

# Wabash.

## Class Agents Letter

Class of 1968

Class Agent  
Jim Roper

Alumni & Affinity Group Engagement Office  
301 W. Wabash Ave.  
Crawfordsville, IN 47933  
765-361-6360  
[alumni@wabash.edu](mailto:alumni@wabash.edu)  
[wabash.edu](http://wabash.edu)

January 2026

Dear Friends in the Class of '68,

Sad news today. A lot of obituaries. I am sorry because of the brothers we have lost at Wabash.

That's my story and I'm stickin to it ...

One football practice I was charged with getting the varsity ready for some particular defenses. We played hard. There may have been some profanity. I don't know. We were huddling up when suddenly I was hit from behind on the helmet with a chinstrap. If you have never been hit with a chinstrap it is loud and reverberates in the helmet. So I dropped a shoulder and spun around. It was Coach Griffith, who lost his balance by the suddenness and surprise of the maneuver. I lost my balance and fell on top of him. Honestly. So I began with, "The front door is always open. That is where I live." I pointed at my face. He said, "Okay." The next play, I hit Ron Hill with a forearm. Hard. I was angry and I focused on the wrong guy. I apologized to Ron. When we were running inside, Coach Urick called, "Are you and Coach Griffith okay?" I answered, "I'm okay." And that's how it went. Read on,

**W.**



*Randy Slickers, Russ Dukes, and Dan Susie at Wabash*

Loved your pictures in the class letter that came today. Here is a picture of Randy Slickers, Russ Dukes and me (Dan Susie) taken at the "tailgate" before Wabash's first home football game on Saturday September 13th. I should have sent this to you earlier...my "bad." The occasion was the celebration of Phi Delta Theta's 175 anniversary of being on the Wabash campus. Phi Delt's from many generations from the '50's down to the present were there. Very cool event. Good to see guys older than us at a Wabash fraternity event. A big thunderstorm interrupted the game. The Wabash field does not have lights. So the second half was played on the Crawfordsville High School field. Of course, Wabash won the game.

## Obituary for **Charles James "Chuck" Anderson**

April 5, 1947 – December 15, 2025

A much-beloved San Antonio elf just returned to his home in heaven. True, most people knew Chuck Anderson only as an advertising executive, but if you want to know the whole story about his time on earth, well...Life is funny. Sometimes it's fun, as well. But Charles James ("Chuck") Anderson had no way of knowing this when he was born April 5, 1947, the son of James Frederick and Florence James Anderson.

No, Chuck didn't know that he would one day work with Jonathan Winters on Diamond Shamrock spots. Or that a visit to Winters' house would be interrupted by a 30-minute phone call from Robin Williams, resulting in a hilarious improv routine by both comics as Chuck looked on. Or that Chuck's creation of the "Buppets" for VIA Metropolitan Transit would lead to TV ads with Monty Python star John Cleese...or that Cleese would recall that and recognize Chuck and wife Yoli at a chi-chi NYC restaurant several years later. But we digress...The point is, Chuck was not born an adman, but how he became one was an adventure.

First came the whole elf thing...which would lead to a lifelong penchant for showmanship. You see, his maternal grandparents ran James' Bicycle Shop in downtown San Antonio for years. Each Christmas Eve, young Chuck dressed as one of Santa's elves to help his granddad deliver newly purchased bikes. He would eventually outgrow that elf costume, but never the sense of fun and magic that came with it. As a teen, Chuck dressed as an early-era policeman and rode a late-1800s-style "big wheel" bike in the Battle of Flowers parade. Still later, he became a serious Model A Ford aficionado (he owned 4 at one point). He also made a name for himself as a deal-maker, trading one Model A for a gazebo that still graces his home's backyard today.

But when he graduated from Thomas Jefferson High in 1964, he left those vehicles behind, boarded a train for Crawfordsville, Indiana, and entered the all-male environs of Wabash College, his father's alma mater. There, he apparently talked his way through all four years (1964-68) as a speech major and a member of the Speaker's Bureau (need an emcee for your store opening- a custom speech delivered to a packed auditorium? no problem!)

Realizing midway through senior year that he would graduate at the height of the Vietnam conflict, he (a) panicked, (b) visited the draft board, who offered less than joyful news, and (c) signed up to take Navy officer candidate exams. Volunteering was the only logical choice – and his dad Jim had been a Navy pilot in WWII and Korea. Chuck passed...and only then did he inform his parents of his postgraduate plans. Goodbye Wabash (graduation 1968), and hello US Navy.

His first posting was Long Beach, CA – a year with the Navy’s prestigious SeaLab project – before being sent to Washington as public affairs officer at the Pentagon. All that year, Chuck gave daily press briefings to chief of naval operations Adm. Thomas Moore, plus occasional presentations to the entire Joint Chiefs. He was a natural at this. So much so that in 1970, he was given a choice: stay in the Navy and ensure promotion by being posted to Saigon, or take an early out. Wow! Suddenly Chuck was a civilian again! So after a two-month break backpacking through Europe, from Portugal up to Norway, he headed back to Texas, with his own big plans.

In October 1970, Chuck had a momentous homecoming discussion with his dad, San Antonio ad exec Jim Anderson. Hearing that National Bank of Commerce was ready for a new agency, they teamed up, brought in other ad pros, created a new campaign, a dazzling presentation, and presto! NBC became the flagship client of a newly minted firm, Anderson Lewis. Over the next 50 years, Chuck refined his business skills as agency president, while the firm evolved into Anderson Advertising, then Anderson Marketing Group. Meanwhile, as creative director, Chuck would give his elfin fun side free rein. Updating TV production styles for H-E-B and Ancira-Winton Chevrolet. Creating characters like Jack the Zipper for 1970s jeans store Below the Belt – and those VIA Buppets in the 1980s. Helping Diamond Shamrock build their Corner Store image...and later rebrand as Valero. Integrating the look and marketing of five local schools into the Alamo Colleges. From Luby’s to Porter Loring to Pioneer Flour Mills to the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo – the list of clients astounds. So does the list of local, regional and national ADDYs and other accolades. But the longevity and professional record of success – hey, those pretty much speak for themselves.

But was Chuck’s inner elf all work and no personal life? Hardly. One day in 1971, Chuck’s childhood best friend called and said he’d been set up on a blind date: “Why don’t we make it a double date and you drive your Model A?” So there they were, Chuck and his date for the evening in the front seat, and in the rumble seat, Chuck’s friend and a striking young lady named Yoli...Yolanda Peña...who exuded extraordinary elfin vibes of her own. This did not go unnoticed by Chuck. In the following weeks, this quartet of acquaintances became a duet of friends. Best friends. Inseparable best friends: Chuck and Yoli. Yoli and Chuck. Romance ensued, it blossomed, and in 1974 it expanded into matrimony. Then parenthood (James and Chrissy). Grandparenthood. And so on. We’re leaving out a lot of details here. Suffice it to say that this partnership too had a record-setting run.

Chuck was consistent on other fronts, as well. Playing racquetball every week for decades. Serving as president of The Governors Club. Acting as Prime Minister for the Court of Rey Feo in 1998. Doing years of community service through the agency for the regional YMCA, the Ecumenical Center, and other groups. Serving on assorted

executive boards. Becoming a member of various social clubs (Big Hipps Bubble Room was a favorite). And, of course, being a dad.

When their kids were successfully launched into college and adulthood, Chuck and Yoli said a little prayer of thanks. Then got a bit more serious about prayer, deciding to join their first Bible study group – which they both finally had time for. This resonated strongly with Chuck, so he went on to join a men's Thursday Morning Bible Study Group – a "can't miss" weekly focus for the next 25+ years. In fact, only in the last few months of his life, when his fight against Parkinson's Disease made attendance impossible, did he fail to show up.

He was, his family insists, the best of the best. As a husband...father...grandfather...friend. With his passing at his home on Monday, December 15, 2025, he leaves behind his beloved wife Yoli; his son James Anderson; his daughter Christina (Chrissy) Anderson Labatt and son-in-law Thomas Labatt; grandsons Thomas (Tommy) Weir Labatt V and Trenten James Labatt, all of San Antonio. He also leaves a large extended family of current and former work colleagues, including longtime partner and friend Julius Germano, and Kim Gresham, in whose capable hands the legacy of Anderson Marketing Group now rests.

Chuck's family is full of gratitude for the loving care provided by some very special individuals the Lord sent. Dr Fernando Lopez guided us through Chuck's journey with Parkinson's with his gentleness and medical expertise coordinating with other experts as needed. Chuck received wonderful home health care for several years from Victor Velazquez, Norma Perez, Ana Arenas, Nikki Carrington as well as an exceptional team from Avionn and Marisela Quiroz's Loving Hearts Group, Avenues Team and Hearts of Texas Hospice. We will be forever grateful.

A Funeral Mass will take place at 2:00 p.m., on Monday, December 22, 2025, at St. Anthony de Padua Catholic Church (102 Lorenz Road). Interment with Military Honors will follow at Sunset Memorial Park. Pallbearers will include Thomas Labatt IV, Thomas Labatt V (Tommy), Trenten Labatt, Ed Kelley, Edward Kelley, Michael Fernandez, and Ernie Gurra. Honorary Pallbearers will be the Thursday Bible Study Group (The Fishermen), Raul B. Fernandez, Weir Labatt, Ronnie Attal, Julius Germano, Clyde Johnson III, Jimmy Ahern, Peter Hennessey III, Mike Yates, and Bill Cook. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that a donation be made to your own favorite charity.

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Obituary for **Ernest Ronald Hill**  
April 21, 1946 – December 2, 2025

**Ernest Ronald Hill** played football and was a brother at Beta Theta Pi.

E. Ronald Hill "Pop", age 79, died peacefully in his sleep on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, and now watches over us with the Lord. Loving and joyful husband of Geraldine "Geri" Hill (nee Makis); loving father of Nicole (the late Jason) Skaggs and Melissa Hill (Tom Baker). Adored and admired grandfather of Christopher, Colin, Carson, Cooper Skaggs and Tyler, Brody and Tanner Baker. Devoted brother to Pat Lemcke (Ralph) and uncle to Jenny, Ralph and Jeff. Brother-in-law to the late Michael Makis and Jill (Matthew and Jason). Cherished son of the late Matilda and late Ernest Hill.

Ron was born in East Chicago, Indiana. From an early age, he had an appreciation of nature and enjoyed fishing and spending time on the water and beaches of Canada. Ron went on to study at Wabash College where he set goals in academics and athletics. At Wabash, he loved the camaraderie of playing football and learned to build a life around leadership and fostering connections with the world around him. He was a member of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity. After graduating from Wabash, Ron built a life with his high school crush, Geri, and moved to St. Louis as Ron pursued his law degree at Washington University. Ron and Geri built a life in Brentwood, Missouri, and were married for 57 years.

Ron was dedicated to his St. Louis community both personally and professionally. He spent his professional career at Ameren in the legal department for 32 years and was a member of the Missouri Bar Association. Ron cared deeply about his community serving as President of his church, Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, in the 1970s. He also served on the board of the Mid-county YMCA in the 1980s. From 1979 to 2015, he first served as a public defender and then municipal judge for the city of Brentwood.

Dedicated to always being present at his daughters and St. Louis grandsons' activities, he spent tireless hours on swimming pool decks, even being certified as a USA swimming official. Later in life, Ron often wheeled up to baseball or soccer fields to experience the joys of his family's everyday enjoyments. Pop was truly everyone's biggest champion and cheerleader. Ron was happiest when surrounded by his family and friends when entertaining at his home. A true conversationalist, he loved nothing more than sitting in a chair, listening intently and enjoying the company and conversation of anyone that was lucky to be near him. He was known lovingly by all those around him as Pop.

Visitation will be held at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church in Brentwood at 10:00 am with a service to follow at 11:00 am, on Thursday, December 18th. Interment St. Paul Churchyard. Donations can be made to Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church or Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana.

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**Obituary for Allan Ralph Gildenhar**  
June 12, 1946 – December 6, 2025

**Allan Gildenhar** was an Independent.

Allan Ralph Gildenhar, 79, passed away December 6, 2025, in Fort Wayne, Ind. He was born on June 12, 1946, in Washington, D.C., to the late Ralph Gildenhar and Doris Richards. Allan was raised in Richmond, Ind., where he enjoyed playing golf with his father and younger brother, Mark Gildenhar. He graduated from Richmond High School, Class of '64, which he attended with his brother and stepsisters, Suzette and Francine Slagle.

Following graduation, Allan took a memorable road trip to the American West with his good friend, Woody Woodward, prior to his matriculation at Wabash College graduating in 1968 and earning the Wall Street Journal Student Achievement Award in Economics. In 1970, he continued his education at Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind., where he met his future wife, Phyllis Gilbert; the two would wed the same year. He completed his M.B.A. degree at I.U. in 1973, while residing in Indianapolis, and received his Indiana CPA Certification in 1979. During his career as an active CPA in Indianapolis, he worked for several entities, including Katz, Sapper & Miller.

Allan was a loving, faithful husband who enjoyed visiting state parks, attending concerts and the movies. He loved chatting with everyone he encountered, always full of questions and good humor. He spent the last years of his life residing within the Lutheran Life Villages community in Fort Wayne, Ind., where he was lovingly cared for.

Allan is survived by his devoted wife of 55 years, Phyllis Gildenhar; brother, Mark (Janet) Gildenhar; and nieces and nephew, Anna, Katie, and Daniel. He was preceded in death by his father's second wife, Dorothy Slagle; and stepsister, Francine Slagle.

In honoring Allan's final wishes, private services will be held at a later date. Interment at Lindenwood Cemetery, Fort Wayne, Ind.

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**Obituary for David Carl Hagen**  
January 20, 1947 – April 8, 2024

David Carl Hagen died April 8, 2024 in Eugene, OR, from complications from progressive supranuclear Palsy (PSP). Hagen was born in 1947 in Indianapolis and grew up in Bloomington, IN, where his father, Charles William Hagen Jr., was a professor of botany at Indiana University, and his mother, Mary Margaret Swan Hagen, was a teacher and a homemaker. He had an older brother, Charles ("Chuck") W. Hagen III, and a younger brother, Ronald ("Ron") E. Hagen. Hagen attended Bloomington University High School, where he was strong in academics, athletics, and leadership.

After high school, attended Wabash College, where he was a member of the Kappa Sigma fraternity. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1968, majoring in biology and minoring in chemistry. He was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa and was selected as a Woodrow Wilson Scholar designee. He attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, for his doctoral program, where he studied biology under Boris Magasanik. While a graduate student, he met his future wife, Lois Marie O'Connor, through mutual friends. They were married in 1973.

From 1973 to 1978, Hagen was a postdoctoral scholar at the Stanford University Medical Center. In 1978 he took a research position at the Institute of Molecular Biology in Eugene, OR, where he worked from 1978 to 1992. His son and only child, Daniel Scott Hagen, was born in 1983. In 1993 the Hagen family lived in Melbourne, Australia, where Hagen worked as a visiting scientist at Monash University and Chiron Mimotopes.

Upon returning to the U.S., Hagen briefly worked as an independent computer and technology consultant before taking a job at Molecular Probes Inc. (later a wholly owned subsidiary of Invitrogen Life Technologies). He was hired initially as an executive technical support person to the president, and worked his way through various positions, including assistant biosciences director and head of new product introduction. He retired in 2006.

Hager was a lifelong naturalist and avid outdoorsman. He loved fly-fishing, backpacking, canoeing, and bird-watching. In retirement, he dedicated many volunteer hours in the local community, including as a nature guide at Mount Pisgah Arboretum and as a leader in the Eugene-Springfield chapter of the North American Butterfly Association. He also welcomed into the world two grandchildren. He loved puzzles and had two of his own published in the MIT Tech Review Puzzle Corner (Nov/Dec 2007 and May/June 2009).

Hagen's friends and family remember him as a remarkable man who was kind, gentle, brilliant, and irreverent. He was a rigorous scientist, a committed naturalist, and a devoted father and grandfather.

He is survived by his younger brother Ron; wife, Lois; son, Dan; and grandchildren.

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**Obituary for James "Jim" R. Edgar**  
July 22, 1946 – September 15, 2025

Jim Edgar started at the Phi Delt house. Ended up as the governor of Illinois. He graduated from Eastern Illinois University.

Jim Edgar, whose steady, principled leadership as Illinois' 38th governor left a lasting legacy of integrity, bipartisanship, and public service, died Sunday morning from complications of pancreatic cancer. He was 79.

At the heart of his life was his family. Jim was married to Brenda Edgar for 58 years, a partnership grounded in love, mutual respect, and shared commitment to service. Together, they raised two children and supported each other through decades of public and private life. Brenda was his greatest source of strength and his closest confidante. Jim Edgar believed public office was a call to serve. He didn't seek popularity, instead he earned it by standing for what was right, even when it was hard. Known for his honesty and thoughtful leadership, he brought people together across political lines and worked to make government work better for everyone. He listened carefully, made tough decisions, and led by example.

Born on July 22, 1946, in Vinita, Oklahoma, Jim grew up in Charleston, Illinois, the youngest of three sons. He graduated from Charleston High School and Eastern Illinois University, where he served as student body president. He began his career in public service as a legislative intern in the Illinois Senate, was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives, and went on to serve 10 years as Illinois Secretary of State before being elected governor in 1990. Four years later, he was re-elected for a second term where he carried 101 of Illinois' 102 counties in a historic landslide victory.

As governor, he prioritized fiscal responsibility, educational access, child welfare reform, and environmental conservation. He restored the state's financial stability during a national recession, championed increased funding for underserved school districts, and helped make higher education more affordable. Alongside Brenda, he led efforts to modernize the state's adoption system and support families. His administration was one of the most diverse in Illinois history.

After leaving office in 1998, he founded the Edgar Fellows Program at the University of Illinois to mentor the next generation of public leaders. More than 500 Fellows have participated in the program, which remains one of his most meaningful accomplishments. It reflects his belief that respectful dialogue and shared purpose can transcend political divides and build a better future.

While his career in public life was significant, Jim was most proud of the life he built with his family. He was a devoted father to Brad (Stacey) and Elizabeth, and a loving grandfather to James "Dakota" (Shannon) Edgar, Cali (Mark) Ward, Ellie (Cole) Gregory, Jake Edgar Lowe, and Cecilia Edgar Lowe, who knew him affectionately as "Papa" and "GFS" (Grandfather Sir).

Jim was also a man of many interests. He loved to travel, was an avid reader, a lifelong learner, and an owner and breeder of thoroughbred race horses. He loved his dogs,

collected art and history, and treasured friendships that spanned decades. He is remembered as a leader who cared, not just about results, but about people. He leaves behind a legacy of decency. His family is grateful for his example of how to lead with integrity, how to listen to all sides, and how to care for others with grace and courage.

He is survived by his wife Brenda; their children and grandchildren; and nieces, nephews, and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, Cecil and Betty Edgar, and his brothers, Tom and Fred.

Funeral arrangements are pending. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that memorial contributions be made to the Edgar Fellows Program or the charity of your choice.

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WAF !

**Jim Roper '68**