meeting with Milton Prell that allowed them the opportunity to open their first Las Vegas Strip hotel store at the Sahara, was also a board member of Nevada State Bank, as was long-time Las Vegas realtor and civic patron Harley Harmon Sr.

Some 15 years later, when some of the board members bought Harmon out of his interest in the bank, Hecht asked Art and Herb Rousso whether they might be interested in buying into the bank. Hecht said that if the partners made a significant investment in bank stock, the board would invite Art to join the board of directors.

Hecht told Art he would be an asset to the bank, and he thought Art would be helpful with the Jewish community in bringing in new customers.

In 1982, as was stated, Chic Hecht was elected to the U.S. Senate in a startling upset over long-time Nevada Senator Howard Cannon. Art stayed on with Nevada State Bank, but he then also had a friendly voice in Washington D.C., who could be helpful in other causes.

In the middle 1970s, Art and Jayn became friendly with Jack and Irene Sarver, a couple from Arizona, through their mutual admiration of U.S. Senator Henry “Scoop” Jackson of Washington state, who was trying to win the Democratic nomination for President in 1976. Jackson had received wide support nationally from the Jewish community for his strong support of Israel, but he got resistance from the left wing of the Democratic Party for his advocacy of the Vietnam War.
Deciding against campaigning in the early primary states of Iowa and New Hampshire—at the same time that Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter and his family and supporters were going door to door in those states and shaking the hands of nearly every voter—Scoop Jackson fell behind early in the race for the nomination and never caught up. Beaten badly in the Pennsylvania primary and out of campaign money, he dropped out of the race in early summer.

The Sarvers had been the chief fundraisers for Sen. Jackson in Arizona, and with their growing friendship with the Marshalls they continued to do all they could for Jewish causes. Art and Hank Greenspun and Jack Sarver and Jerry Mack went to Washington D.C. in early 1977 and attended a breakfast with new President Carter. The three were invited to become members of the Democratic National Committee.

Art remembers Sarver saying about Carter after that meeting, “This guy’s gonna take our money and kick us in the ass,” vis-à-vis the new President’s views on Israel.

So the men sought Scoop Jackson’s advice on their best course of action, and he said they should form a political action committee.

The Greenspuns, the Macks, the Marshalls, and the Sarvers and others from around the country formed the National Bi-Partisan Political Action Committee, and opened an office in Washington. That organization evolved into the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which does everything it can to help Israel, but cannot by its charter raise funds for candidates.

Sadly, Jack Sarver passed away in 1979 from a heart attack, just prior to Ronald Reagan being elected to the Presidency. But the Marshalls stayed close with Irene Sarver, and came to know and respect the Sarvers’ young son Robert, who even in his twenties was a rising star in the banking industry in Arizona. At the age of 23, Robert founded the National Bank of Tucson, becoming the youngest person ever to found a national bank.

Robert had become friendly with Todd and Cari Marshall, and Art was kept appraised of his accomplishments. One day Robert told Art that he had opened another bank in Phoenix, and he was doing so well that he either had to raise more capital or sell the bank. (When a bank’s deposits grow, it has to have a certain amount of capital behind the deposits.) When Art questioned whether he was serious about selling the bank, Robert replied, “Absolutely.”
Prior to this conversation, Nevada State Bank had been sold to the Zion Bank Corporation in Utah. Art suggested to Robert that a possible buyer of his bank was the Zion group. Robert thought this sounded promising, so Art met with Zion Bank owners Roy Simmons and his son Harris to determine their interest in buying a bank with branches in Tucson and Phoenix. Within a short period of time, the deal was consummated for in excess of sixty million dollars.

Art’s friendship and business relationship with Robert Sarver continued to grow through the years, and not long after the sale to Zion, Todd informed his father that Bill Boyd and Don Snyder, another prominent member of the Las Vegas business community, wanted to start another bank. Bill and Art had been friends for years, dating back to Bill’s introduction of Art and Herb to Milton Prell in the early 1960s, which led to the Sahara store opening, and their mutual involvement in Nevada State Bank.

The bank which Boyd and Snyder proposed was to be called Bank West of Nevada. Art thought it sounded like a good idea, so he invested. In initial discussions it was determined that Don Snyder would be the chairman of the new bank. At the time Don was also president of the Boyd Gaming Company, and the more the idea was discussed, it became apparent to Snyder that he would be taking on more responsibility than he could reasonably handle.

Although he was not an experienced banker in terms of hands-on banking, Art had been a bank board member for a number of years, so when Bill Boyd asked him to become the chairman of the board of the new bank he accepted. Art was assured that Don Snyder would give him any help he needed, and he also knew that he could rely on his brilliant young friend Robert Sarver to guide him through any uncharted waters.

“Art did a great job as chairman of Bank West,” says Bill Boyd. “He was a go-getter and he went out and found us depositors and people seeking loans, and of course that’s what you need to be successful when you start up a bank. Art’s very good at asking people for things, something I’m not very good at.”

Don Snyder concurs with Boyd’s assessment. “Art was clearly the best business developer we had,” he says, “because it was always in his mind to discuss the bank with people. It’s true he called me with a lot of questions, and he sometimes referred to me as his shadow chairman, but the truth is because he was retired from Marshall Rousso and had the time and interest to give to the job, we
couldn’t have had a more effective chairman. Art had the maturity and wisdom to make the right decisions and he had great gut instincts.”

Between Snyder and Sarver, Art had two of the best advisors imaginable, and these relationships would years later afford all of them the confidence to forge a new partnership.

“Robert at this time was a major shareholder in the Zion Bank Corporation (note: Sarver had accepted stock rather than cash when he sold his Arizona banks), and I spoke to him frequently during those years with Bank West,” Art says. “Whenever I got good advice from him, I made sure I shared my source with Bill and Don, so they would fully appreciate how knowledgeable Robert was.”

Within a few years, Robert parted ways with the Zion Bank Corporation. The Marshall family had invested with Sarver in many real estate deals, primarily in a company called Southwest Value Partners, and they had all done very well with these investments. Robert was married, with three young children, and he bought an apartment in Coronado, where his mother Irene had a condominium on the floor right below Art and Jayn. She was naturally delighted to learn that her new neighbors were her long-time friends. They were able to reignite a friendship started many years before.

Robert Sarver started to enjoy the good life in the early 1990s. He bought a boat and with Art’s endorsement became a member of the Coronado Yacht Club. Shortly after he was accepted, he sent Art a letter thanking him for supporting him for membership, and added a special thank you because he deeply appreciated how Art had supported him in everything he’d ever done.

Art was very touched by the letter, and when he heard that Robert would be in Las Vegas the following week to attend a stag, he suggested they have lunch at Las Vegas Country Club. During that lunch, Robert told Art that he had been idle too long and that he was thinking of investing around twenty-five million dollars and opening a bank in Phoenix. When Art heard that, he called Bill Boyd and Don Snyder and arranged a meeting that same day for the four of them. They jointly decided that it made more sense for Robert to make a large investment in their Bank West of Nevada than to open the bank in Phoenix, and Sarver agreed. At the time Bank West had about three hundred million dollars in assets, but they felt it had much greater potential with the right leadership.
Although Robert was still in his mid-30s, it was obvious he was a perfect fit for Bank West, but he would accept the role only under certain conditions. He told Art and Bill and Don, “I’ll come in, but I run the bank. If you don’t like the job I’m doing, you can fire me, but I’m the boss.”

So with that agreed upon, Robert Sarver came in and became CEO and chairman of the bank holding company. Eventually, the group formed the Western Alliance Bank Corporation, and in time purchased the Bank of Nevada and Nevada First Bank.

Shortly after that, the group opened a bank in Phoenix called the Alliance Bank of Arizona, and then another bank in San Diego called Torrey Pines Bank. At that point it became publicly listed on the New York Stock Exchange. All of these banks still exist and are doing well. Todd Marshall is currently on the board of Western Alliance Bank Corp, and Don Snyder, in addition to being the dean of UNLV’s Boyd College of Law, is the chairman of Bank of Nevada. (Note: Western Alliance Bancorporation, with banks in Nevada, Arizona, and California, has current assets of over $8.4 billion.)

As though Robert Sarver’s plate weren’t full enough, in addition to his bank duties in 2004 he assembled a group of investors who purchased the NBA’s Phoenix Suns basketball team, the Women’s NBA franchise Phoenix Mercury, and the operating rights to the US Airways Center, where both teams play their home games.

In a 2013 interview Sarver says of Art Marshall, “He’s a very special man, always willing to go the extra mile for a friend.”

Robert recalls when as a teenager his father Jack was discussing the possibility of purchasing a Rolls Royce. He of course consulted Art, who owned Prestige Motors and was a long-time Rolls collector. In their conversation, Jack Sarver asked Art what kind of gas mileage he could expect to get in a Rolls, and Art said, “Jack, if you have to worry about the gas mileage you probably shouldn’t buy one.”

“And so he didn’t,” Robert says, with a laugh. “I guess Art talked him right out of the sale.

“Art has always had tremendous relationships with people,” Sarver says, “and he’s always willing to use those to help people in business or with a
charitable donation, even if he had nothing to gain by it. His relationships across a broad range of people is just sterling.

“His support of me through the years has been so consistent and so solid,” he adds. “He’s always been there for me, in good times or bad times. To use a poker term, when Art is your friend, he’s ‘all in.’”
Chapter Fourteen: The World of Erte

A chance meeting in 1982 at the Pritikin Institute in Santa Monica, where Art and Jayn had gone for a week of revitalization, opened their world to new friendships inside the world of modern art.

“The Pritikin is like a health spa,” Art says. “It’s diet-oriented, and it’s like an adult camp where you go to practice good nutrition. There’s an exercise program, and you nibble on healthy food all day long. If someone has a birthday, you celebrate by getting some fruit, which is a big deal compared to the other meals that are served.”

Among other interesting people the Marshalls befriended at the Pritikin was a man who sat at their table one morning who was a dead ringer for actor Peter Ustinov.

“He was an elderly gentleman with a beard, who spoke with a mid-Atlantic accent,” Art says. “He was very charming and an interesting conversationalist. It was Eric Estorick, the famous international art dealer. We learned that his father, like mine, had emigrated to America from Dvinsk, the same small village in Latvia that my father was from. Eric was an only child, like I was, and we bonded right away. We soon learned that Eric knew everybody and everything. He was a very worldly man, connected to a huge network of influential people.”

Estorick’s biography certainly backs up Art’s opinion. Growing up in Brooklyn, and intrigued with art and sculpture from boyhood, Eric went on to earn a PhD in sociology at NYU, taught at Columbia University, and later worked in British intelligence during World War II. He authored several history books, wrote a novel, and by his forties had acquired a world-class art collection.

Also like Art, Estorick fell instantly in love with a woman, in his case Salome Dessau, and acted quickly, marrying her within a few weeks.

At just 43 years of age, Estorick pulled off the coup of a lifetime in persuading the Tate Gallery in London to hold an exhibition of what was billed as “Modern Italian Art from the Estorick Collection,” which later traveled to several European and American venues. Although Eric was initially against the show consisting exclusively of works from his personal collection, the arts council that sponsored the show insisted on it for financial reasons. The show made him internationally famous.
Some years later, Estorick became the exclusive worldwide dealer for the works of Erte, the father of art deco. Erte had been the top designer of Harper's Bazaar in the early 1920s, and he created costumes and designs for the Ziegfield Follies and the original Folies Bergeres, which came to Las Vegas and the Tropicana Hotel in the 1950s.

“Being Erte’s dealer was a license to print money for Eric,” Art says. “The art market was flooded with Erte’s originals, graphics, sculpture, jewelry, etc. The Marshalls were the beneficiaries of this as well because by being close to Estorick and Erte, we were with them in London, Barbados, New York, Hollywood, Israel, and France and were privileged to attend great parties and openings in their company. There were always a number of celebrities at these events, and these were memorable experiences for Jayn and me.”

Not long after WWII ended, there was a small show for Erte in Paris, in which he was selling his original sketches for the costume designs. He had also by then completed the Erte Alphabet, which was his creation of all 26 letters of the alphabet in artistic forms.

Eric Estorick was invited to the show, and through that meeting he struck the original deal with Erte to become business partners. Eric came up with the idea of printing graphics of the Erte Alphabet and others of his works. That marketing plan became hugely successful.

Even before that fateful meeting, Estorick was a major celebrity in the art world, with clients like J. Paul Getty, who was then considered one of the world’s wealthiest men. He also he did business regularly with many Hollywood stars. Among his clients were director Billy Wilder, and actors Edward G. Robinson, Kirk Douglas, and Burt Lancaster.

Eric told Art about the time Groucho Marx was in London, and how Groucho spent a considerable amount of time browsing through the Estorick Art Gallery. He even selected a few paintings for purchase. When Groucho came in to settle up, he told Eric, “I’m not paying you.”

“Why not?” Eric asked.

“Because my presence here has brought enough notoriety to the gallery that I feel I’ve earned these paintings.”

And that was that.
Art says Groucho eventually paid Estorick.

Through their enduring friendship with Eric and Salome Estorick, the Marshalls were invited to Erte’s 90th birthday celebration in New York. It was held in the arts district in Soho, and one of the hostesses was former *Vogue* editor Diana Vreeland.

“We were with the Estoricks and Erte from four to six weeks a year between New York, London, Barbados, Paris, and the south of France,” says Art.

The Estoricks had a flat in London and a magnificent home in Barbados next to the home of Oscar-winning actress Claudette Colbert (*It Happened One Night*), who the Marshalls sat with on the beach almost every day and with whom they occasionally had cocktails. They had first met her at the big *Vogue* magazine party honoring Erte. When Jayn and Art went to Barbados the first time Art copied several of Colbert’s movies off cable, including the 1930s classics *Tovarich*, with Charles Boyer, and *I Cover the Waterfront*, with Ben Lyon. He gave them to her and the next morning she told him she had stayed up late to watch the Waterfront movie. It had been over 50 years since she had made it.

The Marshalls had met Estorick when he was alone at the Pritikin Institute, and they instantly became so friendly that Eric invited them to in effect be a part of his close circle of friends, and after that they vacationed together regularly. Through the years whenever he was on the West Coast he would stop and stay with the Marshalls in Las Vegas.

“With both Jayn and myself being art lovers, and she an artist, it was both a pleasure and a privilege to befriend Eric and get to attend the big parties for Erte,” Art says.

Eric was a big fan of Jayn’s paintings. There was one untitled painting in particular that he loved, and he told her if she would do a series of paintings around that theme, he would do a show of her work in London.

“Of course, she declined,” Art says, “as I knew she would, because Jayn painted only because it was her passion, and not for commercial or show purposes.”

It was on a vacation trip to France with the Estoricks and Erte that Art was able to do a huge favor for the great artist. Erte wrote about in his book *My Life/My Art*.
One morning we set off to visit the places that I had loved so much in the past. We began with the Laghut monastery, which I used to visit often. Then we went to Menton to find my father’s grave. It was very difficult to locate, as there was no caretaker at the cemetery. Fortunately, Arthur Marshall, a friend of the Estoricks, was with us. Arthur truly possesses a sixth sense—he found my father’s grave among thousands of others. It was very damaged and I immediately had it restored.”

“Jayn and I spent so much time with Erte, through our friendship with the Estoricks, that he became a very good friend of ours,” Art says. “He was a delightful person, every good spirited and with a good sense of humor.”

Erte was born Romain de Tirtoff in St. Petersburg. His father was an admiral general. He went to Paris before the Revolution to become a fashion designer. He would regale the Estoricks and Marshalls with stories about Nijinsky, Pavlova and Diaghilev, the Ballet Russes, and the Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna.

Art recalls a time when he and Jayn were in New York at the Estorick’s hotel suite. They were preparing to leave for the airport and wanted to say goodbye to Erte, but he had not come into the main room. Eric went to look for him and came back shortly and said, “Erte is bathing and currently washing his balls, and having a good time with it.”

They all laughed at the bold proclamation, which was characteristic of the open friendship they shared.

While Erte in his nineties had failing vision, as most people do, he was too vain to wear glasses in public, so when the Marshalls would walk in the streets of New York with him, Art and Jayn would take either arm to assist him. Jayn once asked Erte whether when he was alone he would also forego glasses when walking, and he cheerily replied, “I never wear glasses in public, but I also fall down a lot.”

Art recalls another time when he and Jayn were with Erte and the Estoricks at their home in Haute de Cagnes in the south of France. Their home was in part of a 15th Century chateau where they were allowed to remodel only the interior, but were not allowed to alter the exterior. They had four levels and had installed a narrow circular staircase. Erte was unable to carry his luggage, so Art volunteered and questioned why the bags were so heavy. It was because Erte had brought his exercise equipment with him.
Eric Estorick also introduced the Marshalls to renowned Russian artist Yuri Kuper, who also became a fan of Jayn’s work and offered to do a show for her in Paris. Again, she declined.

Kuper’s works are in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and his paintings and sculptures have been shown in the U.S., Japan, and Europe. Art has purchased many of his works through the years.

One critic said of Yuri’s work: “There is such sweet tragedy and comfort in his faded, familiar objects from childhood, or from a failed marriage, or an abandoned garage. Using the classic processes of the modern artist, through texture, mood, tone, and color, Kuper gives his work the quality of hallowed archaeological mummies.”

On that same visit in France, Kuper had called Sal Estorick and asked if he could join them, and bring a guest, which they were told was to be the gorgeous actress Catherine Deneuve. When he arrived with a different beautiful woman, they were only mildly disappointed.

Art says he did get to see Deneuve once in a shop on Madison Avenue, below his and Jayn’s apartment.

“I heard a voice behind me,” he says, “and when I turned it was Catherine Deneuve and a friend. That was truly a memorable moment.”

It was in Haute de Cagnes when they all received the news that Manuel, Erte’s long-time houseman/companion was near death back in Paris. They all returned, and after Manuel died and the funeral service was held, Art recalls Erte sitting quietly, reflecting on his loss. After a period of silence, Erte looked up and said, “If one of us had to go, better it was him than me.”

As cold as those words look on a page, Art says that Erte was just expressing a painfully truthful human emotion.

“In so many ways, the Estoricks made a big change in our lives, Art says. “They brought our understanding and appreciation of the art world to a much higher level, and we are very grateful for that.”
Kirk Douglas expressed that same sentiment to Art at a reception for Yitzhak Shamir at Merv Adelson’s house in Bel Air. He told Art, “Eric taught me an awful lot about paintings and the art world.”

Art told Douglas that when he was growing up in Cleveland, and seeing this Jewish actor star in the movie *The Champion*, that Art and his peers considered him their champion as well. Years later, after seeing Kirk make an emotional appearance with his son Michael on the Academy Awards, even after suffering a stroke some years before, Art sent him a note says, “You are even more of a champion to me now.”

Douglas sent him back a nice hand-written note.

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It was in New York one time with Kuper that Art and Jayn first spent an evening at the restaurant Elaine’s with film director Robert Altman, who had collaborated with Yuri on the film *Vincent and Theo*, about the life of Vincent Van Gogh. Kuper also did all the stage sets for a light opera called *McTeague for Two*, that Altman composed and directed.

It was after the 1993 opening in Chicago of *McTeague*, that the Marshalls joined Yuri Kuper and Bob and Kathryn Altman for dinner. The following year, Altman directed the movie *Pret a Portier* with Marcello Mastroianni and Sophia Loren. Art was invited to go to Russia with Kuper, Altman, and Mastroianni to do some post-production filming. Unfortunately, he had to attend an important Clark County Commission meeting and missed a great adventure.

“Great artists are celebrities wherever they go,” Art says. “And Jayn and I knew when we were in the company of talented artists there was no limit to whom we might meet.”

It was at a party in connection with a Yuri Kuper art show that Art and Jayn had a fun meeting with a prince.

“It was at one of those lavish apartments on Park Avenue,” Art says, “and Eric arranged an invitation for us. When we came to the door a stately gentleman greeted us and Jayn held out her hand and said, ‘I’m Jayn Marshall of Las Vegas.’ And with a twinkle in his eye, the man said, ‘I’m Michael of Greece.’ The joke was that he was actually the Prince of Greece. In any event we all got along great and had a wonderful conversation.”
Art sat on a couch later that evening and in front of him on a table was a photo album. It was encased in worn velvet. He picked it up and started paging through it, and noticed that there were notations under all the photos. Captions like Cousin Bertie and Uncle George and Aunt Victoria. They would be casually dressed in some of the photographs, and wearing cloaks and crowns in others.

“I got such a kick out of that album,” Art says, “because all these photographs were of royalty, but the captions underneath showed that Prince Michael of Greece’s family was just like anyone else’s, they just happened to belong to royal families.”

It was through Yuri Kuper that the Marshalls and Roussos were privileged to have dinner in Moscow with the great artist Zurab Tsereteli, who created the sculpture, Good Defeats Evil, which portrays St. George slaying the dragon that fronts the United Nation building in New York; and the evocative Tear of Grief monument, which was a gift from Russia to America in memory of the 9-11 tragedy, that is located in Bayonne, New Jersey. It contains the names of all the victims of that terrible day.

Tsereteli had asked Kuper to arrange a dinner with Art on that trip because he had been informed that Art was well connected to the casino industry in Las Vegas.

“The dinner was held in a private room in a hotel,” Art says, “and it was an incredible presentation. There were mounds of caviar and seafood. Tsereteli, who is also the President of the Russian Academy of Arts, arrived with bodyguards, and accompanying him was the woman head of Dior Europe and a famous Russian actress, whose name I can’t recall. At one end of the table were the Roussos and the Marshalls, and at the other end the Russian dignitaries.

“I asked Yuri what happened as dinner was concluding,” Art says, “and he explained that business was not discussed at the first meeting, that this was just to get to know us and show us Russian hospitality. I said that we were leaving the following morning, and that any business we had to discuss had to be done this night.

“I moved over to Tsereteli, and he told me he wanted me to bring Nevada casino owners to Moscow to open casinos there. I expressed my concern that Russian banks were closed at the time. He assured me that there was plenty of money in Moscow. Nothing much came of the meeting, but I got a taste of how business was done in Russia.”
On that same trip, Abe Foxman arranged a meeting for the Marshalls and Roussos to meet with a billionaire Jewish oligarch, a man named Vladimir Gusinsky, a media baron who was considered the “Rupert Murdoch of Russia.” The meeting was held in the same building where the mayor of Moscow had headquarters. The security at the building was immense, in part due to Gusinsky’s open criticism of both Boris Yeltsin and later Vladimir Putin. Gusinsky’s office was beautifully decorated with antiques and paintings. They had a cordial visit and were then taken to an old Moscow synagogue, where they were greeted by an elderly man who spoke only Russian and Yiddish.

Art says he was fortunate to remember enough Yiddish from his grandparents to get by in conversation. Upon leaving, their party was confronted outside the building by many beggars claiming to be Jewish. Art had been cautioned to ignore them, as they were only pretenders, but one man came up to Art and in perfect Yiddish said, “Please help me, I am truly a Jewish person.”

Art gave him a hundred-ruble note, which was worth less than ten dollars.

“It was easier to give than refuse,” he says. “Plus, it made me feel better.”

[Note: Gusinsky is currently living in exile, for his outspoken criticism of Putin.]

On a subsequent flight to St. Petersburg, the couples ended up with two coach tickets and two in business class, which they gave to Jayn and Este. The women were treated with great courtesy by two men also seated in business class. That evening in the hotel dining room, Jayn and Este saw the two men who had shown them kindness, and they went over to their table to thank them. When they did so, the waiter at Art’s and Herb’s table whispered to them that the men were prominent figures in the Russian Mafia.

In St. Petersburg, the Marshalls and Roussos hooked up with fellow gaming regulator Steve DuCharme and his wife Patty Becker, a prominent Las Vegas attorney. They engaged a guide and went to the Yusupov Palace, where they were shown the cellar where Rasputin was murdered. They next visited many of the great Russian palaces, which were home to Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, Alexander, and others. The Alexander Palace was the residence of the last Czar Nicholas II. They were shown his study and visited Alexandra’s famous Mauve Bedroom. They were all surprised at how simple their quarters were.
The also visited the Hermitage Museum Collections, where there were as many as a dozen Rembrandts in one room.

That was the last major trip the Marshalls and Roussos would take together, but it couldn’t have been more special. For Art to visit the birthplace of his ancestors and see those memorable sites was a long-awaited dream.

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One idea that Art regrets never came to fruition was his endeavor through Estorick to get Erte’s name on a fragrance.

“I would explain to Eric that they had licenses to market the Erte brand on glass, on scarves, and graphics and sculptures, but they had never made a deal on a perfume or cologne,” Art says. “And it was my firm belief that a fragrance would be sensational. So I kept pushing Eric on that.”

So Eric and Erte gave Art the contract to find a fragrance, and told him he would get 10 percent of the royalties that they got. Erte had already designed a number of bottles, and this was going to be Art’s baby. Erte was 93 years old at the time, so time was of the essence.

The first name that came to mind was actor Cary Grant, who was on the board of directors of the Faberge fragrance company. Because Grant was a close friend of MGM’s principal owner Kirk Kerkorian, he was frequently in Las Vegas, and Art would see the actor occasionally at the hotel, when he was at the Marshall Roussos store there. One day Art was with Herb Roussos and attorney Sydney Irmas, and he saw Grant coming up the escalator. He approached him and reintroduced himself, as they had met before, and he mentioned his relationship with Erte.

Grant said, “I know Erte. Is he still alive?”

Art said yes, and explained that Erte was 93, and that the idea of his name on a fragrance could be a perfect blend of brand and product. Grant told Art to call Dan Manila, who was running Faberge and explain that the two had talked and that Cary felt it was a fabulous idea.

“I’ll even be available to launch the product when it comes out,” Grant told Art. “We’ll launch it in Paris, on Bastille Day.”
This chance meeting also reacquainted Cary Grant with Syd Irmas, the attorney who had worked with Grant negotiating his divorce from Dyan Cannon, and issues regarding custody of their daughter Jennifer.

What followed over the next few months were several phone calls and visits between Art and the famed actor.

“I was very excited about the potential for this deal coming to fruition,” says Art. “We got to the contract stage with Faberge, which was owned by another friend of mine, Meshulem Riklis, when at the last minute they pulled the plug on us. This was going to be Faberge’s move up into a higher market, because at the time they had lower market fragrance products like Brut cologne, which you could buy almost anywhere, including discount stores and drug stores. But the five million dollars it would take to launch the product scared Faberge, and at the very last minute they decided not to budget for it.”

This was a big disappointment to Art, who had put a lot of energy and time into the deal, and when it vanished he got a deal signed with another much smaller fragrance developer. But that company unfortunately got caught in a cash crunch when Bloomingdale’s went into bankruptcy. And then Erte died, and with that all interest vanished. “Like all business ventures, timing is critical,” Art says. “And in that case the timing was just not on our side.”

There’s one other story regarding Eric Estorick that Art wasn’t able to fully appreciate until about 10 years after he first heard it.

The Marshall family was in London in the 1960s when Art got a phone call from someone at Temple Beth Shalom in Las Vegas. He was president of the Temple at the time. The caller said he wanted Art to check out a synagogue in London called Westminster Synagogue at Rutland Gate that had retrieved 1400 Torahs from Czechoslovakia. These were famous Torahs because the Nazis had collected them with the idea of creating a museum of—according to their chilling stated goal—“the former Jewish race.”

The Torahs were hundreds of years old, from several different generations. Art and Jayn and Todd and Cari visited the synagogue, and they were more than impressed by the collection of Torahs, many of which were wrapped in bloody rags and garments from Jewish victims of the holocaust trying to protect them. Many of them had hang-tags with swastikas on them. The Marshalls were told as they toured the synagogue that an English art dealer had rescued them, by
arranging with someone in London to purchase them so they could be protected and displayed with the proper respect.

At least a decade later, Art and Jayn met Estorick and befriended him, and they were spending time with Eric and his wife Sal at their home in s de Cagnes, near Cannes in the south of France. With them on this particular evening was Bernice Rubens, a noted author who had written a number of best-selling books, including two that became movies: *I Sent a Letter to My Love*, starring Simone Signoret, and *Madame Sousazka*, starring Shirley MacLaine.

During the conversation, Art said to Bernice, “Do you know about the Torahs in London?”

Art says he saw her give a quick, knowing look to Eric, and he looked back at her, and it dawned on Art at that moment that Eric was in fact the dealer who had arranged to bring the Torahs to London. It was one of those light-bulb moments that informed him just how important his friend was in the art world and in the Jewish world.

“Eric filled us in on the whole story that night, and it was just incredible to hear about it,” Art says. “Those Torahs are being given to synagogues all over the world on permanent loan. Las Vegas has at least three of them.”

Art says that while Eric and Salome have passed on, they brought great joy and knowledge to the Marshalls’ lives and get full credit for introducing them to the art world.

“The times we spent with them at different locations around the world are memorable,” Art says. “We have the pleasure of continuing the experience with the Estoricks’ son Michael, a writer who lives in London, and daughter Isabel, a lovely, bright, and talented woman of wit and charm who is involved in theater and the arts and with whom I am often in delightful contact. Michael and Isabel oversee the Estorick Collection of modern Italian art in London, which is one of London’s finest art collections.”

Another big name that Art met around this time was Jay Rockefeller, who was running for the U.S. Senate in West Virginia. He was already the past governor of the state, and on a campaign trip through Las Vegas Art met him and donated to his campaign.
Art’s father Leo couldn’t get over the irony of his son—born of a Russian immigrant who worked as a tinsmith—giving money to a Rockefeller.

“I met Jay at the Sands Hotel,” Art says, and he told us a story about taking his children to Israel, and how they spent a night in a Kibbutz near one of the borders. While they were there, the Palestinians were sending rockets into that Kibbutz. Rockefeller told him, “That night, my children and I became Israelis. I realized what it was like to be there. (Note: A Kibbutz is a collective farm, and many were put together in Israel to grow produce and other foods.)

Another famous politician that Art came to know was John Kerry, who once saved Chic Hecht’s life by performing a Heimlich maneuver on him when he was choking on a piece of meat. Obviously, Kerry’s quick thinking brought these two prominent men from different sides of the political aisle together in a special way.

Art was with then Senator Kerry and Harry Reid in 1998, after Kerry’s failed Presidential bid against George Bush, when he was running for the Senate again. They were having a friendly conversation, when Art told Reid, “It cost me $300,000 to support John Kerry.”

Reid was astounded at that figure. Art explained that when Jayn found out how much he had donated to the Kerry campaign, she said, “Don’t tell me you can’t afford to redo the apartment in Coronado.”

The eventual remodel cost Art $300,000.
Chapter Fifteen: The Family Getaway

Art gives Jayn full credit for their eventual purchase of an apartment at Coronado Shores, a development at the island community close to San Diego. In 1990 Art and Jayn were at the San Diego Museum to view a major display of Imperial Russian Faberge eggs. Jayn suggested they hire a broker to show them apartments at Coronado as she had been enthusiastic for years about having a place where the Marshall family could spend time together in the summer away from the Las Vegas heat.

Their friends Alan and Suzanne Feld had highly recommended Coronado, as it was a safe and quiet Mayberry type village just an hour from Las Vegas by air, where the family could spend quality time together. Eventually Todd bought an apartment near theirs and Cari and Dana, after leasing for a few summers, eventually also bought in apartment in the same building.

Many friends over the years have either bought or visited the Marshalls in Coronado, among them, Irene Sarver, Robert Sarver and his family, Dr. Morley and Very Rosenfield, Dr. Phillip and Judy Berman, Jon and Jane Pollack, Dr. Leon and Faye Steinberg, Dr. David and Betsy Steinberg, Carolyn Towbin, Irwin and Susan Molasky, Ed and Mona Sher, and prominent Coronado restaurateur Mayson Hwa.

As long as they had a beautiful spot on the ocean, Jayn realized that if they had a boat it would be a greater enticement for the children and grandchildren to spend time there. Art knew nothing about boating and had no idea where to start. If inquiring with friends, he purchased a 43-foot Hatteras Motor yacht called Argo Navis that was 10 years old and had only 400 hours. He took some lessons and invited all along for a family ride. He had just left Gloriatta Bay and gotten to the Coronado Bridge when the engines died. He frantically called Ken Black, whom he had recently hired as a captain and mechanic and he came to the rescue, changed fuel filters, and Art nervously returned to the marina.

Eventually Art got more comfortable with the boat and enjoyed that first summer with it, but he felt the layout of the boat was difficult, so within a year he sold it and bought a 1981 61-foot Hatteras cockpit motor yacht with an on-deck salon, a flying bridge, three staterooms, a fully equipped kitchen, and all the other
trimmings for a luxury yacht which would allow them the host many friends. Art says it was “a totally equipped condo on the water.”

They named the boat the Russian Bear at the suggestion of granddaughter Dana. One of their first excursions was to celebrate dear friend Burton Cohen’s birthday. Along were Todd and his wife Vivi, Cari, Linda Cohen, Alex and Arda Yemenidjian, and Kirk Kerkorian and friend. Kirk had come to San Diego on his boat October Rose. They docked at a waterfront restaurant and had a wonderful time. Kirk invited all the next morning onto his boat, which Art says was magnificent and almost three times the size of the Russian Bear.

Jayn proceeded to refurbish and redecorate the Bear and it came out great. Special times were enjoyed when they would take the boat to Catalina Island for a three-day stay and tie up in Avalon Harbor to a buoy that belonged to Jerry and Joyce Mack and visit Herb and Este Roussos, who had a home there. The trip would take from five to six hours, and they were often accompanied by porpoises swimming alongside.

Later, Art acquired a 30-foot triple-cockpit classic mahogany speedboat from Hackercraft, that the family could use to putt around the harbor without having to move their yacht. Bill Morgan, who built the boat, even came to Coronado to visit the Marshalls and showed them how to dock the boat. It was not easy at first, put they eventually put a bow thruster in the Hackercraft which made docking magic. They called the boat the Lady Jayn, even though Jayn was never convinced buying it was a good idea and never liked the hard ride and the close-to-the-water feeling.

Time passed and Todd has his own boats through the years, and because the Russian Bear was not being used as much the Marshalls decided to get a smaller, easier to handle boat. Art had heard about the Hinckley Picnic Boat, a 36-footer with a water jet drive and a joy stick that made it a dream to operate. It was the talk of the boating world and was featured in many magazines. They sold the Hackercraft and the Russian Bear and ordered a Hickley to be built.

In the meantime Art and Jayn went, at their own expense, to Prague for a gaming conference and then on to Russia with the Roussos.

The Marshalls had been collecting Russian art for years, and they enjoyed Moscow immensely, especially when they were joined by their artist friend Yuri Kuper, who came from Paris and served as their expert guide. From Moscow, they travelled to St. Petersburg for another six days.
Upon returning to the U.S., they went to Maine to see their Hinckley boat being made, and receive some jet-drive handling instructions.

Their boat was completed in January that year and they returned to Maine with the Roussos for more practice with the boat. They named it the Spirit of ’29, the joint year of Art’s and Jayn’s births. They kept the boat at the Hinckley factor so they could use it in conjunction with business trips to New York, and then had it shipped to Coronado in June.

The entire family loved the new boat and they had 10 years of pleasure with it.

Art sold the boat after Jayn passed in 2010 to a lovely couple at their yacht club. The Russian Bear was bought by a Mexican gentleman, Anwar Nami, who family were long-time summer residents at Coronado and also own collector cars. Many times Mr. Nami offered Art the use of the renamed Bear along with its captain as his guest.
Chapter Sixteen: Harry Jackson

Another great artist that Art came to know and befriend was painter and western sculptor Harry Jackson.

To say that Jackson had a colorful background would be a huge understatement. His father, born Harry Allen Shapiro, was an enforcer for the Al Capone crime gang in Chicago in the 1920s, and is said to have committed his first contract murder at age 13. Harry Shapiro married a madam and prostitute, Ellen Grace Jackson, and when their son Harry was born she gave him her last name because she felt her husband’s name was more tainted.

As a boy Harry Jackson developed an early interest in drawing and attended Saturday classes at the Art Institute of Chicago. Upon seeing a photo spread in Life magazine, he became instantly enamored with cowboys, and he ran away from home in 1938 at age 14 and hitchhiked to Wyoming. Young Harry found work as a ranch hand in Cody, and called the area around Cody his “spiritual birthplace.”

Decades later Jackson told Art that the reason he ran away from home was because his grandmother wanted him to kill his mother’s lesbian lover. Needless to say the blue skies and wide-open spaces of Wyoming must have felt like heaven to an adolescent who had been through so much inner-city drama, and who had such notorious family ties.

In his teens Harry continued to take art classes and sketched the ranch life around him. He enlisted in the Marines during World War II, and while on combat intelligence duty in the Pacific he did reconnaissance sketches. He was seriously wounded during the battle for Betio on Tarawa atoll and on Saipan.

After the war, Jackson became an official Marine artist, and he discovered modern art. After his discharge, he moved to New York City, where he became a friend and protégé of Jackson Pollack, the leading abstract expressionist.

By the early 1980s, Jackson was one of America’s highest paid artists and his work was collected in major museums around the world. By then Harry had turned to sculpture and became instantly popular in that medium, but he was also troubled by the business side of art. Partly due to post-traumatic stress disorder from his injuries in the war, and an eccentric personality attributable to the bizarre circumstances of his upbringing, Jackson was distrustful of art agents and dealers.
That explains in part why he found a friend in Art Marshall, who by the
time they met had been around nearly every personality type imaginable. Their
meeting happened by chance. One day Art saw an ad in a western magazine for
Harry Jackson sculptures, and he liked them very much. Harry by then was selling
direct to the public, and with Art’s desire to get a dealer’s reduced price, he called
the number in the ad and explained that he dealt in antiques and sculptures in his
stores and was interested in purchasing some pieces. Art also explained to the
person who’d answered his call that he was friends with Eric Estorick and
connected with the Erte program.

This phone call prompted a return call from Harry Jackson himself, seeking
information about Estorick and whether he might be interested in handling Jackson
as a client, because Harry was aware of how much success Eric had enjoyed with
Erte.

When Art contacted Eric with this query, Estorick suggested that Harry
speak with David Rogath, who owned a company called Chalk & Vermilion. Art
and Jayn flew to Wyoming and met with Jackson and Rogath, but they were not
able to put a partnership together because Rogath wanted Jackson to produce new
work at an active rate and Harry wasn’t willing at that point in his life to do that.

Nevertheless Art and Harry Jackson developed an ongoing phone
friendship, and the Marshall family acquired a number of his sculptures.

Jackson was one of the first contemporary artists to paint color on his
bronzes. They were traditionally done in two ways, either in a bronze-finish patina,
or in the old days in Austria cold-painted in color with what was called
polychrome. Harry Jackson revived the polychrome world by what he called three-
dimensional paintings. When he would produce a series like *Dog Soldier*, he would
produce a limited number in polychrome and a greater number in patina, which
was the accepted mode. Originally, the patinas outsold the polychromes, but
eventually the polychromes became far more valuable and in demand than the
patinas.

One night Art and Jayn were at dinner at the Desert Inn with Kirk
Kerkorian and his date, Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme, Alex and Arda
Yemenidjian, and Burton and Linda Cohen, when he became involved in an
auction over the phone to purchase a *Dog Soldier* sculpture. This was before cell
phones, so Art had to return to the phone several times to keep bidding on the
piece.
“I wound up buying the bronze right there for something in the twenty thousand dollar range,” Art says. “One of the reasons I bought it was because I didn’t see any way I could come back to the dinner table and admit to our friends that I didn’t get it,” he adds, with a laugh.

The following day Art called Harry to tell him that he had bought the bronze and was supporting his market.

“And my thanks for telling him was to get the worst 20 minutes of phone I’d ever had in my life,” Art says. “Harry went on about how he didn’t make a f---ing dime on the sale and that everybody was making money on his work but him. The language was just unbelievable, and Harry kept ranting until finally he said, ‘You want to hang up, don’t you?’

“And I said, ‘Harry, I wanted to hang up 20 minutes ago.’

“He said, ‘Why didn’t you?’

“And I said, ‘Because you were in so much pain I had to let you vent.’

“Harry then said, ‘Art, it shows me one thing:’ the goodness in you is greater than the devil in me.’

“And I thought that was one of the greatest lines I ever heard,” Art says, “and a very nice compliment.”

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Note: It occurs to the author of this memoir that Harry Jackson’s assessment of Art was another indicator of his artistic genius, for he couldn’t have phrased it better. In the many hours I spent with Art listening to the stories of his life—all told with the sharpness of memory that would be the envy of people thirty years his junior--what comes through in every tale is a sense of compassion.

If someone acted wrongly in a story, Art would explain the indiscretion with a sense of apology and forgiveness, and in most cases ask that the story be left out of the final version. He fully appreciated that harsh words set down in print can have a long-lasting and harmful effect, whether on the person behind the misdeed, or surviving relatives who might be hearing the story for the first time. And if he thought of a fun or noble story about a person from a back chapter of his
life, he would either call or e-mail with the note that “we shouldn’t leave this one out.”

These thoughtful considerations are ingrained in the DNA of this “kid from Cleveland,” who by any measure has led a remarkable and highly admirable life. It was my honor to help him get it all down in writing.—Jack Sheehan
Chapter Seventeen: Other Important Friends and Honorable ‘Menchens’:
(In Art’s words)

Vice-President Joe Biden: I’ve been a friend of Joe Biden for over 25 years. When he ran for President in 1988 I helped him get on the ballot by soliciting several people to make donations towards his campaign. And even after I’d made a commitment to support Hillary Clinton when she ran for the Democratic nomination in 2008, I got a call from Biden to make a contribution to his campaign, which I did. He sent me a gracious personal thank-you note that said, “Art, you’re the best.” Joe’s a really good guy and I appreciate his friendship.

Senator Rudy Boschwitz (R—Minnesota): A former U.S. Senator whose advice and counsel I seek at election time. He and his wife Ellen have been long-time friends. He came to Las Vegas to speak and stayed the night at our home. Jayn and I had a fundraiser for him when he ran for reelection. He was a good friend of Chic Hecht’s and is highly regarded.

Al McCaw: Al was my man Friday at Marshall Rousso. He applied for a part-time truck-driver job while serving as a sergeant at Nellis AFB. He became a most trusted employee and friend. He was in charge of the warehouse and distribution of merchandise to the stores. He had the keys to all the stores and even to our homes. He was really part of the family. Al oversaw all the drivers, all remodeling, and even store construction. He is the person that Alarmco would call night or day. He was truly a best friend to me and the family. He had retired from the Air Force after an overseas tour and returned and worked for us full time. Todd gave him an ownership interest in one of our gift shops when he retired. He would always tell me he would be my driver when I got old. Al had a heart attack and passed some years ago. We all miss him to this day.

Stanley and Nan Schwartz were among our dearest social friends. Stanley was one of the funniest men ever. Some of the hotel comics would visit his Big and Tall men’s shop just to gather material from Stanley. He passed on early, but Jayn and
Nan remained close friends. Nan’s father was Leonard Tose, owner of the Philadelphia Eagles NFL team. Leonard once invited the four of us to Super Bowl XXXIX in New Orleans in 2005. Even though the Eagles lost, we had a great time. Leonard was a fabulous host and we traveled around New Orleans by limousine with a motorcycle escort even if we were going only a few short blocks. You never know what life will turn up next. Nan’s daughter is Carol Fisher, who is the executive director of the Nathan Adelson Hospice. Carol was a godsend in providing palliative care for Jayn during her battle with cancer. Carol and Irwin Molasky, co-founder of the hospice with Merv Adelson, along with nurse Terry Ritchie and Dr. Warren Wheeler, made it possible for Jayn to pass peacefully in her own home.

Dr. Alan Feld and wife Suzanne have been friends for over 50 years. Alan is one of Nevada’s foremost physicians and was doctor to many of the major figures in the casino industry and community leaders. He had the oldest patient census in Las Vegas, which meant his patients lived long under his care. I recall at a gaming dinner event long after he retired being seated with a group of casino owners including Dr. Feld. A comment was made that even though Alan was retired these people still called on him and would not see another physician unless he or she would be willing to consult with Alan. With Suzanne, whose father and brother were doctors, Alan took care of our parents and us. When my father started to develop rheumatoid arthritis, Alan gave him gold shots and it worked. Alan is a doctor’s doctor, and even though he has been retired for many years he has stayed informed with the latest advances in medicine. He has followed my granddaughter Dana’s battle with Crohn’s for over 20 years, and is always ready to call with any new information he’s found. He has been a strong supporter of bringing the Cleveland Clinic to Nevada and has participated in many meetings with community leaders, many of whom are his former patients. I have on many occasions picked his brain for friends and associates needing medical advice. Dr. Feld is a former Governor of the College of Physicians and former Governor of the College of Cardiologists. He stays closely involved with his alma maters Princeton, Columbia, and UCLA. I speak to Alan and Suzanne several times a week. They’ve had a home in Coronado for many years, and some 25 years ago I followed Suzanne’s advice to buy a three-bedroom over a two-bedroom unit. The Felds have been a source of comfort to us with Dana’s issues and the loss of Jayn. I am blessed to have them in my life.
Jerry Countess was a great executive director of the Jewish Federation of Las Vegas. He was there while I was president and he did all the heavy lifting. Jerry, Mel Exber, and I went on a President’s 5-day mission to Israel. We were there the night Begin left for Camp David at the Knesset. Mel got up to announce his pledge and said, “Mr. Prime Minister, my name is Mel Exber from Las Vegas, the entertainment capitol of the world, and I have always dreamed of putting together a group like this for a junket to my hotel.” The group roared. When I was asked to take the presidency years later after some controversy, I agreed only if Jerry would come out of retirement. With thanks mostly to Jerry, we got the thing going again. Jerry has also written some good novels. Sadly, he lost his dear Rae, but carries on.

Jerry Greenberg has become a very close friend. We live in the same tower and generally have lunch three or four days each week. It is a blessing to meet someone late in your life and develop such a close friendship. Jerry lost his dear Robin almost four years ago and came to my rescue when I lost Jayn. He and his lovely fiancé Carol are great to be with. Jerry was a most successful businessman and is a most sophisticated gentleman, and we are politically aligned.

Paul and Sue Lowden are long-time friends and we recently traveled to Singapore for Sheldon Adelson’s birthday. I first met Paul when I was on the PERS Board. He and Bill Raggio came to see me regarding his PERS mortgage at the Hacienda Hotel, and we came to an accord on some minor issues. The Lowdens went on to buy the Sahara, which he later sold to Bill Bennett.

Irwin and Susan Molasky have been dear friends for almost 50 years. Irwin is one of the men who built Las Vegas. He built Sunrise Hospital, Nathan Adelson Hospice, the Boulevard Shopping Center, Bank of America Building, Park Towers, Paradise Homes, LaCosta Hotel and Spa outside San Diego, the Molasky Corporate Center in downtown Symphony Park, along with numerous other projects. Irwin and Susan are strong supporters of local charities and those in Israel. Susan is a tireless worker for good causes and always there for a friend in need. Our children grew up together and are very close friends. Our families are often together in Coronado, over holidays, and at the racetracks, where Todd and their son Andrew Molasky own horses together. Many years back Cari was searching for a house, and we came upon one just a few steps from our home at the
Las Vegas Country Club. It belonged to Merv Adelson and had been his parents’ home. Merv’s father Nate had passed and his mother remained there with care, but the home was now for sale. I called Irwin’s office to get in touch with Merv and was told that Irwin and Merv were travelling. When I finally reached them, Merv asked who the house was for and how much we wanted to pay. He then passed the phone to Irwin, who told me to call Terry Wright, the owner of Nevada Title Company. When I went to see Terry, he told me that when I came in I was to be asked how much I wanted to pay for the house and that would be the selling price. Terry said that was the first time he’d ever heard of that kind of offer. What more can I say about Irwin or Merv?

Burton and Linda Cohen have been dear friends of ours forever. Jayn and I had multiple weekly dinners and movies and trips to Coronado and all the things good friends do. Burton and I have been involved in ADL for years pretty much as a team. He is like an uncle to my grandchildren. As a former president of the Desert Inn and the Dunes and a legend in the hotel and gaming industry, he was my go-to guy when I wanted to understand more about the gaming industry. Most importantly, Burton and Linda have been there for me every minute since Jayn passed. They along with my children have helped me get through the fog. Burton just celebrated his 90\textsuperscript{th} birthday. May he have many more.

Larry Woolf has been a friend for many years and was most helpful when we negotiated to lease at the then new MGM Grand in the early 1990s. He was the chairman and CEO at the time and could be counted on to keep things running smoothly. Larry is a handshake guy and a man of his word. He runs a good clean tight ship and his Navegante Group Inc. is a credit to the gaming industry.

A thank you to Allan Creel and Don Andress for their ongoing friendship and generosity. They and their wives Debbie and Madeleine are long-time great members and contributors to the Las Vegas community. This memoir is being beautifully handled and produced by Creel Printing.
I’ve mentioned Hank Greenspun several times in this memoir, but he is deserving of more. Hank and his wife Barbara were among our oldest friends in Las Vegas. Actually, Barbara and my mother-in-law Sara Saltzman were friendly when the Greenspuns first moved to Las Vegas. I recall Sara telling us of the times when Hank was bringing arms to Israel during the War of Independence, and Barbara’s concerns over how and where Hank was during those times. I was a fan of Hank’s during those early years when he was attacking Sen. Joe McCarthy and his red-baiting. When we lived in Cleveland I would follow Hank’s articles on McCarthy in the LV Sun. We got to serve together on the board of Temple Beth Sholom in the early 1960s along with Jerry Mack and Jack Entratter. We all became good friends. When Hank ran for governor we were proud to support him. I found out years later that he had put in a good word to Milton Prell at the Sahara when we were lobbying to get our first Strip dress shop there. Barbara and Jayn played tennis at the country club frequently and our children became friendly. Hank and Barbara were a large part of the soul of the Jewish community, particularly when it came to supporting the state of Israel. Most of the charitable events started out in their home, and it was through the Greenspuns that we got involved with AIPAC, Israel Bonds, and U.S. Senators Scoop Jackson and Frank Church. It was with Hank that we first met Begin, Sharon, Rabin, Teddy Kolleck, Ehud Olmert, and others.

I remember years when the Greenspuns had some tough financial times, especially when the Las Vegas Sun offices burned down. But they never stopped contributing no matter their circumstances. Hank would go to the bank and borrow a million dollars at say 6 percent and buy a million-dollar Israel Bond at 4 percent and pay the cost of the spread at $20,000. Hank was often asked to speak to large groups, and he would tell the story about his grandson Jonathan, who would not sit still in the car when Hank was driving. So Hank would exile him to the back seat, where it was safer. Before climbing over to the back seat, Jonathan would throw over all the stuffed animals and toys he had brought with him. Hank would eventually relent and let Jonathan back in the front seat if he promised to sit still, and the boy would immediately throw all the animals and toys back up to the front seat. Hank would explain to his audience that Jonathan knew that when Jews were sent somewhere they had to take their belongings with them because there was no assurance they could return. Hank was a fearless man. He had fallouts with Moe Dalitz from time to time, and Moe had declared Hank persona non grata. Willow Moricel, who was head hostess of the DI Country Club, told me that at a Halloween party Hank and Barbara showed up in witches’ costumes from head to toe. Having to identify themselves as club members, they told her who they were. She said her heart was in her throat, and soon after Moe came over and asked her if the rumor the Greenspuns were there was true. She timidly said, “Yes, Mr. Dalitz.” He paused.
and laughingly said, “That S.O.B. has balls!” Barbara and Hank taught the lesson tzedakah (giving) to their children and grandchildren. The Greenspuns have given countless millions to UNLV, cancer research, the LV Sun youth camp, animal care, and many other worthy causes. A few years ago our family had an intimate fundraiser for Crohn’s and Colitis where the average gifts ranged from $2500 to $5000, with a few at $25,000 in honor of our brave granddaughter Dana. The Greenspuns gave $250,000. They donated the land where Temple Ner Tamid sits. Susan Fine, Cari, and I are on the ADL Board. Danny, Cari, and I served on the Jewish Federation Board when Danny was president of that board. Brian has brought us together many times with President Bill and Hillary Clinton on world political issues. Janie Gale has led the way on animal care. Some years ago we persuaded Barbara to be the honoree for an ADL dinner. Not well at the time and in a wheelchair, she rallied for the evening and walked to the stage and said to Abe Foxman, “Look, Abe, I’m walking.” Elie Weisel came especially for Barbara and gave a magnificent speech. The evening was a huge success with over 700 people raising over $700,000. The Greenspun family rounded it up to a million. Our families have been close for over fifty years, and we love them individually and collectively.

More notes on the Nevada Gaming Commission: The Nevada Gaming Commission and the Gaming Control Board consisted of a group of fine, dedicated people whose friendships I treasure. My first chairman, Bill Curran, appointed me vice-chairman and is one of my most trusted friends. Bill mentored me, along with executive secretary of both the Commission and Control Board, Marilyn Epling. Marilyn is a lovely woman who taught me that the key word was suitability when it came to licensing applicants. Bill taught me that it was not necessary to prove we had read everything about applicants, only to then find some minor incidents and dirty them up for the record. If they were deemed suitable, so be it. He was also an example of courtesy to all as a member of the powerful Gaming Commission, where our decisions were final and there was judicial review. A policy of courtesy is not always followed in government by people in power.

One of my first fellow commissioners was former Nevada Lt. Governor Sue Wagner, who served with me for 12 years. Sue is a friend and hero to me, having been in a terrible airplane crash some years earlier where she suffered a serious back injury. There were many times during the meetings when she would have to
stand to relieve the pain, but she did so with nary a complaint. Debbie Griffin and
Augie Gurrola were also with me and both did a terrific job. When Debbie left the
Commission, Brian Sandoval replaced her. Bill Curran, after serving for 10 years,
returned full time to his law firm. Brian Sandoval replaced Bill as chairman and
Rhada Chanderajj was named to the Commission. She is both a lawyer and a CPA
and she brought expertise from both fields to the Commission. Brian asked me to
remain vice chairman, a position we would rotate yearly. Brian and I worked
together closely and we consider each other family. Jayn was also very fond of
Brian and our family was behind him one hundred percent when he ran for
attorney general. I consider Brian to be among the most honest and conscientious
people I have ever known. We feel Brian is destined for a great political career
after he completes his term or terms as Nevada governor.

Peter Bernhard was named Chairman of the Gaming Commission to replace Brian
Sandoval. Peter had represented the Dunes Hotel bankruptcy in our Marshall-
Roussso lease negotiations and was most fair and cooperative. He was part of the
Schreck law firm, which we began to use. Peter had been chairman of the Nevada
Commission on Ethics, and I engaged him to help me word my ethical disclosures
that I would announce in any matters that came before me during Commission
hearings. I strictly followed his advice for the 12 years I was on the Commission. I
consider Peter a legal giant, a man of great insight, and a gentleman. As he was a
Harvard graduate, we would chide him with the old line: “You can always tell a
Harvard man; you just can’t tell him much.” Peter has led the Gaming Commission
through overseeing many changes, mergers, buyouts, and more, and always with
thoughtful long-range thinking. Peter and I worked very closely and went through
many heavy agendas, such as the MGM/Mandalay Bay merger, the Pansy and
Daisy Ho investigation, Harrah’s, Stations, etc. I consider him a most trusted
friend. Augie Gurrola had served three terms and was replaced by John Moran Jr.,
who is a long-time family friend. John decided to run for Lt. Governor and
resigned mid-term. He was replaced by Dr. Ray Rawson, a former state senator
and very competent commissioner. Gov. Jim Gibbons appointed Dr. Tony Alamo
to that seat. I invited Tony to a short lunch that lasted several hours. I told him that
I strongly believed in second chances for casino workers who had lost their work
cards over minor infractions with the law, of course on a case-by-case basis. When
a major licensee got in trouble, he could hire the best advice and counsel to help
through the situation, but the individual dealers and other work-card holders could
not afford that kind of help. I asked him how he felt about the issue. He answered
that as a physician, he spent his life helping people, and he believed as I did in

The Marshall Plan 173
giving deserving people a second chance. We worked very well together, and I once called his father who I knew and told him how highly I regarded his son.

Lest I forget, I had replaced Bill Urga on the Commission and he was kind enough to meet with me and even had his secretary show me how to manage the incredible amount of paperwork for each meeting. It was typically two full file boxes for each meeting. (As I recall, I received over 1000 pages on the Ted Binion licensing matter for my first meeting a few days hence.)

In addition to the Commission, there was the Gaming Control Board, with whom we worked hand in hand. Bill Bible was the chairman, along with Steve DuCharme and Brian Harris. Steve had been a police officer and was very qualified. After my first few meetings, Bible said to me, “You may be too gentle-hearted to be a regulator.” I replied, “I’m learning.” He smiled, shook my hand, and said, “Good.” To this day we are the best of friends. I consider Bill Bible to be the best gaming regulator ever. I think it was DuCharme who called Bill “Mr. Memory.” During a particularly complicated transaction, Bill would ask questions that would take three or more of the applicant’s attorneys to answer, and each question required a different specialist in their field. Bill retired and became head of the Nevada Resort Association, so we continued to see each other and work on issues relating to the good of the state and the industry. You could always count on Bill Bible never to blindside you. Bill’s father was U.S. Senator Alan Bible and he lived in the Washington D.C. area. I once met television personality and actor Ben Stein at Susan Fine’s house, and he told me he grew up with Bill as a neighbor and that more than once Bill protected him during racial incidents at school. I always thought Bill belonged in D.C. as a White House Chief of Staff or a commensurate position. He is now a member of MGM Resorts International’s board of directors. After DuCharme, Dennis Neilander was appointed chairman of the Gaming Control Board. He was there for the MGM acquisitions with Mirage Resorts and Mandalay, and the complicated financial transactions with Harrah’s and Stations Casino. Dennis handled those with great skill and expertise, and I consider him a good friend. Bobby Siller, a former special agent for the FBI in charge of the Las Vegas office, was appointed as a Gaming Control Board member. We came from two different worlds--law enforcement and business--and occasionally had some differences, but they were healthy differences. We had many good discussions and as I once pointed out to him we had an agreement record of better than 95 percent,
which was better than we had with our wives. That comment, incidentally, got a
laugh at a meeting but not at home. I recently had a warm multi-hour phone
conversation with Bobby and I plan to stay in touch with him. I had the privilege of
working with many other talented Control Board people such as Randy Sayre,
Chief of Investigations and later a Control Board member, who befriended me at
my first Commission meeting; Mike Wilson, Chief Deputy Attorney General; and
former Deputy AG Jeffrey Rodefer, with whom I now work on the compliance
committee of Boyd Gaming. There are also many private attorneys that came
before us and for whom I have great respect, such as Robert Faiss, Frank Schreck,
Jeff Silver, Ellen Whittemore, David Arrajj, Mike Alonzo, Richard Wright, and
many others.

I first got to know Terry Lanni years ago at our Marshall Rousso store at Caesars
Palace. He and wife Debbie would come in from time to time. Terry and I worked
together on some store transactions with VIP customers that might want one of our
antique pieces the hotel would gift them. Terry was always a gentleman and we
were always able to come to a satisfactory arrangement on prices. Terry later
moved over to the new MGM Grand to become co-president. We had the large
Marshall Rousso store with exclusivity on all women’s and men’s apparel. Some
of the hotel executives wanted to have a separate men’s store as well.
Complications set in and negotiations became difficult. Fortunately, Terry stepped
in and everything was worked out satisfactorily. When I was appointed to the
Nevada Gaming Commission, I worked closely with Terry and Danny Wade on the
Private Salon issue. Terry was always interested in what was good for gaming as
an industry. His concerns were well beyond MGM. We visited often and after he
retired I missed him. Actually because of those early conversations with Terry, and
a previous meeting that Bill Curran and I had with Steve Wynn at The Mirage, I
saw the value of a dialogue between hotel owners and the commission members. I
asked Commission chairman Curran if I could host gaming lunch meetings with
casino owners and executives. We had a number of lunches at the Las Vegas
Country Club boardroom that held about 20 people. We had a deputy attorney
general there to make certain no open meeting laws were violated. We had great
owner attendance discussing issues relative to working closer with the state and the
industry, and we had some suggestions that required attention. I remember Michael
Gaughan saying this was one of the first times he had seen a group like this get
together. I continued these lunches for a number of years. After his retirement, I
did get to see Terry Lanni and Debbie occasionally at Del Mar. Sadly, we lost him
to cancer.
Steve Wynn in my opinion changed Las Vegas from a gambling town to a destination when he built The Mirage. He upgraded rooms, shopping, food, and entertainment. Ironically, his vision problems have given him even greater vision. I really got to know Steve better after I became a gaming commissioner. Bill Curran made me his vice-chairman and wanted us to meet with various owners. First we met with Steve, and that meeting lasted hours. Bill had some concerns about high-roller areas and that was worked out. Steve had received some paintings at that time and he shared them with us. I have been around the art world for some time, and I can say that Steve is as knowledgeable as anyone I have ever met about art. He showed us those great paintings and he knew them brushstroke by brushstroke. I realized the intensity he applies to everything he does certainly applied to art as well. Steve would phone me from time to time on industry gaming issues. We would not always agree, but I would learn something. Steve would invite the commissioners to tour pre-openings at Bellagio, and then Wynn and Encore. He would personally escort whoever showed up and explain from carpeting on up or how he improved access to parking for convention rooms from lessons learned at Bellagio to the Wynn. When we moved from the Las Vegas Country Club to a condo, I called Steve’s secretary and gave Steve all my auction catalogues from Sotheby’s and Christie’s as well as the Benezit Dictionnarre of painters, sculptors, etc. When we lost Jayn, Steve called and we had a long warm conversation. When I see him at events, he and Andrea are warm and friendly.

Bill Bennett became the head of the Mint Hotel where we operated the gift shop after Sam Boyd left. We became friends, and when he took over Circus Circus he offered us the women’s and men’s shop. We had just sold the Sara’s stores and had upgraded to selling better hotel shop merchandise, and we made the mistake of declining his offer. When he announced the building of Excalibur, I went to him hat in hand and asked for the store. Some years previously I had asked Bill to be the honoree at an ADL dinner, which he declined. Bennett had Bill Paulos call me and tell me the store was ours, but he didn’t want any honoree dinners. We had a meeting to discuss the lease, and he told me to get started on the store and the lease would come later. We opened very successfully and just as promised the lease came later. Bill Bennett later called and told me the leases for the store at Circus Circus had only a year left, and he would not renew the current operator. Did I want it? I said yes, so we went to the store owner and bought him out. Again we rebuilt the store before getting a signed lease, and I was totally comfortable with
Bill’s handshake. In those days Circus leases had a 90-day clause, which allowed Circus to buy out their leases. Bennett then built Luxor with limited space for shops. I called Bill and told him I thought that was a mistake. He asked me to come to his office that afternoon. Todd and I arrived, Bill Paulos was there, and I was asked to explain why I thought it was a mistake. Their thought was that the monorail to Excalibur would take care of their guests’ shopping needs. After stating our reasons, Bennett told Paulos to find us some space. I then said to Bennett, whose retirement was rumored, that I had never lost a moment’s sleep over those 90-day clauses, but I asked him what would happen when he was no longer there. He turned to Paulos and told him to remove the clauses, and they were removed. Bennett eventually left and bought the Sahara, where we still had our first hotel shop. I had retired from the stores and was bank chairman and on the Gaming Commission, but I made it a point to visit Bill every few months at the Sahara. His illness was starting to take a toll, but he was still sharp and amiable and we both enjoyed those visits. Bill Bennett was a gaming giant. He helped build Las Vegas and made a lot of people richer.

Growing up in Cleveland, I was well aware of the Cleveland Clinic medical facility and its reputation as one of the finest institutions of its kind in the world. My friend Eugene Warner, who was involved in many of the stories in this memoir and who was a close associate of Adnan Khashoggi’s, had been diagnosed with colon cancer while in London with Khashoggi some 45 years ago. Because Warner was also from Cleveland, he flew there and underwent successful surgery. I believe that Warner’s experience there was what introduced so many prominent Saudis to go there. Eugene returned to the clinic years later for open-heart surgery. Some time later, my cousin Stanley Wernick needed his third bypass surgery and enlisted Warner’s and my help to get into the clinic. Warner called the Cleveland Clinic CEO Dr. Fred Loop, and Stanley was admitted that afternoon and operated on a few days later. He has been doing well some 30 years since. About six or eight years ago Burton Cohen, my good friend and the chairman of Sunrise Hospital, asked me to help bring the Cleveland Clinic to Las Vegas to open a Urology Department in conjunction with Sunrise. Of course that meant that money had to be raised. Cohen spoke to his good friend Kirk Kerkorian, who committed to a large donation. I and others went to Bill Boyd, the Fertitta family, and the Greenspuns, and they all said yes. Unfortunately, some hospital politics caused Sunrise to reconsider, but Dr. Andy Novick, the head of Cleveland Urology, and Las Vegas physician Alan Feld wanted to go forward anyway. A number of meetings were held with many Las Vegas hotel executives and community leaders.
MGM Chairman at the time Terry Lanni and others saw an opportunity for Las Vegas to become a major medical destination with Cleveland Clinic drawing people worldwide to Las Vegas for executive medical examinations and care. Then Mayor Oscar Goodman offered land downtown in Symphony Park. Tragically, Dr. Novick died of a sudden heart attack and momentum for the project lost momentum. About that time, the nation’s economy was beginning to spiral downward, and Las Vegas was affected as adversely as any city in the country.

However, Dr. Toby Cosgrove, CEO of the Cleveland Clinic, came to Las Vegas to meet with me and others involved. Highly respected local doctor Scott Slavis, who had trained at the clinic with Dr. Novick, got Larry Ruvo and Dr. Cosgrove together. Larry and Camille Ruvo, founders of the Keep Memory Alive movement to raise money and advance research for brain diseases like Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease, had built the magnificent Lou Ruvo Brain Center in honor of Larry’s father, and they were searching for the best people to operate it. When that partnership was formed, it was a major milestone for Las Vegas. Our goal now is to bring more specialties from the Cleveland Clinic to Las Vegas. I am excited that the clinic recently opened a Urology department, with state of the art equipment, under the guidance of Dr. Slavis and Dr. Laurie Larson. The clinic will be overseen by Dr. Eric Klein, who heads up the renowned Glickman Urology Institute at the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland.

While there are many fine physicians and medical specialists in Las Vegas, many of our residents when asked where they go for major medical issues quickly answer McCarran Airport, and then on to UCLA, Cedars-Sinai, Mayo Clinic, Scripps LaJolla, Cleveland Clinic, MD Anderson, and so on. One night at a friend’s home for dinner some years back when Jayn and I were pitching Cleveland Clinic, my friend said, “But Art, I have an airplane.” I said, “Okay, but what if the hot water heater in your house bursts at 2 a.m. this morning? Do you call a plumber from Beverly Hills?” He understood my point. I and others feel that Las Vegas with a population of over two million residents may be medically underserved. My granddaughter Dana, who suffers from Crohn’s and had wonderful care here while growing up and has been many places, now goes to Cleveland Clinic, which is rated among the best in gastroenterology for special care. So along with daughter Cari, son Todd, and Dana’s father Ed Bernstein, I am going to work along with Larry and Camille Ruvo, who gave birth to the clinic here, to bring more specialties and facilities to the people of Las Vegas and Nevada. Las Vegas can become a world medical center, where people can have the best of hotel facilities while having a physical examination or procedure. We are going to enlist...
all the movers and shakers, gamers, bankers, politicos, business leaders, lawyers, and medical people. As my dear friend Dr. Alan Feld explained to me, there are times in a patient’s life when a doctor needs a special care facility to do a procedure or provide a special step for his patient, and how much better if that facility were right here in Las Vegas.

I want to give a special mention to my friend Trevor Chinn of London, a distinguished gentleman I have known for over 40 years. I initially met Trevor through Al Benedict, my friend who was the president of the MGM Grand and who was one of the “handshake guys,” totally honorable and a true friend. Trevor was helpful in our purchase of a 1951 Rolls Royce, which was discussed earlier. Trevor was the CEO of LEX Group, a major automotive and hotel company. The company was founded by his father Rosser, who was a leader of England’s Jewish community and very helpful towards the state of Israel. He was an excellent fundraiser and told me of an incident during the Yom Kipper War. Rosser had gone to Friday night services at a London synagogue and made an appeal for funds. As he was leaving an elderly woman came to him and gave him her bank savings book of several hundred pounds. He tried to resist but she insisted and claimed that her small pension would suffice and that she wanted to help Israel as much as she possibly could. Rosser said it was the most significant gift he ever got. I used that story during some of my own fundraising. During those London trips, we had a number of delightful dinners. Trevor was involved with the Jerusalem Institute of Management (JIM) at Harvard University, which by chance came to my rescue at the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas. We had a Marshall Rousso store at the Sands, and we enjoyed excellent relations with the owners. Suddenly, in 1967 Howard Hughes bought the hotel and we had a constant change of hotel executives. A young Hughes attorney came into the store and told me he wanted to make some changes in our space and our lease, changes that were not in our best interests. I resisted and he began to get difficult. At one point he spoke of his Harvard training, and I asked him if he knew of JIM or Trevor Chinn. As soon as I mentioned Trevor’s name all the hostility vanished. The Hughes organization had a good relationship with the Harvard Business School and JIM and the matter was over. We then became friends, and remained so. I called Trevor in London to tell him about the encounter, and he laughed and then suggested we sign up for a weekend course at JIM at Harvard and make a contribution to JIM. Actually, Herb and Este and Jayn and I went for a JIM weekend. We attended some classes, met some fabulous people from all over the world, and had a great experience. I recall they had given us some business theory problems to discuss and solve in class. A
lot of time has passed as have Jayn, Este, and Trevor’s parents. But Trevor is now Sir Trevor CVO and his wife is Lady Susan. He is one of England’s most respected and important business leaders and is most active in London charities and is the president of United Jewish Israel Appeal. Although I had been out of touch with him for many years, we recently exchanged e-mails and I am delighted to be back in touch with this wonderful man.

I have fond memories of the late chief justice of the Nevada Supreme Court, Judge John Mowbray. I once was empaneled on a grand jury in his court and found him to be a wise and fair man, who later gave me good counseling on the law. I was involved in honoring him with the ADL, and he was so touched by the honor that tears rolled down his cheeks. His family members have been great supporters of the Las Vegas community for years.

Mike and Sonja Saltman are also dear friends and wonderful people. Their devotion to the Las Vegas community and UNLV has been unending. I dearly enjoy sitting down with Michael to talk about issues large and small. He is a terrific conversationalist and a great listener, two talents that seem harder to find in these modern times.

Fred Leighton (real name Murray Mondshine), who is famous for selling estate jewelry, had his store a few blocks up the street on Madison Ave. from our New York apartment, which was at 62nd and Madison. We had found some wonderful art objects for resale at his store and we soon became friendly with Fred and his wife Gloria, who would visit Las Vegas from time to time. They loved Las Vegas, and Jayn and I thought they would do well here with a branch store. While visiting Fred in New York, he asked where I thought he should locate in Las Vegas. I reached for his phone and called Elaine Wynn and asked her whether she would suggest the Fashion Show Mall, the Forum Shops at Caesars Palace, or someplace else. Elaine simply said Bellagio, which she and Steve were building at the time, and that of course was the answer I hoped she’d give us. Elaine knew that Murray had changed his name to that of the store he had purchased, but that many of his friends still called him Murray. I told her when I phoned him that I asked for Fred and said hello to Murray. We both laughed at that, and the deal came through. Fred has since sold his company, but travels the world as an independent dealer.
I would be remiss in not mentioning the following persons who were instrumental in working with me when I was chairman of Bank West of Nevada, which later changed to Bank of Nevada. Among them were Larry Woodrum, president and CEO; Jack Wallis, executive vice-president; founders William S. Boyd and Donald D. Snyder; founding directors Marianne Boyd Johnson, Todd Marshall, Robert Clark; directors Robert Boughner, Nafees Nagy, M.D., James Nave, DVM, Bruno Mark, Sherry Colquitt, and Perry Whitt. These people constituted a dedicated group who were totally committed to the bank’s future success.

Just before this book went to print, I received the very sad news that our friend Eydie Gorme had passed. Eydie and her husband Steve Lawrence have been our friends for over 40 years. We first met when they were headliners at the Sands Hotel, and later we were neighbors in the Las Vegas Country Club. In addition to having a great voice, Eydie had a talent for selecting great antique works. Whenever she and Steve appeared at the Sands, Eydie would shop our store for any new arrivals. Over the years she found some great things, and she would always tell me how much pleasure they gave her. It was always special to be in her company, and she always greeted us with a warm hug. Steve was totally dedicated to her. When we spoke recently Steve said women like my Jayn and his Eydie are not replaceable. Fortunately, he has his long-time gal Friday Judy Tannen for support. She has been with them for over forty years. Steve knows the show must go on.

Before I move to final thoughts on my family, I want to thank my new friend Jack Sheehan for professionally guiding me through the many chapters of my life and chronicling them for this memoir. It takes dual talents of interviewing and writing to make a book like this come to life, and Jack is a real pro in both regards. We are good friends from here on out.

**Final note from Art:** In writing this book I have reflected about the many friends and instances that have guided me through life. But the major guides in my life have been my family: father, mother, uncles, aunts, cousins, all who were there
when I was growing up. And then there was Jayn, my wife, partner, friend, guide, teacher, who taught me so much.

My son and daughter, Todd and Cari. So much can be said about them. Todd is very responsible for much of the success my family and I have enjoyed. It was Todd who taught me to, “Make the deal first, then bring in the lawyers and accountants.”

Todd convinced me to leave the board of Nevada State Bank and join with him, Don Snyder, and Bill Boyd in starting Bank West of Nevada and accepting the chairmanship, which was a life-changing event.

Todd grew Marshall Rousso up from eight stores, opened in Atlantic City, built the company and then sold off part, which allowed Cari and me financial independence. He is also partners with Cari in real estate ventures and looks out for her interest.

Todd provides air travel to Cari, my granddaughter Dana, and myself. He oversees all of the family’s interests and holdings. He is a loving son, father, brother, and uncle. Candidly, I had taken our company as far as I could. He brought in an investment partner and more management talent, and today Marshall Retail Group has approximately 100 locations. I am very proud of him.

My daughter Cari is a remarkable single mother, a loving daughter, sister, and aunt. She is a Life Coach and speaks to groups and individuals. She is actively involved in the Las Vegas community, having served on the board of the Jewish Federation and the executive board of the ADL. She is working to bring more medical specialties from the Cleveland Clinic to Las Vegas, and she works with the Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation of America. Cari is a wise and talented woman and, as with Todd, I am most proud of her. Todd and Cari are truly best friends.

I have three wonderful granddaughters, Jessica, Alexis, and Dana. They are very close to me and bring much pleasure to my life. (September, 2013)