



Gerald "Jerry" Smith

DEC 3, 1932 - OCT 27, 2024



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Gerald "Jerry" Smith

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Mr. Gerald “Jerry” Smith, age 91, of Grand Haven passed away Sunday, October 27, 2024, at Grand Pines Assisted Living Community. He was born December 3, 1932, in Grand Rapids, to Frank and Viola (VanderVries) Smith. On March 3, 2007, he married the former Hazel Steigenga at Second Christian Reformed Church.

Jerry served in the US Coast Guard and Reserves for 40 years. After graduating from MSU he taught and coached at Lowell High School. He enjoyed coaching football, basketball and golf. He then went into business management with several public schools until retirement from Jackson Public Schools. Jerry was a former member of Harvest Bible – West Olive and a current member of Second Christian Reformed Church, Lions Club, and the American Legion Post 28. He was active for many years with the Michigan School Business Officials (MSBO) and served as president in 1990. He served as the executive Director of the Coast Guard Festival for 9 years. He was instrumental in Gand Haven receiving the first designation of Coast Guard City USA in 1998. Jerry enjoyed golfing, mentoring, and getting together with family. Most of all he loved God, family, country, walking, and concerts, also he loved MSU football and basketball. GO GREEN!!

He is survived by his wife, Hazel; two children: Mike (Patty) Smith, Laurie (Don) LaBelle; stepchildren: Kim (Dean) Mesman, Kris (Steve) Sparling, Kendall (Patti) Steigenga; fourteen grandchildren; twenty great- grandchildren; brother, Frank (Jill) Smith. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Amy Stuart; brother, Judd Smith; and his wives, Pat Smith and Barbara Smith.

A funeral service will be 11:00 AM Saturday, November 2, 2024, at Second Christian Reformed Church with Rev. Tim Blackmon officiating. Visitation will be held 4-7 PM Friday, November 1, 2024, at The VanZantwick Chapel of Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services. Interment will take place in Lake Forest Cemetery. Memorial contributions in memory of Jerry may be given to [Love in Action](#) or the [Van Andel Institute](#) for research. Please sign the family’s online guestbook at <http://www.sytsemafah.com>.




Events

Gerald "Jerry" Smith

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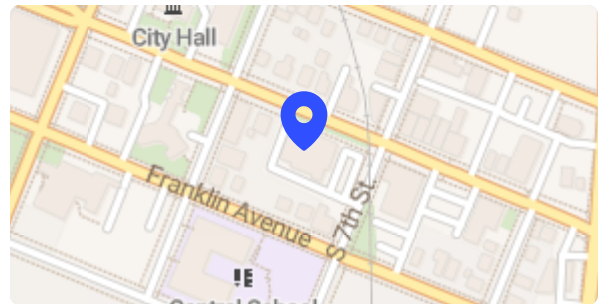
Visitation

 **Friday**, November 1, 2024


 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM ET


 **The VanZantwick Chapel of Sytsema Funeral & Cremation Services**

620 Washington Avenue, Grand Haven MI 49417



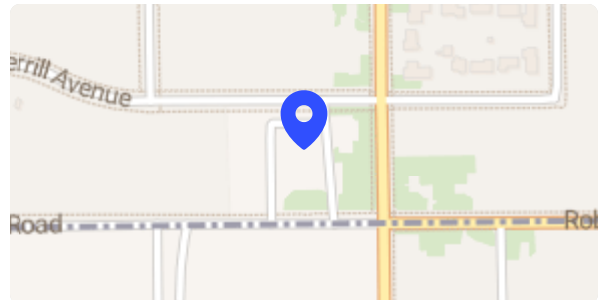
Funeral Service

 **Saturday**, November 2, 2024

 11:00 AM ET

 **Second Christian Reformed Church**

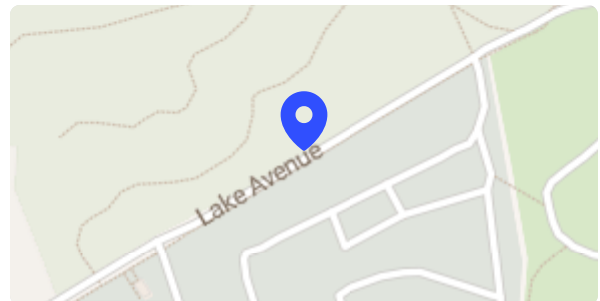
2021 Sheldon Road, Grand Haven MI 49417



Cemetery Details

 **Lake Forest Cemetery**

1304 Lake Ave., Grand Haven MI 49417





Tribute Wall

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Dawn & Ron Davis posted:

Jerry was a wonderful man and will be missed. He contributed so much to the CG Festival and this community. Our condolences to Hazel and her family. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

November 1 at 2:08 PM



Carol Bordua posted:

Our sincere sympathy to Hazel and the family for the loss of such a wonderful man. We were fortunate to work with him on the Coast Guard Festival. He was funny, lovable, hard working, passionate about the Coast Guard and history of the Coast Guard Festival. His dedication was obvious with his work in making Grand Haven the only Coast Guard City USA! We are honored to have known you and worked with you. Ken and Carol Bordua

October 31 at 4:34 PM



Anonymous sent a Beautiful Dreams to the Smith family.



October 30 at 12:31 PM



Vicki, Rick, Mikki & Nikki sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Smith family.



October 30 at 10:14 AM



Joni Bennett posted:

I worked with Jerry for a number of years when I first joined the CG Festival committee. He truly was a remarkable person when it came to the history of the CG Festival, His impact of getting Grand Haven recognized as "Coast Guard City USA" is beyond incredible!!! I m FOREVER thankful he did that for our community. I am sooo lucky I got to know Jerry and work with him for a time on the Festival. Thoughts and prayers to his family.

October 30 at 8:04 AM



Tribute Wall

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Gerald Hunsburger posted:

My sympathy to Hazel and the family on the passing of my friend Jerry. I knew Jerry and worked with him over many years when he was at Grand Rapids Schools, Jackson Intermediate and the Michigan School Business Official Board (MSBO). Always approachable, positive, and willing to help others on any project. And with smile on his face. Jerry was ready to roll up his sleeves to help anyone. I have many great memories assisting him as he ran for election to the MSBO Board, and working with him on various committees. The overnight trips at the cottage near Rothbury, and the many golf outings with Jerry and the guys are cherished memories. Jerry was a major contributor to many major projects to improved public school finance. In his "retirement", his love, passion and leadership as Executive Director of the Grand Haven Coast Guard Festival grew that organization to a new level and to fiscal independence. May Jerry rest in peace. Gerald "Jerry" Hunsburger

October 30 at 3:15 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Gerald by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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