



## Hayward "Smitty" Smith

January 30, 1925 - March 9, 2019

Hayward Eugene "Smitty" Smith, age 94, of Bourbonnais, passed away Saturday, March 9, 2019 at the Illinois Veterans Home at Manteno.

He was born January 30, 1925 in Norris City, the son of Hayward & Ruby Edmonds Smith and one of 12 children.

Smitty married Marcella A. "Marcy" Harmon on January 17, 1948 in New Palestine. She preceded him in death on July 5, 2011.

He was a teamster for Baron Huot Oil Company.

Hayward was an accomplished bodybuilder and even at 90 was training 4-5 days a week! Smitty had also been an instructor at the YMCA and was a gifted handball player.

He loved to jitterbug with his wife at the Moose Lodge, enjoyed taking care of his beautiful roses, his precious Shelties and spending time with his family at the beach at Manteno Sportsman Club.

Smitty was a veteran of the U.S. Navy, having served January 5, 1943 until February 4, 1946 as a radio operator in WWII.

He was a member of Wesley United Methodist Church in Bradley.

Surviving are one son and daughter-in-law, Phil & Debbie Smith of Clifton; one daughter and son-in-law, Kim & Doug Benbow of Fox River Grove; three grandchildren, Blake Benbow, Tyler Benbow, and Jessica (Scott) Ulmer; two sisters and one brother-in-law, Ruth Ann Phillips of Beaumont, TX and Katie & Lloyd Lindsey of Denver, CO; two brothers and two sisters-in-law, Phillip & Sugar Smith of St. Peters, MO and Larry & Mary Smith of Chester; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to his wife, he is preceded in death by his parents; and seven siblings.

Cremation Rites have been accorded.

A memorial service will be held 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 23, 2019 at New Covenant Church; 1401 Timber Lake Manor Parkway, Chesterfield, MO 63017-5581.

Inurnment will be held at New Palestine Cemetery in New Palestine.

In lieu of flowers, Memorials may be made to the compassionate individuals at Hospice of Kankakee Valley, 482 Main Street, Bourbonnais, IL. 60914

Arrangements by Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes.

To view a music video about Smitty visit: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJ-F3H\\_I8IY&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJ-F3H_I8IY&feature=youtu.be)

# Comments

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“ Smitty was one of the first people I met when I started working out at the YMCA when I was 11 years old. He was a regular at Gold’s when I worked there during my teenage years. Smitty was always one of the main lifters that I looked up to. Always a smile, always said hi. We had many good conversations. After his wife died, he would tell me how much he loved and missed her. I typically just have small talk with most people I come across but Smitty was one person who would go beyond small talk with me. I appreciated him. A true good man who lived a full life. Smitty left his mark on this world.

**Mike Neumann** - Yesterday at 11:14 AM

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“ Sending my best to the Smith family and close friends of his across the country. Words do not do this kind soul justice. Smitty touched my life in a manner that I’ll never forget. He often felt like family; a cool grandfather perhaps, that wasn’t going to allow Mother Nature to stand in his way. His dedication to fitness was admirable and inspiring but moreover his demeanor as a kind, uplifting human being is what I will remember. The world really does need more people like this. His footprint on humanity will hopefully be passed on by the many individuals that he undoubtedly impacted. Very grateful to have shared so many conversations with this gentleman. Peace be with you sir.

**Keith Diedrich** - March 17 at 01:51 AM

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“ I will truly miss him. I can always recall the times when we would share our love of fitness and times in the service. He was a walking wealth of history and I would just eat up every conversation. He will be sorely missed.

**Kaelin Patterson** - March 16 at 07:12 PM

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“ I will miss Smitty a lot! I've known him since I first started lifting back in '80 at the YMCA, then on to Gold's gym and he was ALWAYS a great guy that was lifting since the 1950's. We had many long talks about so many things from fitness and changing times, the military and Elvis...(which he also liked very much, especially his gospel). I remember him wishing me a Happy Birthday on my 40th birthday at Golds, and realized at that time that he was exactly double my age at that point-he was 80, AND STILL WORKING OUT! He was always in a good and friendly mood and I couldn't come up w something negative to say about him if I wanted to...he was just a great guy, and I'm not just saying that now, because I told him that on numerous occasions through the years. I bragged about Smitty to many people through the years as well,

about how proud I was of him that he worked out basically his entire life and was STILL doing so til almost 90 yrs old!!! What a guy, and I will miss him a lot!! Rest well ol' friend and you can now be w your beloved wife again.



**Dirk Panozzo** - March 16 at 05:35 AM

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“ I worked at Golds Gym for many years where Smitty was a long time member. Truthfully he was always my favorite member of the gym and I always looked forward to seeing him every day with his wonderful smile and kind words and beautiful heart. Everyone loved him for the genuine man that he was. I feel so honored to have had such an amazing and inspirational human being in my life such as he was. I'm a better person for having him in my life. Smitty was dearly loved and adored and will be greatly missed.



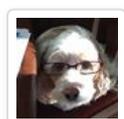
**Angie Hasemeyer** - March 15 at 10:30 PM

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“ Our deepest sympathies to the family. We've known Smitty for decades. He was always smiling. Marcella was also a wonderful woman and he adored her. Working out with him and “the boys” at the Y back in the eighties was probably the most fun any of us had. Smitty was truly a good guy. We will miss him. Thank you for the Utube video, both of them. They made us smile and cry. Again so sorry for your loss. May he Rest In Peace.

**Rose Brown Velatini** - March 15 at 06:15 PM



“ Rose and “Adolfo” Pete Velatini

**Rose** - March 15 at 06:16 PM

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“ remember Smitty well. In the 80"s a group of guys would meet at the "Y" at 5pm. Either run inside or in the summer a outside route..Smitty always a true athlete and most cordial at all times .  
My deepest sympathy to his family for their loss. I pray you all have many wonderful memories of this great man.

**Larry Skelly** - March 15 at 12:10 PM

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“ I am very sorry for your loss. When I think of the times our parents hung out, how funny your dad was and the joy he brought, it brings a smile to my face. I hope happy memories replace the sorrow in your hearts.

God Bless and keep you,  
Pam Welge

**Pam Welge** - March 12 at 01:46 PM

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“ Smitty was a fine YMCA member and friend to many.I always enjoyed chatting with him and giving him a hard time about his Cardinals as a Cubs fan.  
I offer prayers for the family.  
With friendship and respect,  
Joseph Giacchino  
Former YMCA Director

**Joseph Giacchino** - March 12 at 11:00 AM



“ My sympathies to the Smith family on their loss of a great man. I have many fond memories of Smitty from the K3 Y weight room. Jeff Lahners-Highland, IN

**Jeff Lahners** - March 13 at 10:14 AM



“ I first meet "Smitty" in the late 1950's at the old Kankakee YMCA. We were patrons of the new YMCA till 1990 when I moved Arizona. He was always a smiling face and one of the most pleasant individuals I've ever meet. He took great care of himself, and obviously had a great run. My thoughts and prayers for his family on the loss of one of the "Truly Good Ones". May he rest in peace.

**Jim Puswaskis** - March 13 at 03:50 PM



“ I've known Smitty since the mid 1970's when i first joined the "Y". at the age of 20. My conversations with Smitty inspired me to stick with working out regardless. I have used his name many times when trying to inspire others to work out and try live healthy lives. My condolences to the family for the loss of such a great man.

**David Garcia** - Yesterday at 12:19 PM



“ I met Smitty in 2003 at the then, Gold GYM. On my first day there, Smitty came up and introduced himself to me,he was a very pleasant and kind person.My older brother Lee had met him over sixty years ago at the old YMCA and was inspired to began weightlifting ever since. He was truly a wonderful human being and impacted the lives of many people.We give our deepest sympathy and condolences to the family.  
May he rest in eternal peace,

Nelson Dillon and Lee Dillon

**Nelson D Dillon** - Yesterday at 11:57 PM