



Mr. Eldon Merle Bigham

July 8, 1942 - September 18, 2025

1st Quarter: Eldon “Ed” Merle Bigham was born July 8, 1942 to William Leslie and Ernestine Heisner Bigham. His birth mother passed away 4 ½ months after Ed’s birth. Ed was raised by Ernestine’s brother, Leonard Heisner and his wife Mary Faltmeyer Heisner (Ernestine’s best friend). This made Ed the youngest of eight children in both the Bigham and Heisner families. Ed often said “I am the luckiest child in Southern Illinois to be blessed with 14 siblings.”

2nd Quarter: Eldon attended school in the Pinckneyville, Illinois school system, graduating from PCHS (Pinckneyville Community High School) in 1960. He was recruited and offered a scholarship by NBA Hall of Fame basketball Coach, Harry Gallatin to Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Ed played four seasons of basketball at SIU-C, two for Coach Gallatin and two for Coach Jack Hartman. Upon Ed’s graduation from Carbondale, he returned to his hometown of Pinckneyville where he accepted a position teaching and head basketball coach for Pinckneyville Community High School. After 4 years at Pinckneyville, he was recruited again by Coach Gallatin to join him at SIU (Southern Illinois University) Edwardsville to join him as his assistant basketball coach. During Ed’s tenure at SIU-E he earned his master’s degree and took on numerous positions at SIU-E such as professor, assistant to the Dean in student affairs, Athletic Director, also playing a major role in the development of the Vadalabene Center at SIU-E.

Ed embraced his new hometown of Edwardsville and became an active member of the community. Ed served as president of the LeClaire School PTA where his daughters, Michele and Jenifer attended school. He became a member of the YMCA board and joined Eden Church. Ed settled in and enjoyed his adopted city. After retiring from SIU-E, Ed became a real estate agent with ReMax in the Maryville, Illinois office, then owned by Jan Moore Smith and Terry Smith. He retired from ReMax after approximately 20 productive years.

3rd Quarter: Ed and his wife, Gloria lived in Glen Carbon, Illinois. They enjoyed a wonderful life of 42 years, living, loving and laughing together. They enjoyed traveling with friends and family, and looked forward to the regular trips to Las Vegas, Nevada with the Lou Juan Hills neighbors. Ed also enjoyed Canada fishing trips with his nephews and friends. He was also an avid quail hunter who loved training his dogs, he probably missed many a shot for watching the dogs lock in on the “perfect point”.

Loving all that he did in life, one of Ed's greatest pleasures was his family. Ed took any opportunity to grill out and have family and friends at his house. Ed's house was often filled with neighbors, family and friends.

4th Quarter: Eldon “Ed” Merle Bigham, 83. Eldon passed away in his home September 17, at 5:00 in the evening with his family surrounding him. Ed is preceded in death by his parents; siblings, William Heisner, Leonard J. Heisner, Nelvin Heisner, Mildred Davis, Norma Welch, Marie Stanton, Betty Ann Simms, Winton Bigham, Orel Bigham, Bessie Bigham-Rheinecker, Beulah Bigham Hamm, Blanche Bigham West, and Nila Bigham Kohlsdorf.

Ed is survived by his wife, Gloria Jumper Bigham of Glen Carbon, IL; daughters, Michele (Shelly) Bigham of Edwardsville, IL, Jenifer Bigham Bonney (Lance) of Lewistown, IL; step-son, C. Robert (Robb) Crawford of St.

Louis, MO; grandson, Michael U. Willame of Edwardsville, IL; granddaughters, Isabelle C. Bonney, Grace E. Bonney, and Samantha R. Bonney of Lewistown IL; brothers, A. Wayne and Charlene Bigham of Du Quoin IL; sisters-in-law, Marilyn Heisner of Pinckneyville, IL and Margie Moore of Edwardsville, IL; five brothers-in-law, Jim and Mitze Jumper of St. Ann, MO, S. Ray Jumper and Anderson Jumper both of Edwardsville, IL, Robert L. (Veronica) Johnson of Des Moines, WA, Richard (Sidra) Johnson of Tulsa OK, and a number of nieces and nephews from the Bigham, Heisner, Jumper, and Johnson families, and each one was his “favorite” niece or nephew.

Cemetery Details

Valley View

1564 Lewis Rd
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 26. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Eden Church of Edwardsville
903 North 2nd Street
Edwardsville , IL 62025

Service

SEP 26. 11:00 AM (CT)

Eden Church of Edwardsville
903 North 2nd Street
Edwardsville , IL 62025

Graveside

SEP 26 (CT)

Valley View
1564 Lewis Rd
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Tribute Wall

JB

“ I found out about Ed passing away a few hours ago. He was a good man. He befriended me years ago when he was teaching at SIUE and I was an older student. We shared a love of high school basketball and horse racing. You were good to me when you didn't have to be. RIP Ed. You deserve the rest. My thoughts are with Gloria and the rest of his family.

Jack Bullock - October 25, 2025 at 02:29 AM

JP

“ Dear Gloria, your friends from EHS class of 1967 are thinking of you and sending Love. Jean Garde Price

Jean Garde Price - September 28, 2025 at 12:37 PM

KB

“ Katherine Bray purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Mr. Eldon Merle Bigham.



Katherine Bray - September 25, 2025 at 06:25 PM



“ Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Eldon Merle Bigham.



September 23, 2025 at 08:48 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mr. Eldon Bigham.

September 23, 2025 at 08:48 PM



“ Our deepest condolences.
Tom and Vicki Decker

Vicki Decker - September 23, 2025 at 01:00 PM



“ Ronald L. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. Eldon Bigham.

Ronald L. - September 23, 2025 at 12:07 PM



“ Your cousin Rita from NC. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. Eldon Bigham.

Your cousin Rita from NC. - September 22, 2025 at 11:53 PM



“ Your cousin Rita from NC. purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of Mr. Eldon Merle Bigham.



Your cousin Rita from NC. - September 22, 2025 at 11:53 PM



“ Gloria: Sorry for your beloved loss. May God Bless. Gerry Hobbs

GerryHobbs - September 22, 2025 at 08:58 PM

DV

“ *SIUE colleague, friend, and poker player. Will miss him.* ”

Dave Valley - September 20, 2025 at 09:21 AM