

METRO

ANGELA 'ANGIE' LEVIN, 65

Staff assistant 'lived to serve others,' says former senator

Family recalls woman's tenacity, words of wisdom.

By David Schick
For the AJC

She was the ultimate public servant. Above and beyond was her calling card.

"I can say, without qualification, that Angie lived to serve others," former U.S. Senator Wyche Fowler said. From 1977 to 1992, Angela "Angie" Levin worked as a staff assistant for him, and many will remember her positive influence her service had on their lives.

Levin, 65, died from breast cancer. A celebration of life memorial service will be held today at 1 p.m. at H.M. Patterson & Son, Arlington Chapel off Allen Road in Sandy Springs. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to: Kiwanis Foundation of Atlanta or Church of the Atonement/Highpoint Episcopal Community Church.

When Levin was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer five years ago, her daughter Andrea Christopher prayed for her to have at least five more years.

"I knew the survival rate was two years," she said. Andrea got her wish and her mother survived long enough to be able to witness several special family events. Andrea got married, then her brother was married two weeks later. And not long after, Andrea became pregnant with twins.

"I feel like I was given those twins so they could see their grandma," Andrea said. Her mother was overjoyed to experience being a



Angie Levin met many interesting people in her lifetime because of her work. Here, she chats with Gen. David Petraeus, who later served as head of the CIA. CONTRIBUTED

proud grandmother. Angie often said the twins were the "most marvelous creatures to ever be on the face of the earth."

Levin met her husband Jay in college. She asked him to a dance where the girls asked the guys to go. It was his first date, and Jay said he "never felt so comfortable with someone" like he did with his future wife. Although she came from a different background, she won his parents over the way she won him over. "They accepted her and were very fond of her," he said.

Angie and Jay moved to Atlanta in 1974 where Angie began her role in Fowler's office. Angie's daughter said, "She would spend hours on the phone with people reassuring them that she was going to help them solve their problems."

From helping someone

with a water bill to solving an immigration issue, she worked tirelessly. The last month of her life, a "parade of people" came to visit. Many of them, the family had never seen before.

And she had a bulldog tenacity against bureaucratic process when working for Georgians. She didn't take no for an answer. She was the best at serving a citizen because, as Fowler said, "people knew she was genuine in wanting to solve their problems."

"Her request wasn't going to be buried in some stack of papers," Fowler said. If she didn't hear an answer back in four or five days, "she'd go after them." Fowler said he'd constantly hear about all the wonderful things that Levin had done on his behalf. She was a "perfect public employee," he said. "Her forte was public service.

That's what she lived for."

When he was a boy, Adam Levin used to take overnight train rides with his mother and would meet many interesting people. In the formal dining room, you would be paired with strangers, and one time Adam remembers meeting an undertaker. From watching his mother deal with everyone from strangers to the managers of the fast-food places where he was treated to an afternoon snack, Adam learned a valuable lesson from his mother: "Anybody can be your friend."

The lesson Andrea remembers most from her mother's teachings is that life isn't fair. When Andrea was 16, she had to go to traffic court. Due to a clerical error she went on the wrong date and would have to return. When she became upset about it, her mother said, "You have no idea how lucky you are that you have a mother who can bring you back here again."

Each time when she was upset about something as a kid, Andrea remembers her mother saying, "Honey, nobody ever said life is fair." And when Andrea got news of her mother's breast cancer diagnosis and expressed her distress to her mother, without missing a beat her mother said, "Nobody ever said life was fair."

Levin is survived by her husband Jay, children Andrea Levin Christopher (Michael) and Adam Levin (Paige Dixon) and her grandchildren Andrew and Alexander Christopher, among other family.