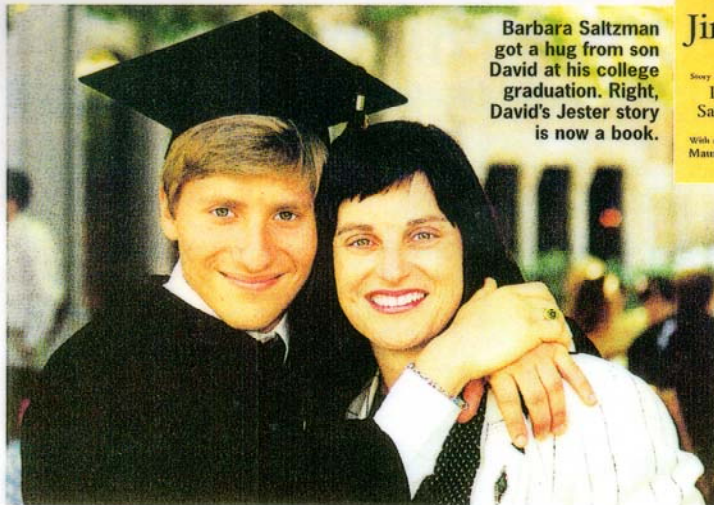


# GH PROFILES



Barbara Saltzman got a hug from son David at his college graduation. Right, David's Jester story is now a book.

## The Jester Has Lost His Jingle

Story and Pictures by David Saltzman

With an Afterword by Maurice Sendak



the book was too long and that rhyme didn't sell. That's when they decided to publish David's book on their own. A newspaper editor, Barbara had some knowledge of the business and she had the will. Over the following years, she devoted endless late nights and entire weekends to the project. She hired a book designer, negotiated prices, and even had a temperature-controlled room built in her garage to store the books.

Barbara kept her mission quiet, telling only a few friends, "because it was so personal." But working on the book never depressed her. "It gave me a great deal of strength," she says.

Finally, the book was ready to go to press. Barbara persuaded Joe to use part of a \$250,000 home-equity loan to finance production. Shortly before she was set to leave for Hong Kong to oversee the printing, Joe announced that he wanted to come along. "That was a turning point," Barbara remembers. "He wanted to be part of the final realization."

Six weeks later, 30,000 books arrived at their home. That evening, the Saltmans and a few close friends held a special ceremony in the garage to toast the book and David. "It was only appropriate to have it in the place where his spirit lived," says Barbara. An empty champagne bottle still sits atop a little chest there.

The book is now available in selected stores across the country. Parents Against Cancer, a nonprofit organization, has also purchased 10,000 copies to donate to hospitals. Barbara dearly hopes that the book will sell and that she and Joe can recoup their investment. And she wants to publish some of David's other children's stories. "But the Jester had to be the first one," she says, "Because the Jester is David—full of life, joy, and fun. I'll never stop missing David. But I am with him whenever I look at his book."  
—Ellen Seidman

*The Jester Has Lost His Jingle* can be ordered by calling 800-9-JESTER. The price is \$20.

## TRIBUTE

### A Labor of Love

*Whenever I feel like crying,  
I smile hard instead!  
I turn my sadness upside down  
And stand it on its head!*

Barbara Saltzman has read the verse hundreds, perhaps thousands, of times. Yet it never fails to move her. The passage is from *The Jester Has Lost His Jingle*, a children's fable created by her son, David. Five years ago, he died of cancer at age 22; this month, thanks to his grieving mother's dedication, his book is finally being published. "To me those words are the essence of his story," says Barbara, 55. "No matter how bleak life may be, you have the power to make yourself feel better." Nobody knows that better than she does. "Working on the book sustained David during his sickness," says Barbara. "Getting it published sustained me."

An honors student majoring in English and art at Yale, David was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease during the fall of his senior year. "We didn't know then just how bad it was," Barbara recalls. "David had such spirit, such intensity, such a life force about him that we thought if anyone could pull out of it, he could."

The cancer lingered, though, and soon David had to undergo regular

radiation treatments.

David was a master cartoonist and a gifted writer, and he had a story in progress about a court jester who discovers the world has lost its sense of humor—and teaches everyone to find laughter within themselves. Determined to finish the book, he scribbled away on drawing pads during hospital stays and, at home in Palos Verdes, CA, spent hours in the studio his father had set up for him in the family's garage. "When he went for treatments and saw sick kids he'd tell them the Jester story," says Barbara. "And he'd tell us he wished that jester could be with every child who was sick."

When it began to look as though David wasn't going to recover, his parents made him a promise. "We didn't know how but we told him his book would be published, and that the kids who needed the book would get it," says Barbara.

David died on March 2, 1990, 11 days before his twenty-third birthday.

Even as Barbara struggled with the agony of losing David, she never forgot her vow. That spring she enlisted the help of her older son, Michael, in gathering up all the Jester verses and drawings. Her husband, Joe, chose not to help, and instead threw himself into his work as a journalism professor, teaching documentary filmmaking. "Looking at David's pictures was just too painful for him," says Barbara, quietly. "But for Michael and me, our way of dealing was to make sure we brought the Jester alive."

Several publishers told them that