

Richard K. Wilson Scholarship, Class of 1965



The FHS Alumni Association is pleased to announce that a fully endowed scholarship has been established to honor the life of 1965 FHS graduate Richard K. Wilson who overcame significant hurdles to live a courageous and fulfilling life.

After starting on the varsity football team as a sophomore, Rick was diagnosed with a chronic kidney disease and sat out his junior year. Coming back his senior year, even with the kidney issue; he earned honorable mention All-Ohio. In 1970 he lost his kidneys to the disease and was an early kidney transplant recipient at Ohio State University Hospital with his brother Ed, FHS 1968, as the donor. The kidney served him well for 17 years until the toll of the immune suppressant drugs resulted in the failure of that kidney. He had a second transplant in 1987 with brother, Bill, FHS 1962, as the donor.

In spite of the health challenges, Rick went on to have a successful career in mechanical design and drafting and earned a stellar reputation in the field of cryogenics and nuclear energy.

The joy of his life was his miracle daughter, Kristie. Rick and his wife, Janet, whom he married in 1969, were told they would likely not be able to have children because of the trauma of the kidney transplant on the rest of his systems. To their surprise and elation, Kristie was born in 1973. Later, when Kristi was diagnosed with dyslexia, it was evident that Rick had accomplished so much in his life while dealing with this disability as well. His determination to live life to the fullest was a role model for Kristie. She graduated from Adrian College and with husband, Andrew, adopted, a baby boy, Stephen, from Kazakhstan in 2008. They have done a wonderful job raising a young American boy who is proud of his Kazakhstan heritage. Stephen would have loved his Grandpa Rick as did every child who ever met him.

Rick was the son of Bill and Donna (Earnest) Wilson. Donna was a 1929 graduate of FHS. The family attended Fredericktown Presbyterian Church. The three Wilson brothers were familiar sights on the playing fields of Fredericktown in the 1960s.

This scholarship is sponsored by Rick's brother, Bill, and will be awarded annually beginning in 2017. When Bill was asked what motivated his donation, he said that "In the face of his challenges, Rick was always confident, optimistic and ready for a new adventure. Hopefully, this scholarship will assist many other Fredericktown High School graduates overcome great obstacles and develop the skills to live a life as rewarding as Rick Wilson".



1969 – Bill-25 Rick-22 Ed-19