



## Charles W. Smithgall

October 18, 2022

Charles W. Smithgall, 77, of Lancaster, PA, died on Tuesday, October 18, 2022 at Lancaster General Hospital. Born in Lancaster, PA, he was the son of the late George and Catharine Gerhart Smithgall and the husband of Deborah Albright Smithgall with whom he celebrated 50 years of marriage in August.

Charlie graduated from J.P. McCaskey High School in 1963 and the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science in 1968. He then joined the family business, Smithgall's Pharmacy, as a second-generation pharmacist in Lancaster and worked until his passing. He served as Lancaster's Mayor from 1998 to 2006 where he accomplished many advancements for the city of Lancaster, including the Convention Center and Clipper Magazine Stadium. He was involved in numerous organizations as a dedicated Lancaster resident as well as The Slumbering Ground Hog Lodge, The Pirates, North-South Skirmish Association and was the commander of the 3rd US regular infantry. Starting at the age of 16, he proudly collected military equipment and currently holds the largest cannon collection in private ownership.

Charlie established The Smithgall Foundation 503c, a charitable foundation dedicated to the preservation of military antiques and artillery. Some of his happiest moments were spent with his family on his farm in Drumore bringing him great joy.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his daughter, Allison Smithgall, wife of Jonathan Rutter and two grandsons, Christopher and Carter Gehron, all of Lancaster. He was preceded in death by his brother, George Smithgall, Jr. who died in 2005.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend a Funeral Service at Lancaster County Convention Center, Freedom Hall A, at Penn Square, 25 S. Queen Street, Lancaster, PA 17603 on Monday, October 24, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. The family will receive friends at the Lancaster County Convention Center on Monday from 11:00 a.m. until the time of service. Interment will be held at Greenwood Cemetery. The service will be available to view via livestream beginning at 1:00p.m. using the following link: <https://client.tribucas.com/tcid/5996577747>

For parking, visit Prince Street Parking Garage <http://www.lancasterparkingauthority.com/maps/prince-street-garage/> or Duke Street Parking Garage <http://www.lancasterparkingauthority.com/maps/duke-street-garage/>

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent in Charles' memory to Smithgall Foundation, 536 W. Lemon Street, Lancaster, PA 17603 or Lancaster City Police Foundation, P.O. Box 10171, Lancaster, PA 17605-0171.

# Cemetery Details

## Greenwood Cemetery

Lancaster, PA 17603

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **24**. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Lancaster County Convention Center, Freedom Hall A  
25 S. Queen Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603

## Celebration of Life

OCT **24**. 1:00 PM (ET)

Lancaster County Convention Center, Freedom Hall A  
25 S. Queen Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603

# Tribute Wall



“ *Charles W. Smithgall*

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ *Dear Debbie and Family, I send to You all my sincere condolences on the loss of a Great Man who brought so much love and joy to us all. I have great memories of stopping over at the Pharmacy in Lemon Street talking with Charlie and speaking of our beautiful city of Lancaster and His Beloved Cannons. I had the honor to see them once with a dear friend of mine who took me to see them. I shall never forget Him giving me the VIP to meet Gladys Knight and The Pips in Lancaster, 1999 for a Fourth of July beautiful celebration downtown one Holiday. I shall treasure that always and meeting Gladys. He brought so much happiness to our city and gave us all great love and hope to all who met Him; He was a Blessed Inspiration to us all. I shall never forget Our beloved Charlie, and how He touched our lives and hearts. He shall truly be greatly missed and I will always keep Him in my thoughts and Prayers. My love, comfort and Peace to You all. Forever in All our Hearts! Charlie was a good man with a Heart of gold; a very kind and gentle soul. He was my Friend. God love and bless You , Love and Blessings, Robyn Kirchner- Wolf ( Stumpf)*

Robyn Kirchner-Wolf - August 04, 2023 at 12:15 AM



“ *Debbie and Allison,*

*It took me a while to process the loss of a man who was much bigger than life. Charlie was the first person who know that I was pregnant (the vitamins gave it away), the person who married Frank and me (though he chuckled when people would come up to him and say, "I hear that you married Betty."), and truly the person who epitomized the spirit of Lancaster. He's irreplaceable but such a memorable person and role model. Please hold those memories close. I have so many fond memories of his friendship, warmth, sincerity, and integrity.*

*Betty Grabusky*

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**Betty Grabusky** - October 29, 2022 at 10:00 PM

RB

“ My top memories of Charlie:

*My Grandmother and Charlie's mother were sisters. Being of similar age we spent some time together. In my pre-teen years we flew rockets and made and used gun powder. I wonder where we got the chemicals? We learned a lot and nobody got hurt. I stopped that hobby but he obviously never did.*

*Also, three foolish fellows tried to rob the Pharmacy with a gun store in the back: <https://www.pennlive.com/news/2018/12/two-lancaster-county-men-charge-in-robbery-of-former-mayors-pharmacy-police.html> Charlie was 72 at the time and on good terms with the Lancaster Police from his Mayor days. [https://lancasteronline.com/news/local/clerk-foils-holdup-at-former-mayor-charlie-smithgalls-pharmacy-1-suspect-shot-second-at-large/article\\_dedb8054-d6f5-11e8-ad41-cf2402083ec1.html](https://lancasteronline.com/news/local/clerk-foils-holdup-at-former-mayor-charlie-smithgalls-pharmacy-1-suspect-shot-second-at-large/article_dedb8054-d6f5-11e8-ad41-cf2402083ec1.html)*

*My mother lived into her 90s and she was a lifelong Pharmacy customer. Charlie was always her for her if needed.*

*Condolences to all that knew him,  
- Ron Borthwick*

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**Ronald Borthwick** - October 23, 2022 at 01:07 PM

JG

“ Dear Debbie and family,  
Sorry to read of Charlie's passing.  
He's a very interesting man as you know. He contributed many unattributed gifts to his favorite city and its residents. I am glad to have been able to aid him in a few pursuits. I think we had fun talking about motorcycles and sharing some adventure stories from our youths. Though they were similar we didn't know the other then. I'll miss him.

*Jerry Greiner*

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**Jerry Greiner** - October 22, 2022 at 03:23 PM

JW

“ I knew Charlie primarily due to our shared interest in history, historic artillery, and antique firearms. He was a friend, mentor, and terrific repository of knowledge, always ready to share information and advice, even though we were friendly competitors in artillery target competition. Many delightful hours were spent in his company both in Winchester as well as at Fort Ross. And it was a treat to visit him at work, especially in the "old pharmacy," with it's vintage soda fountain and treasure trove of antiques and mementos of times past. I share the sense of loss felt by his family and community.

*God bless, and God speed, good friend.*

*Dr. John Wells and Marylou Wells*

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**John Wells** - October 22, 2022 at 09:40 AM

JA

“ Charlie famously thought it a fine idea to bring July 4th fireworks to Lancaster -- into the heart of the city. They were set off on top of the public garage near our office at 126 E. King Street on a Friday one year. Early the next morning, I was in the office and noticed someone wandering around in our parking lot. It was the Mayor !! picking up the cardboard debris left from the previous night's display. That said both how much Charlie enjoyed "things that go Boom" and his readiness to take personal responsibility. Rick Gray said it well, that one could disagree with Charlie about an issue, but no one could ever doubt his love for his City.

James R Adams - October 21, 2022 at 05:15 PM

TS

“ I am saddened to hear of Mr. Smithgall's passing. He was a great man. My condolences to the family and to all of Lancaster. Thank you for all your service sir and rest in peace.



Teri Stacey - October 21, 2022 at 04:59 PM

MW

“ He was a great Mayor of Lancaster. His love for the people and the city was memorable. He was a very humble and kind man.

Monica Whalen - October 21, 2022 at 11:43 AM

 Elva Jones

“ My first husband and I lived on Columbia Ave I would go to the on Columbia Ave get my husband and I sandwiches they were so good. You will be missed Charlie



Elva Jones - October 21, 2022 at 09:03 AM

JW

“ Charles will be sorely missed in the Lancaster gun community. With the rise in internet sales he provided a valuable service at a time when many business people are being intimidated into shunning anything connected to firearms rights and commerce. His love of historical weaponry is legendary and his wisdom will be missed.  
John Wade LMLRA.

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**John Wade** - October 20, 2022 at 11:51 AM

JC

“ Mr Smithgall was a wonderful neighbor and great landlord to our family long ago on lemon street

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**James W. Carnes** - October 20, 2022 at 11:26 AM

JP

“ Dear Debbie, I am saddened to learn of your loss and send my heartfelt sympathy to you and your family. I will keep all of you in my thoughts and prayers.  
With deepest sympathy,  
Jane Pelland

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**Jane Pelland** - October 20, 2022 at 09:35 AM

JH

“ Was so sorry to hear of Charlie's passing... sending sympathy to you Deb and your family...God Bless!



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**judy and terry hollinger** - October 20, 2022 at 08:38 AM

DS

“ So very sorry for your loss. Your dad & father was a very good man.  
Love Jeff Davis & Donna Speece

**DONNA SPEECE** - October 20, 2022 at 08:13 AM

KM

“ I am really sorry for the loss of Mr. Smithgall. My grandmother took me to his store as a child for lunches, etc. They are memories, I will never forget. His leadership of Lancaster was something that I really admired. The snowstorm rally at Penn Square, the list goes on. My thoughts and prayers are with Deb, Allison and his family and friends during this time.

**Kenny Myers** - October 20, 2022 at 07:27 AM

SS

“ Shawn Shoff lit a candle in memory of  
Charles W. Smithgall



**Shawn Shoff** - October 20, 2022 at 06:55 AM

KS

“ MYCONDOLENCES AND PRAYERS TO THE FAMILY OF A  
GREAT MAN,AND BLACK POWDER MAN. HE WIOLL BE  
MISSED. KARL F. SCHUBERT

**KARL F. SCHUBERT** - October 20, 2022 at 06:52 AM

ME

“ I was very saddened upon hearing of Charlie's death. He was a wonderful man. I have fond memories of working with him when he was Mayor and also dealing with pharmacy issues for my patients. He will be truly missed. My prayers are with his wife, daughter and family.  
Maryann  
Formerly at SG Diamantoni and Associates.



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**Maryann Enge** - October 20, 2022 at 05:47 AM

WB

“ Debbie so sorry to hear of Charlie passing, he was my favorite love being around him. He appointed me as one of the original convention center board member. We spent a lot time talking about what the convention center would bring to Lancaster and he was correct. You have my sincere condolences.  
Willie Borden

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**Willie Borden** - October 20, 2022 at 05:43 AM

GD

“ Debbie, we are so sorry to hear of the passing of Charlie. I will always hold so many fond memories of spending time with Charlie at the Lemon Street Pharmacy. We are in Portugal celebrating our 30th anniversary( you both shared in our wedding day) so unfortunately we will not be attending the funeral. Please know that our thoughts are with you and Allison and her family. Glenda baby sends her love and rubies to heaven in honor of Charlie! Love,  
Glenda and Jim

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**glenda dornes** - October 20, 2022 at 05:12 AM