



## Dr. Max L. Smith

January 24, 1925 - April 2, 2019

Dr. Max LeRoy Smith, age 94, of Washington, Iowa, passed away Tuesday, April 2, 2019 at the United Presbyterian Home in Washington.

Celebration of life services will be held 2:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 10, 2019, at the United Methodist Church with Pastor Kwang Song officiating. Calling hours will begin noon Tuesday at the Jones & Eden Funeral Home where the family will receive friends from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Tuesday. Interment with military honors will be held at Elm Grove Cemetery in Washington. Memorials have been established for the United Methodist Church Music Fund or the United Presbyterian Home. Online condolences may be sent for Max's family through the web at [www.jonesfh.com](http://www.jonesfh.com).

Max was born January 24, 1925 in Moravia, Iowa, the son of Wilfred Andrew and Olive Inez (Caylor) Smith. He grew up in Albia, Iowa where his father owned a drug store.

During high school, Max participated in track, football and music. He directed the High School Prep Band, played clarinet and was active in theater and vocal music groups. He enlisted in the Air Force in April 1943, serving in North Africa, Casablanca, France and Morocco as an Upper Air Weather Observer. He later transferred into the USAF Medical Service Corp as an Optometrist serving in the active Reserves for 22 years. Max was honorably discharged as a Major.

After attending the University of Oregon and Harvard University Graduate School of Engineering while in the Air Force, Max graduated from Iowa Wesleyan College with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Physics. While attending Iowa Wesleyan College, he was united in marriage to Madora Lonsdale on June 22, 1947 in Winfield, Iowa. He then earned his Doctor of Optometry Degree from the Illinois College of Optometry and opened his practice in Washington in the fall of 1950.

Max was a fifty year member of the Masonic Lodge and a member of the KAABA Shrine. He was a lifetime member of the United Methodist Church where he served as Sunday

School Superintendent, teacher, trustee, chairman of the evangelism committee and was a choir member for over sixty years. Max served as chairman of the Washington County Heart Fund for two years and a chairman of the County Easter Seals for three years. He was a sixty year member and past president of the Washington Noon Kiwanis Club. Max served on the Y's Men Board of the YMCA where he was secretary.

He filled several offices and was State President of the Iowa Optometric Association in 1961. He received the "State Optometrist of the Year" award in 1974. Max established the Washington Eye Care Center and served as Secretary of the Mid America Contact Lens Society.

Max loved helping and taking care of people when and wherever he could. As a member of VOSH International he and his wife, Madora, made five mission trips into Mexico to bring optometric services and glasses to the unfortunate. Max enjoyed acting and being in many plays and musicals as the Washington Community Theater. Singing with the choral society was a joy! Max loved his family dearly!

He is survived by his son, Mark Richard Smith of Washington, IA; granddaughter, Bambi Darlene Goodwin of Batavia, Iowa; great-grandchildren: Malachi, Max and Lilly Goodwin of Washington, IA; sister, Mary Olive McInnes and husband Charles of Brainerd, MN; brother-in-law, Richard "J.D" Lonsdale and wife Penny of Midway, GA; and sister-in-law, Neva Gladys Burba of Largo, FL.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Madora; and daughter, Mary Annette Sistrin.

# Cemetery

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# Events

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**Elm Grove Cemetery**

Washington, IA, 52353

**APR 9** **Calling Hours** 12:00PM - 06:00PM

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Jones - Eden Funeral Home  
116 East Main, Washington, IA, US, 52353

**APR 9** **Family Receiving Friends** 04:00PM - 06:00PM

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Jones - Eden Funeral Home  
116 East Main, Washington, IA, US, 52353

**APR 10** **Celebration of Life** 02:00PM

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United Methodist Church  
206 West Second Street, Washington, IA, US, 52353

# Comments

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“ I believe I have one of Max L. Smith dog tags from ww2 if was found in Germany I believe if one of the family members want too they can get ahold of me @ georgeturnidge@gmail.com

**George Turnidge** - December 05, 2021 at 10:15 AM

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“ Dr. Smith and I shared a love of the theatre and singing. I will never forget the performance he gave in “The Five Loves of Theatre”. The show was given to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of the Washington Community Theatre ( the McCleery stage).

The show consisted of various musical numbers from many shows. It wasn't just singing....we had sets....costumes....choreography....the whole thing!

Anyway, Max was cast as the minister in the the number” People Will Say We're In Love”

from the musical Oklahoma. John Claussen and I were the soloists....we sang our parts....then turned to the minister (Max) as the chorus continued singing. Max mimed the actions of a minister performing a marriage ceremony as we stood before him. It was an amazing thing to watch him as he gestured and bowed and prayed and blessed us with great flourish!! All this was done with a twinkle in his eye

His life truly is a life to be celebrated and remembered.  
Warmest Regards,  
Barb and Marty Chebuhar

**barb chebuhar** - April 10, 2019 at 10:55 PM

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“ My heart was sad this AM when I saw your father's picture on facebook. I grew up in Richland but my first meeting of your father was as a young child and my father took me to Dr. Smith. I needed glasses but my eye muscles were not working together so he created several exercises for me to do at home to improve that condition. I didn't really like to do them each day but I remember he had made one, a red rubber ball hanging on a string with numbers on it that I followed with my eyes while lying on the floor. I liked that one. But then in later years, as an adult my husband and I moved to Washington and again he became my eye Dr. Mostly though I remember your Dad as the wonderful human being he was. We both belonged to the Methodist church and he was so active and such a strong Christian. He always greeted you as a friend. And so much talent in the arts. Even though I haved moved away and not seen him for many years I will always remember him and what a kind, generous person he was. I so sorry for your loss.

Karolyn White

Karolyn White - April 10, 2019 at 03:18 PM

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“ I was walking past the old office on Saturday and memories of Dr Smith of his kindness and smile. Making a 5 yr old feel good about getting her first pair of glasses. He will be greatly missed.

Ann Reed - April 10, 2019 at 01:34 AM

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“ Mark, I am so sorry to hear of your father's passing. He was such a kind, gentle man, and I enjoyed being a part of the church choir so that I got to know him a little better. Thinking of you in this trying time.  
Becky (Thompson) Riley

Becky Riley - April 09, 2019 at 07:48 PM

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“ Mark, I am SO sorry of your loss...Sending thoughts and prayers your way from NC.  
Vicki

Vicki Brown - April 08, 2019 at 08:22 PM

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“ Mark & Family, Sandy and I offer our condolences for your loss. Words are inadequate to express how much Dr. Smith's professional vision care changed my life starting with corrective glasses at age 7 in '51 and contact lenses at age 15 in '59. Generations of Washington County residents are extremely fortunate to have Dr. Smith as their optometrist and community leader. He contributed so much to his community, nation and profession in a full life, well-lived.

With Deepest Sympathies,

Tom Bauer

Tom Bauer - April 08, 2019 at 01:07 PM

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“ Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Max L. Smith.



April 07, 2019 at 09:54 PM

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“ Dr. Smith was in Washington Choral Society and was always really supportive of the arts. When I was in Choral Society, he offered words of support when I made the decision to major in music. My thoughts and prayers go out to the family.

George Marie - April 05, 2019 at 11:20 PM

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“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Max L. Smith.



April 05, 2019 at 05:57 PM

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“ Mark & family Sending sympathy to you. There will always be a spot in your heart for your Dad. You have done a great service for him as he lived through his final time.

**Alan Olson** - April 05, 2019 at 05:42 PM

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## “ Washington Lost A Jewel This Week...

Washington lost a great part of its community and heritage this week when Dr. Max L. Smith passed away at age 94. He will forever be missed in Washington and his legacy of “Goodness” will live on for many years into the future. His life deserves much attention and discussion.

Max was a hero of mine...Let me explain.

In 1967, I turned 16 years-old and I was working part-time at Hy-Vee there in town making \$1.60 per hour. I barely made enough to buy a few clothes occasionally and meet the needs a young kid has for social activities and things like snacks and pop.

Contact lenses were becoming very popular in America and I wanted some very badly so I could get rid of the glasses I had worn since I was 12 years-old. I wanted the “Fashionable Look”.

So, knowing my parents would not buy the contact lenses for me, I made an appointment (free) to go and discuss it with Dr. Smith. I anxiously awaited my appointment day and when the day arrived, I went to his office there just a block south of the SE corner of the Square and presented myself to the Office Secretary at the front desk. I was nervous because I knew that the contact lenses would be much higher in cost than I had the money to pay for.

I was right.

After examining my eyes for a long time, Dr. Smith rolled away from the piece of equipment he was using to look into my eyes and he sat back in his chair. I could see him thinking about what he'd found in his examination. As I sat there, he started to talk.

He said his examination of my eyes showed that I'd be a good candidate for the new contact lenses and he explained the good points of wearing them instead of glasses. I knew the whole time, he was leading up to the price. When he said they'd be \$225., my heart sank because I knew I didn't have that kind of money and it would be way out of my reach. I am sure he could see the disappointment written all over my face as I sat there.

It was then that Dr. Smith said “You really want these, don't you?” I acknowledged the comment with a “Yes, Sir.” and then I heard what he said next.

It changed everything.

Dr. Smith said “I'll make you a deal. I will get you outfitted with these contact lenses in the next few weeks and in return, you have to agree to bring in \$10. every other week until the bill is paid. Will you make that kind of a deal with me?”

I am sure I was grinning ear-to-ear as he finished explaining his “Deal” with me. I

quickly said "Yes, I will make that deal with you. That's GREAT !" So, the next couple of weeks came and went and I kept all of my appointments with Dr. Smith and I got my new contact lenses. I was so happy to have them.

Every other week for the next 45 weeks, I presented myself at his office to pay my \$10 payment for the contact lenses. When the payments were done, I was so proud and I felt I learned a great lesson from Dr. Max Smith.

The lesson ?..."Have Faith In People".

I used that lesson as a guide in Management over the next 34 years with Hy-Vee. As a Store Manager in 3 different stores, I had innumerable occasions to "Have Faith In Someone". That philosophy never failed me.

Dr. Max Smith was a hero of mine for sure...52 years later, I am still wearing contact lenses.

Rest In Peace, Doc...Thanks for what you taught me.  
(And for the wonderful eyesight too !)

Yes, Washington Lost A Jewel This Week.

Rick Lampkin  
Fort Myers, FL



**Rick Lampkin** - April 05, 2019 at 04:05 PM



“ Rick. Thank you so much for your comments about Dad. He was exactly as you described him! Thank you for sharing this! What a Blessing Dad was to so many! Mark Smith

**Mark Smith** - April 05, 2019 at 06:59 PM

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“ Sorry Mark. Max was a great guy, and always fin to be around.

**Charles Thompson** - April 04, 2019 at 08:11 PM

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“ To the Family of Dr. Max. From Jane Peck. Daughterinlaw of Drs Glenn & Martha Peck of Ft. Madison. Many times years ago Dr. Martha (Terry) would speak of him. Prayers for peace and smiles as you remember.

**Jane Peck** - April 04, 2019 at 04:26 PM



“ Jane thank you so much for your kind words! Max is my Dad. I appreciate it very much! Mark.

**Mark Smith** - April 04, 2019 at 08:11 PM

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“ We always enjoyed seeing and listening to Max singing in the choir at church on Sunday mornings. A gentle, humble man with a great sense of humor and a deep faith. He will be greatly missed! Our deepest sympathy to the family.  
Milton & Ilene Schnicker

**Milton & Ilene Schnicker** - April 04, 2019 at 02:13 PM



“ Thank you so much Milton and Ilene! You are appreciated more than you know! Mark.

**Mark Smith** - April 04, 2019 at 08:09 PM

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“ I remember when I was a teenager and I had to go to him once a week for almost 6months. One time it was snowing really bad and he cancelled all his appointments except for me. My eyes were very bad but he wanted to make sure I got my treatments that I needed.

**Kitty Snow Miller Polhamus** - April 04, 2019 at 12:16 PM

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“ Dr. Smith was my eye doctor for years and years and years. I went to him long after I was married. I returned to Washington for all of my eye appointments! Blessings to his family at this difficult time.

**Cheryl Keating Nug3nt** - April 03, 2019 at 11:49 AM

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“ Peggy Crull lit a candle in memory of Dr. Max L. Smith



**Peggy Crull** - April 03, 2019 at 11:11 AM

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“ My deepest sympathies to Max's family.



**Annette Fritz** - April 03, 2019 at 08:04 AM

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“ Dr. Smith was certainly a professional whenever he was in one of the Community Theater productions. I remember him being so funny. We have missed him in those plays for a long time. Sympathy to his family.  
an old friend.

**ginny schuerman** - April 02, 2019 at 10:32 PM



“ I worked with Dr Smith for many years. My sympathies to his family.

**vicki Ropp** - April 04, 2019 at 11:13 AM



“ Thank you Ginny! Thank you Vicki! It is so appreciated. Mark.

**Mark Smith** - April 04, 2019 at 01:31 PM



“ I met Dr. Smith when I needed glasses at 10 years old. He remained my family's eye doctor until he retired. After college I left the area for just over 10 years. When I returned to the WA area in 1979, Dr. Max was again my and my two sons' eye doctor until he retired. He diagnosed my younger son's double vision and with his care and instruction, the problem was corrected. I have never known a more caring, concerned, compassionate, professional, intelligent, genuine, and personable doctor. I have an astigmatism in my left eye, and I can still hear him say as he approached me in the exam chair, "Well, we better check old lefty, and see how he's doing." He will be missed by the community. Prayers to the family.

**Cheryl Davison Dahlquist** - April 04, 2019 at 06:10 PM



“ Cheryl. Thank you so much for your kind words about Dad. He really did as you describe. He cared greatly for each and every patient of his! Comments like yours touch not only me, but many others as well! Again, thank you Cheryl!! Mark Smith.

**Mark Smith** - April 06, 2019 at 01:48 PM



“ Mark, So sorry to hear of your loss, thoughts and prayers.

**Richard P Gibson** - April 10, 2019 at 03:59 PM



“ I believe I have max smith dog tag from ww2

**George Turnidge** - December 05, 2021 at 10:12 AM