

Atty. Charles J. Giacometti Memorial Scholarship



The Attorney Charles J. Giacometti Memorial Scholarship, established in 2012, is created to honor the memory of our beloved Charlie.

As you can imagine dealing with Charlie's sudden death, March 30, 2009 from a massive heart attack, brought with it a lot of anguish and sadness for his family. Charlie has been thought of daily for the past three and a half years, and we wanted his memory to live on. As time passed we thought and thought; "How can we keep his memory alive? "We decided to establish this award in his honor. What better way to honor him than to establish a scholarship in his name in the school district where he spent so many happy years with his many friends! Charlie was a 1976 Wyoming Area graduate.

Thus the Attorney Charles J. Giacometti Memorial Scholarship was awarded for the first time on Thursday, May 23, 2013 at a celebration of scholarships in the Wyoming Area High School cafeteria.

If Charlie's life had been a video, it would have come with a warning that said:

"Trained professional. Do not attempt this at home. "

Charlie was a life trained professional because he was energy in motion; he was supremely confident; he was impatient; he was infinitely loyal. You could always count on the fact that Charlie always had a plan and he was executing it. When he chose not to sit through Pennsylvania winters at West Chester University, he went for the option of going to the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida and then chose Loyola Law School, New Orleans, LA. You could count on him for always having tickets to the big game! He was the tour guide to fun that brought everyone he knew closer together. He introduced his friends to Sports Center when it first came on the air. He arranged get-togethers at the NIT at Madison Square Garden. He made the phone calls to assure that all members of the class of '76 and '79/'80 would play the Turkey Bowl. He arranged Monday and Wednesday night basketball at 10th Street Elementary School. He ran fantasy football. He was the one who discovered NASCAR, the NHL and cigars. He planned the trips to Yankees games. He made everybody root for Alabama. And he developed a real obsession with building bonfires. With Charlie around you could always count on the fact that there would never be a dull moment – he was energy in motion.

Confidence. All of Charlie's friends have their own examples of Charlie's supreme confidence. One instance is that Charlie bought his first house sight unseen. A local doctor had bought a new

home in West Pittston. She was telling her cousin and his best friend, Charlie, that she was selling her old house, and talking about the electrical and plumbing and other work she had just put into it. Charlie's response: "I'll buy it." The doctor says you have not even had a tour of it. He said, "Looks like just the right size." "Would you like to go for a tour?" "Maybe later," Charlie replied. "You don't even know how much I'm gonna ask for it," she responded. "Well, whatever's fair." And the decision was made right then and there. Charlie knew what he wanted to do and did it!

Impatient. Everyone knew that Charlie loved NASCAR, not as much as football, but he liked to go to the events. One weekend, Charlie and his friends took off for Long Pond to see a race. They were stopped in traffic with twenty-five miles to go. They turned off into Orloski's to get a sub--a little too popular an idea. Charlie looked at the sub line and his solution was to say to the girls behind the counter, "You look like you need some help." He flipped the counter up, walked behind it and asked where the bread was. "What do you need sir? Lettuce on that? Do you want dressing?" "He started yelling out orders and slicing meat. The fellow up front behind the cash register was getting concerned and goes to get the manager. The older fellow came from the back, looked sternly at Charlie and said, "Sir, get out from behind the counter." Charlie glanced up at him, looked right back down and continued making the sandwich. Then he says, "Van, just leave me alone here. I'm trying to help these girls make sandwiches for these people." The fellow responded, "Charlie, is that you?" They had known each other since youth. No surprise there. Life's trained professional at work. Loyalty. Once you were Charlie's friend, you were always and forevermore Charlie's friend. And Charlie took that obligation very seriously. He gave all of his friend's nicknames. Once you had yours, you were "in" and that meant everything. Until you had yours you were desperate to get one. His best friends...Paul-E-Boy, Blockhead, Yake, Nutty, Timmy, Burlap, Merle, Scootie, Callignog, Sickle, Artie, Chipper, and Vully all cherish theirs. Back in the late 80's, his friend Timbear had a pretty nasty car accident, and he got hurt pretty badly. Charlie went to the hospital every day and was very helpful. But, you had to remember it was Charlie. At one point, Charlie leaned over to Timmy who had just gotten some glass lodged in his forehead and said, "There is one piece right in the middle there. I think I can get that out if you'll hold still." One was never completely sure that Charlie wasn't really going to try it. Charlie wasn't just a friend, in his larger than life sort of way he was number one to all who knew him.

He was the kind of guy that would parley his stature as a successful sports agent into building friendships with the likes of Al Davis, Johnny Unitas, Walt Michaels, Jimmy Spencer, Bo Schembechler, Rocket and Qadry Ismail, Bo Orlando, Harry Hamilton, Blair Thomas, John Green or Dwayne Downing, who took his Penn State football skills to this region and coached Bishop Hoban to their most successful season. And when Gregory Skrepenak was with the Raiders and the Panthers, it was Charlie getting calls from former Super bowl Quarterback Jeff Hostetler or the late great Pro Bowl linebacker Sam Mills for a little personal advice or just to share a laugh or funny story.

These really special people, the celebrities, they knew Charlie was the centerpiece too, everyone's number one. He and his friends went to the home of NASCAR star Jimmy Spencer in

North Carolina for the weekend of the 1996 Winston All Star Cup race in Charlotte, North Carolina. The tickets were even better than Charlie had promised. He provided pit passes, which are like sideline passes to a football game or where like Spike Lee sits at the Garden. Sunday night was when Jimmy Spencer's family invited all of them for southern style dinner. Jimmy Spencer was a wonderful host. At one point they noticed a crowd forming at the entrance to Spencer's property. It was Jimmy's father and one of the great NASCAR drivers of any era, and the fellow had a rhinestone cowboy hat and alligator boots to fit the profile. Introducing Charlie, Jimmy Spencer said, "This is my man, Charlie Giacometti, he's my good buddy." and walked away. That wasn't Jimmy Spencer putting the rest of his friends down. It was acknowledgement of what the truth was --Charlie was number one.

One more story about celebrities that can't be passed. A group of his friends went to see Skrep play for the Raiders against the New York Giants. And we were staying at the same hotel with the Raiders team. The iconic Al Davis saunters into the hotel lobby with 300 people nearby and who do you think he runs over to, gets in a head lock, gives him a kiss on the top of the head and asks how the heck ya doin? Charlie Giacometti. That's the guy he wanted to talk to before the big game against the New York Giants. We were in awe!

While Charlie was number one to all he knew, it was clear who was number one to Charlie: his family. Charlie loved his family even more than the fun of life! Charlie's mom and dad--Harry and Josephine, he worshipped them. Their closeness was genuine. He was proud of the fact that they were both educators; that their reputations were rock solid. One of the things that Charlie was most proud of was how his dad as the business manager at Wyoming Area was universally respected by his colleagues and how they treated his advice with the greatest of reverence.

And Charlie's brothers, how he loved them. His brother Joe, a 1975 Wyoming Area graduate, in Charlie's eyes was the steadiest guy you could ever rely on. And Charlie always thought that Joe had phenomenally good common sense. Charlie's view, that good common sense was best expressed in Joe's decision that the first time Barb looked Joe's way, Joe never let her look in any other direction. They were high school sweethearts, and she became the sister that Charlie never had. And Charlie, of course, was so proud of young Harry and Lisa and all of his nieces and nephews. When Lisa was tearing up the state as a runner, Charlie was broadcasting it all.

When it came to his brother Harry, Charlie's admiration knew no bounds. You see, Harry was one heck of a bright guy and a talented guy, and Charlie knew it. In his own way, never with pretense, he would let everybody else know it as well. And he had a special bond with Harry's wife Kate from the moment they met. Kate and Charlie were fun and each knew that about the other.

The aunts and uncles and the cousins and the rest of his nieces and nephews all knew how special you were to him. Always, everyone knew that Charlie took so much pride in the names

Giacometti and Gelso, and later Rosencrans, and people would get the feeling at times that he was related to everybody in the valley and well beyond.

Charlie's posse of frat brother wannabes was the only number one to him until I came along. They thought they discovered the meaning of life while sitting on Charlie's front porch in West Pittston, I appeared at first to be a menace, a threat to their collective and individual view that Charlie would never truly give up on bachelorhood, on being a guy's guy, on having a man cave, on playing and watching and talking about sports, and on having the biggest TV you could afford. Then things started to change. The frat brothers were scared. Charlie was smitten. I was everywhere Charlie was. I was on the porch. I was at the games! Suddenly it came to them! I could talk sports with them! I was as fun as Charlie, I was more patient than Charlie. I enjoyed shooting the breeze with them! They were saved!

His friends say, it was Charlie who was saved, and he knew it too! Before long, it wasn't just me going to sporting events, it was Charlie going shopping. He loved TJ Maxx, the Crossings, King of Prussia, Dick's, Target and even shoe stores. We were in love, and as Charlie had always been a guy who left no one out, now we left no one out. A friend said of us, "They were from the beginning a couple to be admired and envied for they had found each other and they knew it." We trusted each other implicitly! We told each other everything! We were soul mates! He was truly a gift.

ANNA AND CHARLES! You were truly number one to your Dad! You were the light of his life! Every time you laughed or cried or grew or learned something new, he was all over it! He'd call all of his friends to tell them of your latest successes or how you made him laugh! He got Bama your beloved dog and fell in love with him even though he said he never would! You were his pride and joy!

The world gets so confused about what it means to be number one and how a person becomes number one. But for a few choice people, like Charlie, it just came naturally. When he was a kid, he was bright. So he got a lot of the answers right in school and, because of that, got to go to college and law school. He was good looking and fun so he was popular. He read a lot and kept up on what was going on so people respected what he had to say. He knew what he was talking about before he spoke. He was a gifted athlete. Good at everything. He'd be the first guy picked for every team. He got the first call when people wanted to get together. But his real qualities at being number one required a lot more work and sacrifice than the ones I just mentioned. You see, he was number one for a friend or loved one in need. He was the guy who would take the risk to ask a troubled friend what was wrong and how he could help. And that could be the little things, like moving furniture, or the big things, like seeing you through a time of sadness. When people get sick, other people get scared and awkward and while we all want to be helpful, we get scared and pull back a little. Not Charlie. He was the first guy through the door, no matter how bad the situation or what he might face. While there are many examples, I remember most when his dear departed friend Andy Calabese grew sicker and sicker. Charlie was true to their friendship and traveled to Lankenau Hospital to be with Breeze. He'd get others to go along. With him, there was never any discussion over whether this may not be a good idea or the best time to do it. He was first in line for a friend, and Breeze knew it and no doubt appreciated it. Well Charlie knew with Andy in Heaven that he could not let time pass without giving Andy's

son a glimpse of how well-loved his Dad had been. So Charlie organized a fundraiser for Lankenau Hospital's Cancer Center, and he invited over a hundred people touched by Andy's life -- to donate and to describe Andy's legacy for Christopher to hear. Charlie and Jimmy Carmody created a fifty-fifty of sorts. And remarkably, the winner was Andy's son Christopher, which as Charlie and James explained, was just a little reminder to Christopher that his Dad was still there watching.

What a storm trooper for people in need. When his friend Joe Burke's son Michael went to Children's Hospital in Philadelphia six years ago, Charlie went down, first through the door to visit. It was March and that meant March madness. The first thing Charlie did was play Michael in ten games of PlayStation NCAA basketball. There were two 12 year olds in the room. Both had no hair and neither by choice. Charlie whipped out a 20 dollar bill and said let's do our brackets! Charlie seemed totally serious but had picked Mt. Holyoke as national champion. He balked at Michael's suggestion that he was throwing the bracket and was quite convincing. Put your money on the table, Charlie demanded, and I'll be back when I win. Just then one of the gorgeous nurses at CHOP entered the room. Charlie leaned into Michael. "Tell her not to touch the money," he said. "Are you gonna beat him, Michael," she asked? "Don't react Mike," Charlie said, "ya gotta play a little hard to get. Pretend you're not even interested in what she's got to say. It drives women nuts!" Well the nurse loved Charlie and Michael and everyone began laughing out loud.

Charlie is definitely number one in my heart as well as our children's and for good reason. Charles, friends wrote that you had the best Dad because he always put you first, always found time to play with you, always found time to teach you and love you. His plethora of good traits can best be summarized in his children's letters to their Dad at the time of his passing in which his 11 year old daughter wrote, "**When I grow up I want to be just like you; caring, warm hearted, completely unselfish, kind, loving, funny and fun to be with.**" And his son wrote: "**You are my hero and are the best Dad in the history of Dads.**" He always put us first, and once again became number one to each of us just as he had been to all of his friends and relatives.

Charlie's daughter, Anna, is presently a freshman at the New School in NYC enrolled in the 5 year Media Studies Master's program. Charles Jr. active in both football and baseball, like so many of you, is deciding where to go to college and what his major will be. Their father would be thrilled with both of his children.

Candidates for the Attorney Charles J. Giacometti Memorial Scholarship are individuals who, are graduating Wyoming Area Seniors, played a varsity sport in their junior and senior year, planning on working toward a four year degree at a college or university beginning the fall semester following, graduating high school.

**Thanks to Attorney Joseph Burke, a lifelong friend of Charlie's, for the beautiful Eulogy he delivered at Charlie's funeral Mass. This story would not have been possible without Joe's beautifully written words.

The Attorney Charles J. Giacometti Memorial Scholarship will provide a \$500.00 Scholarship. The Scholarship will be awarded the night of the Celebration of Scholarships.

Required: The Giacometti Family requires each candidate to; complete a Scholarship Application, and write an essay of five hundred words or more. Please tell the scholarship committee some things about yourself, your strengths and leadership skills by discussing extracurricular activities, community, or volunteer, work and awards. Show the committee that you are deserving of the scholarship and will use the funds wisely to support your education. Please do not use any of the information that was already covered in the application. Final selection will be made by a selection committee.