



## Lawrence William Sherman

July 5, 1941 - July 15, 2021

Lawrence W. (Larry) Sherman died at his Fort Collins, CO home on (July 15, 2021), surrounded by his family after a ten-year battle with cancer. Larry was an ardent enthusiast, generous friend and an intrepid learner who quickly built expertise in any subject or worthy cause that piqued his interest. He and his beloved wife and artist, Leslye J. Sherman, who died in 2015 of ALS, were active in the peace, justice and environmental movements and were committed supporters of the arts. Larry lived life to the fullest pursuing many interests and passions, including music, birding, swimming, gardening, gourd growing and crafting, reading, photography, performance art, hiking and traveling. His ongoing discovery through reading and his photography seemed to go beyond documentation. One of his recent art projects was making sculptures and musical shakers out of plastic bottle tops collected from drinks he and Leslye consumed since moving to Fort Collins to highlight the cumulative impact of tiny amounts of plastic on the environment.

Larry was a professor of Educational Psychology at Miami University in Oxford, OH for 39 years before retiring in 2010 and relocating to Fort Collins, CO in 2013. He was a jazz trumpet player and co-director of the Oxford Gourd and Drum Ensemble: OGADE, that performed both percussive and tonal gourd instruments. He graduated from Bowling Green State University in 1963 with a B.S. in music, earned a Master of Arts in Music from Arizona State University in 1964, and taught instrumental music in elementary and

secondary schools in Detroit before securing a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Wayne State University in 1971.

His research and teaching focus was humor, early childhood social development, Lewinian interactional psychology, and cooperative learning. He was highly active professionally with multiple publications and conference presentations. In 2001 he was the recipient of the Ig Nobel Prize, for his influential research report, "An Ecological Study of Glee in Small Groups of Preschool Children." The Ig Nobel Prize is a satiric prize awarded annually since 1991 to ten individuals "...to honor achievements that first make people laugh, and then make them think." Organized by the scientific humor magazine, Annual of Improbable Research, the Ig Nobel Prizes are presented at Harvard University followed by recipients' public lectures at MIT. Larry was very proud of this honor. He believed in the power of humor and science, and personally was full of inquiry, nuance and laughter.

Larry was active in the Ohio and National Audubon Society, the International Society for Humor Studies, the Ohio Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education, and the American Gourd Society. He loved swimming and competed regularly at the United States Master Swimming meets both in Ohio and Colorado. Often, he would tell friends he won, but then would laugh that he was the only person swimming in that age division. His last swim meet was in May 2021.

Born in Toledo, Ohio, Larry is survived by his son, Eli Sherman (Diana Salzarulo Sherman); daughter, Heather Sherman; grandchildren Kyle and Jacob, sister, Norma Kelling and brother, Dennis Sherman; and numerous nieces and nephews. In lieu of flowers, a donation to the Rocky Mountain Chapter of ALS Association or the American Cancer Society would be welcomed. The funeral will be private.



# Tribute Wall

KO

“ I just learned of Dr. Sherman's passing in the Miami University Alumni Newsletter and wanted to share my condolences and warm memories with his family and friends. I met Dr. Sherman as a graduate student of his in 2002. While I'm sure I learned a thing or two about research methods and statistics in his course, what really sticks with me, twenty years later, is Dr. Sherman's wonderful sense of humor. He radiated delight in life's little pleasures and absurdities, and encouraged us stressed-out grad students to do the same. Thank you.

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**Kay Owen** - January 19, 2022 at 07:56 AM

LT

“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



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**Leslie Taylor** - August 19, 2021 at 11:41 AM

LT

“ I only knew Larry from waves, smiles, and "good mornings" while I walked my dog the last year and a half. I looked forward to seeing him and have missed our interactions. Reading through these tributes, I regret not walking up the driveway and taking more time to know him - so clear that he was one of the good guys.

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**Leslie Taylor** - August 19, 2021 at 11:29 AM

JS

“ I first met Larry on a bird watching field trip in 2014 and got to know him better while serving on the Board of Directors of Fort Collins Audubon Society. Larry had a generous spirit and never seemed to go long without smiling or laughing. He was NOT plain vanilla, though. Larry did not suffer fools and he always kept me on my toes when I was chairing meetings!

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**John Shenot** - August 15, 2021 at 07:44 PM

EC

“ *Eli and Heather,*  
We both, Dennis and I, were so sad to hear of your Dad's passing away. He was a wonderful friend to us, as also your Mom, and we have so many memories of not only nights out with them, but all the wonderful conversations. Your Dad and I always managed to tell each other about the current books we were reading. He introduced us to minimalist music, he shared with us his great nature photos,, we loved seeing his newest gourds, and altogether he contributed to enlivening one's life. I'm so glad that he and your Mom were able to visit us here in Santa Cruz, after we retired here, and we got to take them to a great estuary near Monterey among other things. I know you must both miss your mother, and now your father, and that even years from now special memories will suddenly pop up...the grief doesn't ever really go, but perhaps, with time, it will ebb and become somehow gentler...  
Take care. Our profound condolences.  
*Elizabeth and Dennis Claussen*

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**Elizabeth de Csipkay Claussen** - August 11, 2021 at 01:50 AM

LK

“ Heather and Eli --

*Hold close to all the sweet memories of your Dad (and there must be so many) and keep his infectious smile and lust for life with you. May love, time, and all the sweet memories of your Mom and Dad soften your sadness and bring you peace.*

*Linda Musmeci and Jeffrey Kimball*

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**Linda Musmeci Kimball** - August 04, 2021 at 02:12 PM

KH

“ *I hope Larry is enjoying swimming up and down the Styx*

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**KP Hart** - August 03, 2021 at 10:05 AM

PC

“ *Larry, you made the best of this world, heaven knows. now you've gone on to explore the next one. GOuRD be with you, Larry.*  
*Pete/OGADE*

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**Peter Carels** - August 02, 2021 at 11:27 AM

CS

“ *I am saddened to hear of Larry's passing. He was a fine colleague. At his suggestion, a grad student and I undertook an analysis of toddlers' sense of humor during pretend play, and presented it at a regional humor conference, We served on committees together. He was so full of life—always curious, always inventive, always passionate. I am glad to have known him. Cecilia Shore*

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**cecilia shore** - August 02, 2021 at 08:57 AM

DB

“ I truly mourn the death of Larry Sherman, who was a member of the EDP department during the years I was chair of the department. He was a colleague who shared with me so many of his interests and talents and was always generous with his time and contacts with others. He was also a person who truly exemplified a joy in living and made the most of all of his years, even those he faced alone after the death of his beloved wife. There are not many people who meet life, with all of its challenges, in such a brave and open way and who share their interests and joy in life with so many others. He is truly a person who enriched my life and I will miss him greatly. My love goes out to those of you in his family who are mourning his death. But be glad you had the fortune to know him and grow because of his model of enthusiasm for life. Doris Bergen

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**Doris Bergen** - August 01, 2021 at 02:03 PM

RF

“ Larry & I were friends in Bowling Green S.U. in the early 1960s, & since then I saw him in person maybe 5 times, including twice at my house, in Western Massachusetts. He was my phone buddy in recent years & we often talked about music, mainly jazz, new & old, listening & playing (though I never had occasion to play with him on trumpet). He was almost always enthusiastic about something(s), but very direct, too, about his struggles with cancer through recent years. He kept a pretty optimistic attitude toward his medical problems, which I think probably prolonged his life. He never gave up on making the most of what he could from what the big C served up to him.

I last spoke to him several weeks before he passed, & he was concerned about upcoming test results, & my sense is that when he found out what the latest medical news was, he made a decision (only my guess) that he'd had enough suffering & died soon thereafter.

He was a very generous man, full of good humor & vast interests in many aspects of being, beyond music: birding, swimming, politics, et al.

We had some fun experiences back at BGSU, like camping way up in Northern Michigan, somewhere I would never have gone to on my own.

I will greatly miss our frequent phone checkins & his upbeat energy. He was a one-of-a-kind person & I'm grateful that I knew him....

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ron freshley - July 29, 2021 at 03:23 PM

JG

“ I just met your father recently at dinner for Kathy and Jerry's anniversary and he was so full of information of all the interests he was involved in at present in Ft. Collins - I am so sorry for the loss for all of you and his dear friends...Jannes Gibson

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Jannes Gibson - July 29, 2021 at 12:39 PM