



## Charles S. Himelhoch

August 13, 1919 - December 7, 2020

Charles S. Himelhoch, beloved father, husband, and father-in-law, died peacefully on December 7, 2020 at age 101. He was predeceased by his wife of 63 years, Isabel L. Himelhoch (1932-2018). He was born in Detroit, MI, to the late Israel Himelhoch and Lillian Goldstein-Himelhoch. He is survived by his son, Charles (Chip) S. Himelhoch, Jr., daughter, Carol R. Himelhoch, and son-in-law Stephen (Steve) R. Ball.

Charles Himelhoch (Chuck), graduated from Cranbrook Schools in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. He began working at Himelhoch's Department Store as a stock boy after four years of service in the United States Army. Chuck advanced into leadership at Himelhoch's after serving virtually in every capacity, albeit salesperson, coat buyer, merchandise manager, and other positions vital to a deep understanding of the business. Reflecting back to his experience as coat buyer, he said "We used to know a lot more than they do today about the merchandise. A heck of a lot more pure wools, cottons, and silks were used. There weren't so many variations of manmade fabrics. We even knew the labor setup for each garment" (White, Sandra, January 30, 1977, The Detroit Free Press, p. 1D).

Chuck, called "Mr. Charles" by store employees, was known as "a man of ideas" (Detroit Free Press, January 2, 1967, p. 14). For example, when the Northland store branch added its second level, Chuck implemented the "Taste Level" strategy that eventually was executed throughout the chain. Merchandise purchased by buyers from numerous departments was placed in one area of the store and sold by a shared salesforce. A divergence from the practices of other department stores and women's specialty stores, "Taste Level" provided agility that was comparable to the advantage enjoyed by smaller specialty boutiques.

No matter how much fashions evolved over the years, Chuck told reporter Frank Angelo of the Detroit Free Press in 1975 that "We're still operating pretty much as we've always operated the family business" (Angelo, Frank, September 10, 1975, Detroit Free Press, p. 9). Although Wolf Himelhoch would have found layering, tonality, and denim jumpsuits

startling, the family culture and its core operational procedures never changed. Chuck continued as CEO Emeritus of Himelhoch's, in which he and his wife Isabel's son and daughter, Chip and Carol and son-in-law Steve, continue family traditions.

Nationally, Chuck was Chairman of the Ready-To-Wear Committee, and a member of Vendor Relations Committee of the National Retail Merchants Association, and treasurer of the Specialty Stores of America. Locally, Chuck was a leader in retail trade organizations, and was director of the Better Business Bureau, Detroit Community Trust, the Central Business District of Detroit, and the Retail Merchants Association of Detroit. He was active at Meadowbrook Theater, The Anthony Wayne Society of Wayne State University, Rotary International, the Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit Area Council of Boy Scouts of America, and belonged to Franklin Hills Country Club, the Standard Club, and the Bloomfield Open Hunt Club, where he became a "life member." Along with his wife, Isabel, he was active in St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook and the Birmingham Village Players. Chuck served as president of the Birmingham Tennis Club. Chuck had a quick wit, a love of life, and was always happy to meet new people. He was the most beloved father to his children and son-in-law.

After 1979, he served as Adjunct Professor of Retail Management within the marketing departments of Wayne State University, Oakland University, Central Michigan University, and Eastern Michigan University. He also formed his own consulting and research firm, Himelhoch Retail Research Specialists, and became Assistant to the President of Schnieder's Sporting Goods Stores.

Private family visitation and services will be held at Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, 705 W. 11 Mile Rd. (4 blocks east of Woodward), Royal Oak.

Share your memories at <http://www.SullivanFuneralDirectors.com>.

# Comments

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“ A great man who certainly made his mark in business, but arguably made an even greater impact personally through his wisdom and strength of character. A fixture at BOH, my wife and I enjoyed Isabel's and his company at many dinners. I will always cherish and appreciate what he taught me about tennis and, simultaneously, humility, despite his being 35 years my senior. After running me from side to side all around the court and beating me soundly, with me completely out of gas, he would remark "You sure run fast!".

The consummate gentleman and engaging, humorous companion, he was a marvelous role model for many and will be greatly missed. Craig (and Susan) Hartrick

**Craig T Hartrick, MD** - December 16, 2020 at 11:16 AM

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“ A real gentleman. We enjoyed many good times together. Chuck & Isabel were wonderful friends & neighbors.

Thinking of you - Chip & Carol.

Fondly,

Joanne O'Hara

Glens Apartments

**joanne O'Hara** - December 12, 2020 at 07:42 PM

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“ Dear Chip,

Your name just happened to come up today in a conversation about Ross Roy and I was informed of the passing of your father.

I'm so sorry to hear of your loss. I know how difficult it can be, especially during the holidays. I lost Matt on Dec.13th eight years ago.

My deepest condolences to you and your family. Wishing you Hope and Peace, these coming days.

Take Care,

Rose Duff

**Rose Duff** - December 09, 2020 at 08:24 PM

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“ What a tremendous loss on earth and a great gain in heaven!  
Mr. Himelhoch was such a lovely and inspiring man! Faithful to the end in every area of his life! Disciplined each day as he swam and did his pull-ups at Bloomfield Open Hunt. He shared a birthday with my oldest daughter, Reagan Beatty, as well as several kids at BOH. Each year I would bring a cake, mainly to honor him!  
He was a true gentleman! I am sorry for your loss and the great loss of this world!  
To Carol and Chip, May the promises of God that come with honoring your mother and father, surrounded your life forever!  
With love,  
The Keating Family

**Deirdre K. Beatty** - December 09, 2020 at 07:14 AM

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“ Chuck was my mentor and one of the best people I will ever know. He was "family" to me and my family. He will be dearly missed, especially by me. Love you Mr. Charles.

**Jackie Van Dox** - December 07, 2020 at 08:55 PM