



## Patrick Johnson

December 3, 2023

Patrick Augustus Johnson, 83, died peacefully on December 3, 2023, in Loveland, Colorado at Riverbend Health Center. Patrick was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Despite the effects of the disease, Patrick always remained joyful and kind. His loved ones are especially thankful for the attention, love, and care provided by his spouse and lifelong companion, Linda. Patrick was born in Colorado Springs, on March 16, 1940, the son of Gabriel Joseph and Alvina (Boucher) Johnson. He was preceded in death by his older brother, Anthony G. Johnson, and his two older sisters, Mildred "Millie" Stanley, and Josephine Matthewson. Most of Patrick's life was lived in Colorado Springs, but for the last eight years, when he and Linda retired to Fort Collins, Colorado.

In 1958, Patrick graduated from Colorado Springs High School, where he played football and won the state championship. During these formative years, Patrick was active in Young Life. This connection led Patrick to Central State College in Oklahoma where he earned a B.A. in Sociology. He then attended Princeton Theological Seminary. Patrick came to recognize his passion for teaching. He then earned a Colorado Teacher's Certificate from The Colorado College, and later earned his M.A. in History from the University of California at Riverside. On June 12, 1964, Patrick married Linda Billingsley, daughter of Dr. Lindsey Billingsley, and Majel (Pitts) Billingsley. Following three years of teaching in California, and the birth of their first daughter,

Gretchen, they returned to Colorado. After a year's stay in Norwood, Colorado, they returned to Colorado Springs where Patrick took a high school teaching position in Air Academy School District 20, and their second daughter, Erin, was born. Patrick was a beloved and creative teacher and coach. He was active in the teachers' union, an outspoken advocate for civil rights, and committed to helping those less fortunate. He retired from teaching in 1995. In 1983, Patrick and Linda purchased a costume rental business which they called Ivywild Costumes, named for the historic neighborhood in Colorado Springs where it was located. Together, they enjoyed owning that business for thirty-two years.

Patrick is survived by his wife, Linda, daughters, Gretchen Watson (Chuck) and their three daughters, Claire, Emma, Madeline Watson, and Erin Connor (Thomas) and their two sons, Joseph and Jayce Connor. Also fondly remembering Patrick is his niece, Holly Fischer (Kurt), and their two daughters Elizabeth and Mallory, and now a grand-nephew, Gene. Patrick also has many nieces and nephews in California, the children of his sister, Josephine Matthewson. Patrick's brother-in-law, Carl Billingsley, and Carl's extended family were very dear to Patrick. He valued their friendship, and that of his teacher colleagues, chess partners, and many lifelong friends as the best of life.

A memorial service for Patrick will be held at Evergreen Cemetery Chapel, 1005 Hancock Expressway in Colorado Springs, at 1 pm, Friday, January 5, 2024, followed by the interment of his remains in the Evergreen Cremation Garden at 2 o'clock. The reception will begin at 3 PM at Ivywild School (now an event venue) at 1604 S Cascade Avenue in Colorado Springs. In place of flowers, Patrick would appreciate your donation to the UNICEF fund, in collaboration with Lawrence O'Donnell of MSNBC, in providing school desks for the children of Malawi, Africa. To do so, go to <https://www.unicefusa.org> and indicate K.I.N.D. (Kids In Need of Desks), or to

LastWordDesks.msnbc.com.

# Cemetery Details

## Evergreen Cemetery

1005 Hancock Expy  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JAN 5. 1:00 PM (MT)

Evergreen Cemetery Chapel  
1005 Hancock Expressway  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

## Reception

JAN 5. 3:00 PM (MT)

Ivywild School  
1604 S Cascade Ave  
Colorado Springs, CO 80905

# Tribute Wall

JH

“ Pat was the Rampart High School teacher who understood best what challenges students faced. With enthusiasm, humor and compassion he encouraged student, teacher, and administrator to find a way to deal with complicated circumstances. Whatever the situation, Pat Johnson made us feel like he had been there and found his way—so we could too! His up beat teaching strategy seemed centered in relevance; discussions from his classes continued outside the classroom and often included conversations with other teachers. A memorable colleague, Pat’s contribution to the generations he taught is profound and immeasurable.

Judith R Harrington - December 29, 2023 at 07:27 PM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Patrick Johnson.



December 29, 2023 at 05:24 PM

LJ

“ My dear Patrick. Our 59 years of marriage have been the center of my life's joy, adventure, and meaning. I will carry it with me always. Love, Linda



Linda Johnson - December 17, 2023 at 09:50 AM

JN

*Dear Linda - what beautiful words! You and family are lifted in prayers; hugs stretching across the miles.  
Jackie and Doc*

**Jackie Weaver Nelson** - December 20, 2023 at 09:06 PM

JN

*Dear Linda and family, Pat, though he probably did not realize it, was my teaching mentor at Air Academy High School in the 70's. His love of teaching was contagious and just by listening to him, he taught me so much about reaching the students on a personal level. I will always cherish those years. Joe Novak*

**Joseph Matthew Novak** - December 28, 2023 at 05:09 PM

GW

*Thank you for the kind words... I remember my dad speaking highly of you, Jo. Best, Gretchen J. Watson*

**Gretchen Watson** - December 28, 2023 at 09:12 PM

MS

*Dear Linda, indeed, your words are beautiful and Dan and I have seen that love that you and Pat had all those years. What a joy Pat was to be around. always smiling and just a truly happy person. I'm so glad you have all your family around you to help get through these next few days. Many prayers going out to you and your family and much love to you. Margy*

**Margy Smith** - December 29, 2023 at 05:29 PM

GH

*Beautiful, loving words, Linda which encompass your life together with Pat.  
The Ted Heinz's family will always remember Pat as the gregarious and beloved friend of Ted since high school. I cherish (with all my heart) those long talks around social issues, his love of teaching, and his passion for life. And people.  
Prayers and blessings to you and family. Graciela Heinz and family.*

**Graciela Heinz** - January 04, 2024 at 03:23 AM

BC

*I learned so much about teaching – and life – from Pat. We often shared the same planning period, which inevitably meant that I overheard his conversations with other faculty members and sometimes came to him myself for advice. While the culture of the teachers' lounge sometimes skewed pompous, pedantic, and merciless, each of us trying to impress the others with how high and uncompromising our standards were, Pat stood out for his fascination with kids – what made them tick, how to make their learning relevant, and why it was important to understand where they were coming from. The more I was around Pat, the more I enjoyed his sense of humor, the more I was inspired by his sense of fairness, the more I wanted to emulate his compassion, empathy, and care. (The more I was around him, too, the more I realized how much his family meant to him. Hardly a day went by that I didn't hear something about Linda, Gretchen, or Erin. I think it was Gretchen who came to our house to do a clown birthday party for one of our boys, still a fun memory for our family.) The line in his obituary – that Pat “always remained joyful and kind” – brings me great comfort, as that is how I remember him.*

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**Beth Cutter** - January 05, 2024 at 01:30 AM

HK

*I only today heard of dear Pat's. passing. I am remembering Pat's enthusiasm and love of life as well as his incredible concern for his students! He was a special man whom I admired and enjoyed being around.  
Thank you, Pat, from all of us who benefited from your presence.  
Love to Lynda and family. May wonderful memories help you through Pat's loss.  
Holly*

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**Holly Kroncke** - January 07, 2024 at 10:31 AM