



## Charles Wirth

March 23, 1921 - October 31, 2024

Charlie Wirth lived an extraordinary life. His warmth, kindness, sense of humor and intelligence endeared him to everyone he met. His passing at 103 years means we will be deprived of his bright light in our lives. But the love he gave and received and the memories of a man who brought so much joy to so many people will be undiminished.

Charlie was born in Brooklyn to Albert and Alice Wirth. His parents had met and married in Switzerland. They had immigrated to Cuba prior to WWI. There they were engaged in citrus farming - a life that Charlie's mom often spoke of fondly. They started a family and gave birth to a son, John, Charlie's older brother. With the onset of WWI it became increasingly challenging to ship produce from the island and Charlie's parents headed for the US where his father would work as a mechanic and machinist and his mother would keep their home.

Charlie grew up in Brooklyn and spoke fondly of his childhood. From birth he had poor vision which created challenges for him. But Charlie persevered and built a career as a copy editor. By the time Charlie was in his 40s he had

completely lost his sight.

Charlie met Verne Sobeck, the love of his life, and they married in 1958. Verne had served as a Navy nurse in the early 1950s. She was an extraordinarily warm and caring person and together they built a marriage of deep love, respect and affection.

Together they traveled the world, taking advantage of Verne's service to take military flights and stay on US military bases for a fraction of what commercial travel would cost. Charlie was always careful with a buck.

Verne passed in 1992.

At a time when many would be considering slowing down Charlie continued to embrace life and embarked on new adventures, meeting new people and developing lifelong friendships.

He enjoyed tandem biking and even completed the Five Boro Bike Tour when he was well into his 80s.

Anyone who knew Charlie in the later part of his life knew he loved to cross country ski. Undeterred by advancing years or blindness Charlie would go skiing on extended trips to Norway, Canada, out west in the US and Wisconsin through Ski For Light, an organization committed to helping blind and disabled skiers. Charlie loved the Ski for Light trips and participated in their event in Norway just this past Spring. Some of Charlie's closest friends in recent years were forged through Ski for Light.

For the last 20 years Charlie lived at Seabrook in Tinton Falls, NJ. It seems that everyone there knew Charlie and had heard of his adventures. He was something of a local celebrity. Charlie really enjoyed living at Seabrook and his many friends there will surely miss him.

Charlie is survived by countless close friends around the world. Just this past spring he made his annual visit to relatives in Switzerland. He always looked forward to and enjoyed his visits to Switzerland where he would stay with his relatives there at the hotel they owned and operated in the countryside.

Charlie wished to be cremated and buried with Verne. It is surely comforting knowing they are together again.

A memorial service celebrating Charlie's life will be held in early December at Seabrook in Tinton Falls, NJ. Details will be forthcoming.

For those who wish to honor Charlie's memory donations can be made in Charlie's name to:

Ski for Light: [sfl.org](http://sfl.org)

Salvation Army: [salvationarmyUSA.org](http://salvationarmyUSA.org)

## Cemetery Details

**Private**

## Events

**Details are pending.**

# Tribute Wall



“ *Joyce Rannestad lit a candle in memory of Charles Wirth*



**Joyce Rannestad** - December 06, 2024 at 02:55 PM

PQ

“ *On behalf of the Ski for Light Canada family, I want to offer our sympathies and condolences to Charlie's family and friends. Charlie attended SFL-Canada for many of these past years, and like everywhere else he went, he brought joy and warmth and he generously shared his kindness and lovely sense of humour with all of us. He really was an icon in our community and he will be sadly missed. Peter Quaiattini, President, Ski for Light Canada.*

**Peter Quaiattini** - November 09, 2024 at 11:40 PM

SV

“ *I first met Charlie and Verne at a BBQ in Long Island where he did all the cooking. He had already lost his sight and he amazed me then and left me amazed since with his abilities. He led a full life. Rest easy Charlie, we have the helm!*

**Steve Vdoviak** - November 08, 2024 at 05:19 PM



*Known him all my life and he has always been an inspiration. From making his way into the City to visit with John, using only his cane, to making his way to Europe - and the skiing!! A life well-lived and an honor to have known him. Pat Cahill*

**Patricia Cahill** - November 08, 2024 at 06:19 PM

BH

“ *Bongarzone Funeral Home lit a candle in  
memory of Charles Wirth* ”



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**Bongarzone Funeral Home** - November 03, 2024 at 04:47 PM