



George F. Centini

January 31, 2023

George F. Centini, Jr., 85, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, January 31, 2023. Born in Lancaster, PA, George was the son of the late George Centini, Sr. and June Helm Centini. He is survived by his longtime companion, Gary Hufford.

He graduated from McCaskey High School and served in the Army Reserves for 6 years.

George was in the hospitality and restaurant business for over 50 years in Lancaster. Born above the restaurant his grandfather, Patsy Centini, owned and operated, George's hospitality skills were learned from an early age. In 1960, he started his career by purchasing Pip's Place and then found an opportunity to purchase the Tally Ho on Orange Street in Lancaster and later remodeled the 2nd floor to create The Loft restaurant. He also opened the best sandwich takeout shop next door.

After a successful run, George sold the establishments in 1985 and moved to a horse farm in Wakefield, PA, where with his partner, Gary, he ran a bed and breakfast. Restaurant ownership called again, and they purchased Peg's Place and remodeled it to establish Molly's Pub. Molly's embodied George in its friendly atmosphere, excellent service, great food, and drink. George was a hard worker and meticulous about running a clean restaurant. Everyone

remembers the annual St. Patrick's Day at the restaurant. After selling Molly's in 1995, they took a brief break before purchasing Characters Pub in 2004 until 2011.

In his spare time, he enjoyed going to the horse track or planning fun Rocky Springs Park picnics for their patrons. With George's interest in horses, Kentucky Derby Days were a hit at the restaurants. They coordinated travel trips that included their patrons to various locations around the world including Ireland, Greece and Spain.

He is survived by his 50-year companion, Gary Hufford, his stepbrother, Bob Campbell, and his stepsister, Denise Campbell.

George loved cars, his first 1947 Cadillac convertible was a favorite and consequently he had many other Cadillac vehicles.

Private services will be held at the convenience of the family.

Memorial contributions in George's name may be made to Hospice & Community Care, 685 Good Drive, P.O. Box 4125, Lancaster, PA 17604-4125 and Herd of Hope Rescue, 1142 Union School Road, Mount Joy, PA 17552.

Tribute Wall



“ George F. Centini

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ Gary, Chip and I were shocked and saddened to hear of George's passing. We know he is in a peaceful place but will be greatly missed. Cyndi and Chip Conover

Cyndi Conover - February 11, 2023 at 10:30 AM



“ Gary, we were so sorry to hear about George's passing. You both were such a big part of our lives, with your wonderful restaurants and Bar experiences for the past 40 plus years! His dedication to service and ethics would be hard to beat. We're thinking of you at this time. Jon and Charlie.

Jon L. Johnson and Charles H Maser - February 10, 2023 at 10:52 AM



“ Dear Gary, I am so shocked and saddened to hear of George's passing. I am so very sad. May God give you the strength to get through the coming days ahead. Love you Gary!
Marianne Geraci Baldori

Marianne Baldori - February 08, 2023 at 06:59 PM

KG

“ Dear Gary,
"Doc" and I are so sorry to hear of George's passing! We spent many a wonderful Friday evening at Molly's and Characters with you, George (and Patrick). We have memories of great food and fun conversation, as well as a sense of family whenever we were with you.

50 years together is a testament to your commitment to each other and to the journey it takes to reach that milestone.

*Thinking of you and sending our most heartfelt condolences.
Eamonn and Kathie Garvey*

Kathleen Garvey - February 08, 2023 at 12:18 PM

BS

“ Gary, Suzanne and I were saddened to read about George's passing. What a gentleman he was in all his endeavors. The impact the two of you made on the hospitality scene in Lancaster will never be matched. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Barry Solodky

Barry Solodky - February 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM

MG

“ Gary, Diane and I were very saddened to learn of George's death. We have such fond memories of all the two of you have done for us. You have our deepest sympathy. Judge and Mrs. Michael Georgelis

Michael Georgelis - February 06, 2023 at 08:58 PM

LM

Dear Gary

I'm so sorry for your loss of such a great man who has been a godsend for many in the community over the years. I'll never forget all the good times with the two of you love you Gary.

Lenny Matroni

lenny matroni - February 07, 2023 at 11:16 AM

PW

“*Gary and George set an example for most of the best hospitality entrepreneurs in Lancaster City! So many amazing memories from the Ho and Loft, to Mollies and Characters! We lost a gem! Gary—we are all here with you and love you! Phil Wenger & Steve Dinnocenti*

Phil Wenger - February 06, 2023 at 06:54 PM

MT

“*Gary I am sad for your loss. You and George were an institution in this community for many reasons. I think George in many ways was a trailblazer and hero when he showed Lancaster how very legitimate and important the gay community is to all of us. So he will be missed for honesty and integrity as well as his sweetness and good times. Mary Tribble.*

Mary Tribble - February 06, 2023 at 02:28 PM

JL

“ Dear Gary we are so very sorry to know that your lifelong companion, George has passed last week. Although Bill Hillegas has kept us apprised of George's declining health conditions over the past couple of months, but to now realize that George is gone is a powerful emotion to realize. Our hearts, thoughts and positive energies are do with you Gary and if there is anything that we are able to do to help you...we are here. You and George were quite the pair in all your love and business successes together. Stay strong and allow the love and reflection of your amazing past together be the path to recovery and healing. With much love and huge hugs..Jeff & Stephanie!!

Jeff LeFevre - February 06, 2023 at 01:44 PM

DJ

“ My heart is sad, I just had so much respect for George and I sure did learn a lot from you two. Gary I'll be thinking of you and George and of all our good times.

Dottie Jones - February 06, 2023 at 12:39 PM

MD

“ Dear Gary, I am saddened to read of George's passing. What a great team you were! I am honored to have known you both. I was always amazed how he managed the Loft with perfection. Lancaster owes its recent "the place to be" vote to George and his visionary ideas. Peace and love.
Mary Lynn DiPaolo

Mary Lynn DiPaolo - February 06, 2023 at 09:25 AM

LH

“ George was an amazing boss and mentor with his beloved partner Gary I had the privilege to work for for 9 years. His attention to detail hard work and generosity in every pour and serving gave him such pride. His regulars followed him every place he opened with a packed house on day one.. There was nothing he wouldn't do himself in his business down to cleaning the bathrooms meticulously himself. He will be missed ... blessings and rest peacefully George.... Hugs to you Gary you were such a fun loving and faithful partner...

Lori Hemphill - February 06, 2023 at 01:08 AM

KG

Sorry to hear of the loss of George. Remember him from all three of his restaurants. My prayers go out to his family and his companion Gary. May he rest in peace and God bless.

Kenneth Good - February 06, 2023 at 08:32 AM

 Caolyn Kauffman

“ I was just notified of George`s passing and wanted o to convey my deepest condolences to Gary and to the rest of the family. He will be missed.

Caolyn Kauffman - February 05, 2023 at 09:31 PM

 Caolyn Kauffman

“ Caolyn Kauffman lit a candle in memory of George F. Centini



Caolyn Kauffman - February 05, 2023 at 09:30 PM



“ Dear Gary,
I read, with great sadness, about George’s ‘passing.’ I send you my deepest condolences! I’m here in Palm Beach, FL, and I just happened to glance at my beloved, home town, online newspaper. You and George always treated me with so much love! I have wonderful memories of both of you. Love you, Linda Curtiss

Miranda Mitsouko - February 05, 2023 at 08:42 PM



“ So very sorry for your loss Gary! My favorite times while working in the city was coming into Characters Pub and being greeted by your or George always with a smile and or quick quip. George was always quiet but with a shining smile sneaking out! My sympathy to you Gary!

Jill Carson - February 05, 2023 at 03:39 PM



My memories of George and Gary go back to their Loft days when I organized dinners for a large printing company i worked for. The favourite restaurant was The Loft so we went there often . George and Gary always made sure we had a fabulous evening with excellent food. When I left the company we kept in touch and frequented all their restaurants and to this day they were both our dearest friends...George was a kind, wonderful human being , loved by everyone and will be so missed. Love you dear friend...Gerry and Nick

Geraldine Salsbury - February 05, 2023 at 07:10 PM

EF

“ Gary, to you and George, thanks for the memories. Linda and I had wonderful times at Molly's and the several trips we went on. I will always remember my two favorite hosts and how we always felt special when we were with you guys. My love and heartfelt sympathy to you during this difficult time.

Loge, Ed Fuller

Ed Fuller - February 05, 2023 at 02:47 PM

MM

“ Gary, Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this sad time. You and George were the perfect hosts, always welcoming and fun to be with. You both were so good to my Dad and Mom. George was such a sweet guy. We have fond memories of great food and drink at Mollys Pub and Characters and banter with you both. Also, George going MIA on trips with Dad to Penn National, Delaware Park, Atlantic City, etc. If a horse was running you would find them there.



Mary Ann Mastromatteo McNerney & Mike McNerney

M. McNerney - February 05, 2023 at 11:55 AM

CM

“ Randy and I will always remember shenanigans in our neighborhood with you and George. Lancaster was lucky to have George. Sorry for your loss Gary.

Christine McLain - February 05, 2023 at 10:33 AM

JE

“ Gary, I am sorry to hear of George’s passing. You two were a dynamic team for downtown Lancaster. Your hospitality and great spirit infused all of your restaurant ventures. I wish I was in Lancaster to give you a big hug. Much love and take care.

Jane Eddy - February 05, 2023 at 08:39 AM

CK

“ Gary. Am so sorry to read about George. The two of you were so wonderful together, and have created so many heartfelt memories for those of us who enjoyed your hospitality and great food! Sending love and hugs. Cathy Kornfield

Cathy Kornfield - February 05, 2023 at 08:31 AM

DW

“ I am just stunned and heartbroken to get this news. I missed my window of opportunity to visit one last time with George and I will be forever sorry. I haven’t seen George in many years, but the fact that I am so upset is evidence of the love he fostered in my heart during the time I was his employee at the Loft, decades ago. Actually, we were never employees. We were family. I have never met a more generous person in my life. George and Gary were so well known in the community for their very personal way of caring for each of the people they knew. Gary, I am so sorry for your loss. Please keep us all posted when you are ready to celebrate George's life. That will be some party!

Donna Wilcox - February 05, 2023 at 08:09 AM

MS

“ Gary

*Jill and I extend our sincerest condolences to you on George's passing. We will never forget the great times that we and our family had at all of the restaurants. Again please accept our condolences.
Mike and Jill Sherman*

mike sherman - February 05, 2023 at 07:49 AM

TK

“ Gary,

I'm so very sorry for your loss. You and George have been a constant in my life since the late 70's when I often had lunch at the Loft. My office was right next door, but it wasn't just proximity that drew me to the Loft. It was the always friendly greeting and, of course, the excellent menu. Many a family dinner was held at the Loft throughout. My 40th birthday was celebrated at your Bed and Breakfast. Amazing hosts, beautiful home, fabulous food and perfect ambiance made my birthday memorable, obviously, since it was 35 years ago! Molly's Pub was another favorite haunt for lunch and dinner with friends and colleagues.

In so many ways, I feel that you and George have been lifelong friends and for that I'm deeply grateful. I'm also grateful for the constantly positive impact that you've had for Lancaster, particularly the city.

I will miss George's quiet acknowledgment whenever we saw each other, letting me know that no matter how much time had passed, he always knew me. And, of course, there was always the effusive greeting of "hello beautiful" and big hug from you.

I will miss the force of the two of you. I'm sure your light will continue to bring all of us a smile.

*With love,
Timi Kirchner*

Timothea Kirchner - February 04, 2023 at 01:36 PM

JB

Gary and George: two unforgettable names in the restaurant landscape of Lancaster. Gary, you were the best partner to George, a loyal and caring companion. I'm sorry for your loss. Keeping you close.
Jill Brown

Jill Brown - February 05, 2023 at 05:43 PM

CP

Dear Gary, I'm so sorry to hear about George. I'll never forget the great times we all had hanging out at the bars and restaurants you both owned, particularly the beautiful horse farm where we had a b-day party for my grandmother, Peg Goodman. My Uncle Nevin always had great things to say about you both. I'll always remember all of the hospitality you both provided that brought my family together to share those fun times. They were much in the past but will never be forgotten. Sincerely, Carla Phillips

Carla L Phillips - February 05, 2023 at 06:36 PM