



## Rem Johnston

August 5, 1933 - February 18, 2023

Remington A. Johnston III

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Remington “Rem” A. Johnston III passed away in hospice care on February 18, 2023.

Born August 5, 1933 in Ossian, Indiana, he was the son of Remington and Elizabeth “Betty” Johnston. He graduated from P.A. Allen High School in Bluffton, Indiana in 1951. Following in the footsteps of his father (class of 1927) and grandfather (class of 1901), he graduated from Wabash College in Crawfordsville in 1955. He majored in political science and was a proud member of Sigma Chi fraternity. A “life-loyal Sig” – loyal and dedicated to generations of his brothers -- he and was awarded the Order of Constantine in 2022, the fraternity’s highest honor.

He earned a degree in printing from Carnegie Mellon University and began a half-century career in the printing business. He spent eight years with Harris-Seybold Printing Machinery Company in Dallas, before returning to Bluffton in 1964 to lead his family’s business, the Rem Johnston Printing Company.

Upon returning to Indiana, Rem became one of the most significant alumni volunteers in the history of Wabash College. He was a prolific recruiter, led the

alumni association, assisted in organizing alumni events, and was particularly close to the Wabash athletic department. He traveled with the college's football, track, and golf teams, among others, which earned him the nickname "Big Cookie" because he always made sure student athletes had snacks while traveling to athletic competitions – including big cookies from a Bluffton bakery. He attended every Wabash football game, home and away, from 1970 through 1995 except for a single game in 1970 when his father died. Rem was exceptionally proud of his involvement with Wabash's 1977 football team, which played in the national championship game, the 1982 basketball team that won the national title, and the undefeated 1983 football team.

Rem received the highest honors bestowed by Wabash College. The National Association of Wabash Men (NAWM) honored him with the Alumni Award of Merit in 1971, making him the youngest person ever to receive the award. For his support of Wabash's athletic teams, he was inducted into the college's Athletics Hall of Fame in 1997. He served several terms on the Board of Directors of the NAWM and served a term on the Wabash College Board of Trustees. In 2018, Wabash President Gregory Hess awarded him an honorary doctorate, the same year the College named the campus gateway in his honor.

He received a Sagamore of the Wabash from Governor Robert Orr in 1983.

In addition to his passion for all-things Wabash, Rem was active in First Presbyterian Church in Fort Wayne, where he served as a youth-group leader. He volunteered as a docent at the Lincoln Museum and as a teacher with the Literacy Alliance in Fort Wayne. He was an avid golfer and bridge player, a member of the Orchard Ridge Country Club in Fort Wayne, and loved opera, classical music, and theater.

Rem had a passion for travel and especially enjoyed his trips to Mexico and

Spain. He was also an energetic gardener and liked browsing antique stores. Perhaps more than anything, Rem will be remembered for introducing literally hundreds of Wabash students to new and interesting food, agreeing to pick up the tab if the students chose something from the menu they had never eaten. The relationships he formed with Wabash men evolved throughout their lives with Rem a constant source of wise counsel, celebratory hugs, and life guidance.

A Celebration of Life service will be held on Monday, May 15, 2023 at 10:30 A.M. at First Presbyterian Church, 300 W. Wayne St., Fort Wayne, IN 46802. Rev. Dr. Anne Epling and Rev. Dr. Youngsoo An will officiate.

Memorial donations may be made to the Big Cookie Athletics Spirit Fund at Wabash College, c/o Advancement Office, 301 West Wabash Avenue, Crawfordsville, Indiana 47933; online at [www.wabash.edu/give](http://www.wabash.edu/give); or by phone at (877) 743-4545.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends can send online condolences to the family at [www.thomarich.com](http://www.thomarich.com).

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

MAY 15. 10:30 AM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church, Fort Wayne  
300 W. Wayne St.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

# Tribute Wall



“ REM helped me find a new life by introducing a poor naive inner city student athlete to Wabash College. He allowed me to have the life I had only dreamed of as a young man. I will be forever grateful. He was a man above men and a true hero to me. I only hope that my dedication to the youth of tomorrow honored him in some small way. God bless you my Sigma Chi brother.

*Les Howard*

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**Les Howard** - February 28, 2023 at 04:55 AM