



DeWitt Chapple Jr.

April 6, 1932 - January 1, 2024

DeWitt Chapple, Jr. peacefully passed away at his home in Middletown, Ohio on January 1, 2024 at the age of 91. He is survived by many friends, with several of these friendships spanning many decades and generations.

DeWitt was born at Middletown Hospital on April 6, 1932 to DeWitt Chapple and Margery Chapple nee Snider. DeWitt attended Lincoln School until the fifth grade when his father received a commission in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II, prompting the family to move to Moultrie, GA. DeWitt returned to Middletown to live with his grandparents and attend junior high in Middletown. He graduated from Middletown High School in 1950 and matriculated to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he earned a degree in political science and history in 1955. Continuing his family's legacy of service, DeWitt received a commission in the U.S. Army Air Force in Houston, Texas, as a second lieutenant and served for two years. In 1957, DeWitt returned to Middletown to follow his family in the automobile business when he founded and opened Chapple Leasing with Lee Dunlap where he leased automobiles and machinery to Armco (now Cleveland Cliffs) and other local businesses and executives. He served as president and CEO for 47 years until his retirement in 2004.

Over the course of his life, DeWitt had many interests and traveled extensively. Those closest to him will remember his life-long affinity for

railroading. In 1971, DeWitt purchased Office Car 3 from the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway. Originally the private railcar Hussar for cereal heiress Marjorie Merriweather Post and her husband financier E.F. Hutton, the car was renamed Chapel Hill, in honor of his alma mater, and became a prominent fixture in the private railcar world. Additionally, DeWitt was a founding member of the American Association of Private Railroad Car Owners (AAPRCO), and he served on that board for many years including two terms as president in 2004 and 2005. He later served as director emeritus for AAPRCO until his death. Locally, DeWitt was active in many organizations, including the Atrium Medical Center, First Baptist Church, and was a long-time member of Brown's Run Country Club.

DeWitt will be remembered for his humble presence, sage advice, blind generosity, chivalrous nature, "witt"-y remarks and handsome smile.

A funeral service will be held at the First Baptist Church of Middletown on January 20 at 12:00 p.m. 4500 Riverview Ave., Middletown, OH 45042.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to PAWS Adoption Center, a shelter DeWitt passionately supported. 6302 Crossings Blvd, Monroe, OH 45050, 513-539-7297, www.pawsadoptioncenter.org

Arrangements entrusted to Herr-Riggs Funeral Home of Middletown, Ohio.
herr-riggs.com

Tribute Wall

GP

“ DeWitt and I made many trips together in the 70's aboard his Chapel Hill and my Pennsylvania 120, including transcontinental journeys across Canada. I have nothing but fond memories of those happy days, railroading. George Pins

George Pins - June 20, 2024 at 06:51 AM

TC

“ DeWitt came to Denver on his railroad car about 5 years ago and we met and had lunch together at Union Station. DeWitt is my father's cousin. He had me enthralled and in stitches as he filled me in on all the family lore and dynamics from the 50's & 60's and of his life in Middletown, OH. And, of course, a guided tour of the Chapel Hill. RIP DeWitt.

Todd Chapple - February 02, 2024 at 03:30 PM

JD

“ We knew Dee when he worked with my Dad, Lee Dunlap, at Chapple Leasing. He was always kind hearted and we send our love and prayers. Jeannette

Jeannette Dunlap - January 16, 2024 at 09:34 AM

LO

“ Dewitt was a pleasure to take care of here at AMC pulmonary rehab. He always brought a smile to my face and others he was around. Our running joke was that he was our "bail bondsman" in case one of us got in trouble over the weekend. I will miss him and will always remember his kindness, humor and quick come backs.

Lorin - January 10, 2024 at 07:07 AM