



Guenther F. Lengnick

January 16, 1935 - January 29, 2026

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Guenther Fritz Otto Lengnick passed away on January 29, 2026, in Adrian, Michigan. Guenther was born in Kaunas, Lithuania. The Lengnick family primarily lived outside of Kaunas on their estate, Patamulschen. There they raised all sorts of farm animals, as well as innumerable Dachshunds. The Lengnicks, who are German, had lived in Lithuania since the 1700s with many other Germans who settled there. When war broke out, Guenther's family was forced to flee from the Russians with little notice. His parents, Stefan and Edith, his sister Helga, his grandmother, and his aunt Hildegard (Tanti) began a long and harrowing journey, witnessing atrocities that no one – especially small children - should have to see. His parents became separated from the rest of them, but miraculously they found each other again in a soup kitchen in Poland. The family was able to return to their apartment in Kaunas for a time, but the Russians had seized the entire estate of Patamulschen. The Lengnicks eventually ended up in Germany. Guenther went to 14 different grade schools while he and his family were refugees, but this did not hamper that curious and powerful brain of his. In high school he went to Bederkesa to attend a boarding school for gifted children who had been displaced during the war. There he earned the mysterious nickname "Zebra."

In 1952, when Guenther was 17, the Lengnick family immigrated to the United States to Columbus, Indiana, where Guenther went to high school for a year. He then went to Indiana University where he got a degree in chemistry. Guenther worked for Olin making rocket fuel after graduation and then enrolled in Cornell University where he got a Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry. While at Cornell, he met Marcia Langford who was earning a master's degree in library science at Syracuse. They were engaged after three months and married on December 7, 1963, a marriage that lasted over 62 years. They first lived in a small cottage on the shore of Lake Cayuga in Ithaca, NY, while Guenther finished his Ph.D.

Guenther got a job as a chemist in Weston, Michigan, for the company that eventually would become Wacker Silicones and then Wacker Chemical Corporation, located in Adrian. The rest of the Lengnicks, Stefan, Edith and Helga, were living in Ann Arbor by that time. Marcia and Guenther moved to Toledo, Ohio, where Marcia worked as a librarian, and Guenther made the drive to Weston every day. They missed living on a lake, and in 1965 they bought a tiny home on Devil's Lake, long before tiny homes were a trend. In 1966, their daughter Sonja was born, followed shortly by their son Stephen in 1967. When it was time for the kids to start school, they moved to Maumee Court in Adrian, keeping the Devil's Lake cottage where they continued to live during the summers until 1984. Marcia worked as a librarian, first for Adrian College and then for Siena Heights College. Guenther worked his way up at Wacker, becoming the President and General Manager in 1984.

Once the kids were off at college, never wanting to be far from water, Guenther and Marcia began looking for their dream property. After several years, they found it, buying a home on Lake Michigan a few miles north of Pentwater in 1989. Guenther retired in 1997, and Marcia and Guenther spent many happy years splitting their time between Adrian and their cottage. (Marcia wisely had retired years earlier.) Guenther enjoyed sailing, puttering,

teaching his grandchildren about the natural world, reading the multitude of science publications he subscribed to, attending Adrian symphony concerts and Croswell Opera House productions, and having numerous friends stay at the cottage, including annual weekends hosting their long-time couples' book club. For many years Guenther was the president of the Midland Heights Association where their cottage was located, preserving the character of the association, handling its affairs expeditiously and attempting - not always with success - to ensure that everyone obeyed the rules regarding beach fires (which the association members still joke about regularly). The family was happy they were still able to take Guenther to his beloved Lake Michigan cottage through Labor Day of 2025.

Guenther and Marcia were world travelers and had friends in many places. They especially enjoyed traveling to Germany, which they usually did once or twice a year. They travelled all over Europe, as well as New Zealand, Fiji, Australia, Costa Rica, Egypt, Japan, and China. Guenther and his sister Helga, along with Marcia and Helga's husband Bernie, returned to Lithuania for the first time since their childhood and met with people who remembered their family from before the war. Guenther was warm and friendly to everyone he met and could find something interesting to talk about with pretty much anyone. He was an individual people did not forget.

Guenther was a cancer survivor, beating prostate cancer in 2002. He was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease at age 80 and spent countless hours researching causes and treatments. No matter how much effort he put into fighting PD, it gradually robbed him of his mobility, and he entered assisted living at the Hampton Manor in 2022 where he lived until his death. Guenther continued to read his weekly Chemical & Engineering News, although we aren't sure how much he really absorbed at the end. He had many visitors during his time at the Hampton, and in the last few weeks as he began his

transition, the pace of visits picked up. Many people from all stages of his life came to visit him, and he treasured every visit. Sometimes he thought he was in the chemistry lab or on a cruise ship instead of at Hampton Manor, but he always knew who every visitor was and got so much pleasure from these visits. He received wonderful care at the Hampton, and the family will be ever grateful that he could remain at the Hampton with his loving caregivers until he passed. The family also is thankful for the care and compassion provided by Hospice of Lenawee at the end.

Guenther is survived by his wife Marcia, daughter Sonja and her husband Mark Chutkow, son Stephen and his wife Rene' Carpenter, grandchildren Tate and Zane Chutkow, sister Helga Jubin, brothers-in-law Gary Langford and wife Elaine and Jon Dale Langford and wife Michelle, sister-in-law Ann Langford, nieces and nephews Chris Ballantyne (Terry), Tom Jubin (Liz Zerga), Karen Drews (Jon), Jenny Lamy (Joe), Benji Langford, Ada Langford (Mark Schwaber), Renee Langford, and Dionne Langford, and great and great, great nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Stefan and Edith Lengnick, brothers-in-law Kirby Langford and Bernie Jubin, special aunt Hildegard Bischoff, and many other aunts and uncles (all with names out of a Gothic German novel).

The family will be celebrating Guenther's remarkable life at the Hills of Lenawee on June 13 from 2-5 p.m.

If you wish to make a memorial donation, we recommend making a donation in memory of Guenther Lengnick to the Kirk Gibson Foundation for Parkinson's <https://www.kirkgibsonfoundation.org/ways-to-give/> or the Adrian Symphony Orchestra. <https://www.adriansymphony.org/donate.html>.

Upcoming Events

Celebration of Life

JUN 13. 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Hills of Lenawee Golf Club
4110 Country Club Rd.
Adrian, MI 49221

Tribute Wall

CC

“ I am so grateful that Dr. Lengnick....even after 40 years, he was still Dr. Lengnick to me....was part of the foundation of my professional life. My sympathy goes out to entire family. Chris Crone

Christina Crone - May 07 at 11:23 AM

JW

“ I feel so honored to have known Gunther. I worked in the kitchen at the Hampton. He loved his lemon aid and big cookies. Rip. Gunther

Julia Wenn - May 02 at 05:45 PM

JD

“ What tragedies he lived through and what a wonderful man, husband and father he was Gods blessing on the family

Judie Doan - May 02 at 03:07 PM



“ Fond memories with the Lengnick family at Devil's Lake back in the day. Guenther took me on my very 1st sail boat ride. I'll never forget it!

Karen Keller - May 01 at 10:28 PM

PF

“ Marcia, you and Guenther had such a beautiful life. Treasure the memories. Love to you and your family.

Pam Fisher - May 01 at 09:33 PM

KD

“ *What a wonderful obit.
A life well lived.
RIP*

Keith Dersham - May 01 at 02:28 PM

ML

Thank You 🙏

marcia lengnick - May 16 at 11:36 AM