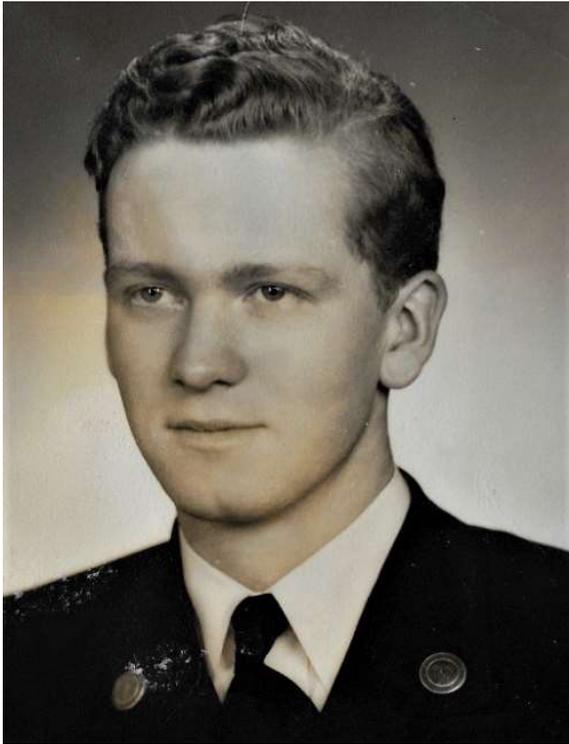


## PAUL ALMQUIST

### Obituary



Paul Almquist, 93, of Farmington, passed away in the comfort of his home on April 30, 2019.

Paul Benjamin Almquist was born in Hastings, MN, on August 8, 1925, in the home his father built. Paul was the tenth of ten children born to Charles August Almquist and Hulda Matilda Carlson. Both parents were born in Sweden, making Paul a first-generation-American and always very proud of his Swedish heritage.

After graduating from Hastings High School in 1943, Paul enlisted in the U.S. Merchant Marine and was proud of his military career during World War II, eventually being honorably discharged as an Ensign in 1948.

After working for Frontier Airlines for a year in Denver, CO, Paul was promoted to Station Manager for Farmington Airport in May, 1948. In 1951, Paul invested in Capital Uranium Company, then in 1953, he sold his stock to buy one of the first Hertz Rent-A-Car franchises. In 1972, Paul partnered with C.O. Ken Kendrick, Dr. Jack Ritzenthaler and O.L. Garretson to build the Holiday Inn in Farmington. In 1995, Paul and his partners built the Holiday Inn Express. He was also a stockholder in Four Corners Savings and Loan and Citizens Bank.

Paul's community service to the City of Farmington is legendary. He served on the City of Farmington's Airport Advisory Committee and the city's first Industrial Development Board. He was also Chairman of the Board of the Farmington Convention and Visitors Bureau, which he helped to found. In addition, Paul helped to start The United Way, was a founder and fund raiser of Childhaven. He was the chairman of the Finance Committee of the First United Methodist Church, was a member of the Elks Lodge, the Masonic Lodge, the Lions Club, and the Ballut Abyad Shrine.

In addition, Paul was the president of the Farmington Junior Chamber of Commerce and was Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Farmington Chamber of Commerce. Paul was especially proud of his contribution in

bringing the Babe Ruth World Series to Farmington in 1963. In 1964 he was an instrumental member of the delegation that went to Chicago to persuade the AABC that it was feasible to bring the Connie Mack World Series to a remote place, Farmington, New Mexico. He was one of many visionaries that made this town into a city.

Paul married his first wife, Bettie Lou King in 1950, and the couple were parents of three daughters, Sharlie Ann (died in 2003), Claire Marie (Mitzie), and Suzan Lee. As Bettie supported Paul's business and community services, Paul also supported Bettie's dedication to the Girl Scouts. Bettie passed away in 1971. Although their marriage was cut short, their life was full with friends, family and traveling the world.

Ten years later Paul met Anne Reid Smartt. The couple dated for two years before getting married in 1983. It was a love story from the beginning. For 38 years, Paul and Anne enjoyed their blended family (including their much-loved grandchildren and great grandchildren) and they delighted in each other's company. They regularly traveled internationally. Paul had a huge map of the world on a wall in his office and kept track of every country (ninety-one) he visited throughout his life.

While Paul's love of his community was deep, it was always his family that has been his pride and joy. He loved sharing stories of his children and grandchildren and great grandchildren. Paul was also a devoted husband and the love he and Anne shared grew stronger every day.

He is survived by his wife, Anne, his daughters, Claire Marie "Mitzie" Almquist, and Suzan Lee (Haluk) Oran, step-children Karen (Eric) Wiley, Brian (Nikki) Smartt, twelve grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held on June 8, 2019 at 1:30 pm, at Riverstone Church 808 N. Monterey Ave., Farmington, NM.

In honor of Paul, donations may be made to San Juan College Foundation, 4601 College Blvd, Farmington, NM 87402.

*-<https://www.farmingtonfuneral.com/notices/Paul-Almquist>*