



## George L. Chapman

May 18, 1947 - March 22, 2023

It is with love and gratitude that the family of George L. Chapman III shares the lengthy announcement of his passing on March 22, 2023. He transitioned peacefully at his home in Naples, Florida comforted by family and dear friends. He was 75 years old.

George was born May 18, 1947 to the former Betsy Idtse and George L. Chapman, Jr. and grew up on East Harrison Street in Maumee. A proud “public school kid” George was a product of Union Elementary School and Maumee High School from which he graduated with honors, was elected President of his senior class, and was a two-year member of the National Honor Society. George went on to earn his undergraduate degree from Cornell University and his JD from The University of Chicago.

George began his professional career as a teacher at Maumee Valley Country Day School - a profession about which he was passionate his entire life. Despite his love for teaching - but much to his students' relief - George ultimately chose to pursue a career as an attorney and experienced sustained professional success first with Minnesota-based Dorsey & Whitney and then with Toledo-based Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick where he was a senior partner.

Ultimately though George's career is best marked by his enormous

contributions to, and leadership of, Toledo-based Health Care REIT. In his various roles as Executive Vice President, General Counsel, President, CEO, and Chairman George consistently grew Health Care REIT to a market value of tens of billions of dollars. Under his stewardship Health Care REIT became one of the largest REITs in the world and one of the most important companies in Northwest Ohio. George was routinely recognized as one of the most respected CEOs in his industry while remaining a loyal colleague and trusted mentor to countless people.

Health Care REIT was ultimately headquartered in the former Dana headquarters on Dorr Street and its remodel - consistent with George's vision - received numerous design and green technology awards. Despite being courted by several business communities outside of Toledo, George was steadfast in his commitment to his Northwest Ohio roots and kept Health Care REIT anchored in Toledo as a pillar of the business community.

George was a valued Board member with several well-respected companies and groups including Health Care REIT, Benchmark Senior Living, Sunrise Senior Living, National Storage Affiliates Trust, OnShift, and the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts, among others.

Despite his professional demands George was generous with his time and resources with many important Toledo-based arts and community initiatives including the Toledo Museum of Art (Board of Trustees), the Toledo Symphony (Board of Trustees), The University of Toledo (Board of Directors), and the United Way of Greater Toledo Tocqueville Society (Co Chair with his wife Leslie). George was particularly passionate about The University of Toledo basketball and football programs and was a loyal and generous supporter of both. He also led the Maumee High School Panther Pride Foundation in its effort to raise millions of dollars to remodel the football stadium. The field proudly bears his name as does The University of Toledo basketball complex.

While these were higher profile projects of his, it was George's quiet generosity to countless people in need that more broadly defines his legacy for giving.

Renowned for his sharp and liberally-used elbows on the basketball court; unique ability to smash ping pong paddles on his first try; and admirable shoulder rotation when hurling his golf clubs after a poor tee shot, George was a multi-faceted and highly-decorated athlete.

A 1993 Maumee High School Athletic Hall of Fame inductee George excelled at baseball, basketball, and football during his playing days at Maumee. His recognitions included Team Captain, Most Valuable Player, and several all-league, all-district, and all-state awards. He continued his basketball and football prowess at Cornell University to which he remained a generous supporter of the University and its athletic program.

George's interests were broad.

He loved to cook. While his grandchildren celebrated any opportunity to relish his grilled skirt steak, his adult family members were universally shocked at the resulting mess in the kitchen and truly baffled by the volume of dry rub he could apply to each piece of meat. To his family George was often referred to by his well-earned nickname "Messy" though certain of his grandchildren preferred "Monkey".

He loved to visit other countries though he was generally considered to be an awful traveler who ultimately forgot that there were sections of airplanes beyond first class. He enjoyed many recent visits to Europe and Greece and cherished the varied cultures, histories, and of course food and wine. It is no surprise that each adventure resulted in new lifelong friends.

He - sometimes - loved to be on the golf course. During the winter months he could be found daily at The Old Collier Golf Club which he affectionately referred to as his “book and wine” club; that is how he spent much of his time there. In summer he often preferred to hold court in the men’s locker room at Toledo Country Club rather than actually playing a round of golf.

He genuinely loved reading and he loved to learn. He read all the time and he read everything he could. Whether a biography of an important statesman, a history of World War II, or the latest spy thriller it was a book he had surely read or had stacked in one of his many piles. They all fed an intellect as vast as it was nimble. He loved to read so much that he learned to use Amazon.com.

These are but a few of the countless stories of the humble, determined public school kid whose intellectual curiosity was boundless; whose love of shared experiences with family was beautiful; and whose generosity towards, and influence on, the lives of everyone he loved is returned with endless, immeasurable gratitude.

George was formerly married to the late Deborah Lynn Chapman with whom he raised three sons.

Surviving are his wife, Leslie Chapman; sons, Caith (Jody), Brian, and Eric; stepdaughter, Elise Ansberg; bonus daughter, Brianna Rotterdam; sister, Connie (Mike) Dillon; grandchildren, Oscar, Nash, Bobby, Ava (“Monkey”), and Vernon; and best friend and backgammon partner, Lynn (Joyce) Olman.

Accomplished, generous, tough, erudite, and ever-loved George was a tenacious fighter to the end. In his various roles of father, husband, brother, son, friend, student, teacher, athlete, CEO, and community pillar he set the

bar for sustained excellence. His life is a testament to the principles of determination, generosity, loyalty, love of and commitment to family and friends, and grit. He is the finest man his family will ever know.

He is deeply loved. He will be missed far beyond the ability these words can convey. His impact will last forever.

A celebration of life will be held from 3PM to 5PM Saturday, May 6th at the Toledo Museum of Art. Arrangements are by the Ansberg-West Funeral Home. The family suggests tributes to the Panther Pride Foundation to benefit the Maumee City Schools.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

MAY 6. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM.

The Toledo Museum of Art  
Toledo, OH

# Tribute Wall

FC

“ George and I were fraternity brothers at Cornell. The summer of '69 after he graduated, we traveled to California, where we connected with other "brothers" and friends. A memorable trip ... and we should just leave it at that. I should note, though, that on that trip George convinced me to start drinking scotch (J&B) and water.

*A good guy. A friend I have never nor ever will forget.*

*Fletcher Cochran*

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**Fletcher Cochran** - April 25, 2023 at 01:07 PM

MP

“ I met and got to know George at Cornell as we were teammates on the basketball team. There are too many memories of him to list. Of course he was a true competitor on the court, but more importantly he was a valued friend. I had only seen George a few times since graduation, and then at the last reunion where we had a chance to talk. I have nothing but fond memories of George and am not surprised by all of his successes and the lives that he impacted.

*M Pope*

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**Michael T Pope** - April 03, 2023 at 07:33 PM

RT

“ I was saddened to learn of George’s passing. He was an immensely talented man: a great athlete, scholar, lawyer, businessman, philanthropist and, most of all, leader. He was one of those rare individuals that not only lived up to expectations, but actually exceeded them. While I did not know him well, I was in awe of his talents and accomplishments. The Toledo legal and business communities have lost a star. Congratulations on a life very well lived and rest in peace, George.

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**Ron Tice** - March 26, 2023 at 08:08 PM

SW

“ George was one of our 20 Founding Members at The Old Collier Golf Club. He always loved the club, other members, and the staff. George would say Old Collier was comfortable and a welcoming place. The staff loved him because he loved us. I've spent many special times on the practice tee with George, hitting a few golf balls, tuning his swing, but mostly having a great conversation. He always talked lovingly about his family. I will miss George as will everyone at The Old Collier Golf Club. Rest peacefully friend!  
Steve Waugh

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**Steve Waugh** - March 26, 2023 at 02:05 PM

AG

“ I have many fond memories of Mr. Chapman at Old Collier enjoying his wine and reading a book.  
We had a long standing comradery of Chit Chat there.  
I will truly miss him , but his memory will always be there at the Club.  
Ava Garner



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**Ava Garner** - March 26, 2023 at 12:46 PM

PH

“ My first memory of Gidge was the summer after 4th grade. He had finished 7th grade. He was a camper at our Presbytery’s summer camp in the Irish Hills, Camp Premauca. My mother was the camp nurse in those early years which allowed me to be the pesty little kid who hung around all the big kids. George would invariably stuff me, upside down, into the various 55 gallon drums scattered around the campgrounds. So, I guess he LIKED me. Anyway, I was always rescued by his friend Bob Baldwin. And I have appreciated George ever since!

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**Pam Butler Hardy** - March 25, 2023 at 05:29 PM

GF

“ I first met Gig when we were grade school kids. At Christmas, his family would arrive at my Uncle Joe Herbert and Aunt Dot's house (she was a Fess) on W. Broadway in Maumee. He usually seemed to be the one carrying the presents. Then there were countless Fourth of Julys at his mum's house on the river where our families always congregated. Not living here anymore, I would only see him occasionally as an adult, like at my dad's funeral. It was nice to reconnect upon my retirement back in Toledo. He will be sorely missed. Greg Fess

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**Gregory Fess** - March 25, 2023 at 03:38 PM

EN

“ He was one of a kind . Gidge as we called him will certainly be missed by all of us who really knew him . R I P my friend .  
Condolences to all of the family.

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**Ed & Nancy Nowak** - March 25, 2023 at 01:57 PM