

BALTIMORE BUSINESS JOURNAL'S FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESS HONOREE 2022



Matt Levinson and Ira Levinson (standing) and Ellensue Levinson-Jeffers of Sol Levinson

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By Rebecca Logan

Sol Levinson & Bros.

Year founded: 1892

Location: Pikesville

Employees: 53

Number of generations: Five

[Matt Levinson](#) hasn't met many people who, like him, are fifth-generation leaders of a family business.

"I know a couple," said the president of [Sol Levinson & Bros.](#) "Not many."

Especially not in the funeral home business.

"Over the past two decades, many funeral homes have been acquired by larger conglomerates," Levinson said. "The projection is that even more funeral homes over the next five to 10 years will be going to the larger companies."

Being family owned allows the company to make necessary changes to the operation, he said.

"And most importantly, our family is part of the community," he said. "We want to make sure everyone is taken care of the Levinson way."

[Max Levinson](#), a Russian immigrant, moved to East Baltimore in the late 1880s and worked in funeral transportation. He opened a funeral home on High Street in 1892 specifically to meet the needs of the Jewish community. That included a livery stable for buggy transportation to cemeteries.

That location burned in the Baltimore fire of 1904.

Other locations and more generations followed. The current Pikesville campus opened in 1996 and arrangement centers in Columbia and Annapolis followed in 2014 and 2019.

Even Levinson's dog reports to work each day.

"She brings joy to our office and is always available for a snuggle with grieving families that need a little extra love," he said.

And it is needed.

"A return to some sense of normalcy is important. It's been a difficult two years for our amazing [Sol Levinson](#) team," he said. "We had more families with unexpected losses, families grieving differently [and] the increased need to problem solve for unique situations."

Levinson is thankful the company had already started live-streaming services pre-pandemic.

"We have always tried to be cutting edge in technology," he said.

As such it might seem hard to relate to a buggy-driving great-great grandfather.

"Each generation has taught the next and the guiding principals have remained the same: being nice and kind and compassionate; taking care of others and always doing the right thing," he said. "I feel my connection to Max and the other generations before me is upholding those principles."

Levinson's brother went into a career in solar. He said he himself never considered another career after working at Levinson during high school. He has a daughter and son, ages 6 and 8.

"Growing up, my dad always talked to me and my brother about the business and the important role we play in the community," he said. "So even at their young age I have similar conversations with our kids. We encourage them to ask questions about death and funerals. I'm a big believer in kids being part of the funeral process."

Business-wise, he doesn't want to apply pressure.

"Or maybe just a little," he said. "I want [them] to choose a career they're passionate about. But, of course, I would love for one or both of them to be part of our company one day as the sixth generation."

Rebecca Logan is a contributing writer for the BBJ.