



Conard Lee Gardner

October 19, 1922 - July 9, 2009

Conard Lee "Connie" Gardner, Reigert's Lane, Annville, went home to his Savior and Lord on July 9, 2009, after a long and valiant battle against diabetes and its complications. He was 86 years old. Born on October 19, 1922, in Penn Laird, Virginia, he was the son of the late Clarence Lee Gardner and Frances Virginia Bush Gardner. Shortly after Conard's birth, the family moved to Pennsylvania and purchased an Annville area cattle farm. Conard graduates from Annville High School in 1940, an accomplished athlete in four varsity sports but particularly talented in baseball. After graduation, he joined his father in the family cattle business until 1942 when he was drafted during World War II. While in the service, Conard received specialized training at the University of Pennsylvania and the Citadel before being assigned to Military Police units both stateside and overseas. In that capacity, he served as a bodyguard to Princess Juliana of Holland and to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt while she was visiting troops in the Pacific. Eventually, he was selected for a specialized cryptology unit on the Island of Curaco. When not in the code room, Conard played baseball in many island tournaments during which he was once offered a tryout with the Detroit Tigers at the conclusion of the war. Following his discharge in 1946, Conard returned home to the family cattle business until he joined the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Conard never defined his own success by his career accomplishments, however, but rather by the well-being of his family. On October 24, 1954, Conard married Joyce Baier, with whom he would have celebrated his 55th

wedding anniversary this year. Together, they raised three children, who have been profoundly affected by their dad's example of integrity, work ethic and servant hood. They are: Mike, husband of Patti Gallagher Gardner, Ponce Inlet, Florida, who shares his father's mischievous sense of humor yet sensitive spirit; Jim, husband of Mary Meyer Gardner, Annville, who shares his father's servants heart; and Kathy, wife of David Wingert, Lebanon, who was and always be proud to be her daddy's "Sweetener." In retirement, Conard most enjoyed being "Pop Pop" to his seven grandchildren Jenny, 23; David, 22; Matt, 19; Mary Rebecca, 18; Daniel 17; Chris, 15; and Katie, 13. While in good health, Conard was very active in his church and community. As a member of the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, he served on church council and as part of the finance, education, and organ search committees. He was also particularly active in veterans' support organizations, serving the Annville American Legion Post for many years as commander, service officer, building committee chair, and bookkeeper. As his children became involved in competitive swimming, he followed them as a volunteer, serving as a long-time AAU swimming official and president of the TriCounty Swim League. He was also a long-term member of the board of the A-C Pool and a member of the Mount Olive Masonic Lodge No. 704. In later years, Conard and Joyce made the Evangelical Free Church of Hershey their church home, and they joined its North Annville Community Group. He relished the Sunday evening gatherings of this group as they met for fellowship and study. Conard's extended family includes a brother, Calvin Gardner, Chambersburg; a nephew, James Tice of Mechanicsburg; a niece, Amy Brown of Chambersburg; and an aunt, Lorraine Bender of Palmyra. He is also survived by numerous cousins and great-nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents; his sister, Vivian; and a niece and nephew. A celebrations of Conard's life and faith is planned for Monday, July 20, at 2:30 p.m. at the Evangelical Free Church of Hershey, 330 Hilltop Road, Hummelstown, Pa. Burial will be private. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that contributions be made either to the Evangelical Free Church of Hershey,

P.O. Box 648, Hershey, AP 17033, for the development of recreational ball fields on the South Campus of the church, or to the Masonic Village 1 Masonic Drive, Elizabethtown, PA, 17022, where in 2006 Conard received expert and loving postamputation rehabilitative care that allowed him to return to his life at home.

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