



Gwendolyn Inez Smallwood

May 25, 1957 - September 8, 2026

Frederick, Maryland

Gwendolyn Inez Smallwood died in Frederick on September 8, 2026. She was sixty-nine. Born there on May 25, 1957, she grew up in a city that still had orchards at the edges and a hospital in the middle. She learned a chart before she learned a highway. A correct room number, she said, is a form of respect.

She spent twenty-four years as a ward clerk in a building that smelled of toner and coffee. She was the person who could sit with a form without making a production of it. She kept extra water in a drawer for the person whose morning had already been too long. When insurance sent a new denial, she translated it twice: once into English a tired family could use, and once into the quiet that says you are not in trouble for needing help. She would not let a widow be rushed. She would not let a number invent a life.

She married Calvin Smallwood in 1980. They bought a bungalow in a neighborhood that later became expensive around them. They stayed. A son and a daughter went through public schools she trusted more than she trusted real-estate talk. After Calvin died in 2019 she kept the garden of mint and the habit of walking a neighbor's child to the bus when a shift ran late.

Neighbors remember a woman who swept her sidewalk and yours if the wind had been unfair, who kept a coffee can of measuring spoons, and who could sit through a graduation without making it about herself. She liked the creek early, before the heat, when the trees still looked like a place a person could walk. She died in Frederick, the only city she had ever needed. The extra water is still in the drawer. That would have pleased her more than a eulogy.

Services

A memorial in Frederick with tea afterward. In lieu of flowers, a gift to a clinic sliding-scale fund is welcome.

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