Laurence "Laurie" Mortashed Hellman came to College from Cincinnati, Ohio but left College early. He returned to Ohio and earned his degree from Ohio Wesleyan University. He was a longtime executive with May Department Stores Co. in St. Louis. Laurie was vice president for merchandise research, retired from May Co. in 2006 after its takeover by Federated Department Stores. He served as a retailing consultant and as a partner in Milestone Storage Condominiums of St. Charles. Though his portfolio at May involved tracking trends in retailing and marketing effectiveness, he was perhaps best known around May's St. Louis headquarters as the "Bear Guy." The nickname stemmed not from his stocky, bearlike frame, but from a wildly successful teddy bear promotion that he developed in the 1990s. The research department Mr. Hellman headed at May was extensive. "Laurie's people connected the dots," said Ken Kolker of New York who retired from May in 2003 as an adviser to the company's chief executive. "It took a certain kind of vision, a prescience, to know what is taking place in the marketplace and then the patience to get the organization to listen to you," Kolker said. "That kind of vision is very rare in this business." Greg Wendt of San Francisco, senior vice president of Capital Research Co., got his start in business working for Mr. Hellman as a 20-year-old college intern in the mid-1980s. "Laurie treated the ideas of a college kid as the equal of anyone else's," Wendt recalled. "He didn't just march to his own drummer, he marched to his own band," Wendt said. Said Michael Doll of Clarkson Valley, whose company worked with Mr. Hellman on store promotions, "He told the truth, and he kept his word. He was almost an intellectual, he was so widely read, but he could talk about anything and had this wonderful, dry sense of humor." Mr. Hellman's daughter, Amanda Hellman of Atlanta, recalled that as a child, her father had convinced her that until the age of 5, he had been a kangaroo. "I'm an adult now, and I know better, but I still have these memories of my father when he was a kangaroo." He was active in civic affairs, serving on the boards of Circus Flora and the Frank Lloyd Wright House in Ebsworth Park, Kirkwood. He was a volunteer for Logos School and Small Rain Inc., which supports the medical needs of orphaned children in Burkina Faso, West Africa. He died of cancer on March 5, 2010 at his home in Clayton, Missouri. In addition to his daughter, Laurie is survived by his wife, Sally Pinckard; a son, Andrew Hellman of Essex, England; the children's mother, Susan Collins of Clayton; and a sister, Anne Hellman of San Francisco.

Reference: <http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/obituaries/laurence-m-laurie-hellman/article_181441ec-8e66-59b7-a045-791819cbc47a.html>