



Leon Charles Neece

October 17, 1936 - February 11, 2020

Leon Charles Neece, loving husband and father, passionate educator, devoted Christian, avid St. Louis Cardinals fan and kind-hearted soul passed away February 11, 2020 while in hospice care at Lawrence Hall Nursing Center in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas.

He was born October 17, 1936 in Powhatan, Arkansas to the late Leo Jackson and Mary Baldrige Neece. A sister, Margaret Downing Barry, preceded him in death.

His devotion to his family and firm belief in God gave him strength and peace throughout his life.

Leon graduated from Black Rock High school in 1954. After graduating from Arkansas State University, he received a master's degree in education from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, and a specialist degree from Arkansas State University.

While attending Black Rock High School, he fell in love with the late Norma Jean Wier, his beloved wife of 55 years. They married on December 24, 1954, and had two children, Norman Leon and the late Kenny Ray. Leon loved his family more than anything, and instilled strong values in his children.

In his professional career, education was Leon's passion. Teaching math and life skills was his heart. He taught at Lynn, Paragould, and Walnut Ridge High Schools. In 1973 he became the Principal at WRHS. He later became Principal at Beebe and eventually retired from the profession at Highland.

In 1990 Leon was named Arkansas Principal of the Year. He was selected by his peers for the honor. He was invited to the White House where First Lady Barbara Bush presented the award. It was one of the highlights of Leon's career. After the recognition Leon said, "You cannot win awards without good students, good teachers and good community support."

Committed to education for 32 years, he enjoyed his profession immensely even through some times of challenge and headaches. Leon once stated, "My greatest rewards are seeing our young men and women grow up and become good and productive citizens in our community." He was very proud of his students; he loved them all.

Leon's teaching extended beyond the classroom. He led by example. He always provided love and support to anyone. He never met a stranger. He was accepting, forgiving, loving and kind. He modeled his life after the Bible verse, 1 Corinthians 16:13-14, Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.

Leon participated in and led many organizations, some of which were: The Boy Scouts, First United Methodist Church of Walnut Ridge, Walnut Ridge City Council, Walnut Ridge Pool Manager, Kiwanis Club, Little league, and Pony League Baseball. He was a member of the Aurora Masonic Lodge 423, a member of the Arkansas Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. He served on the board of the Lawrence Memorial Health Foundation and was Vice President of Lawrence Hall Resident Council.

Leon enjoyed many hobbies. He was a pilot, golfer, basketball referee, softball player and traveler. He enjoyed playing bingo at Lawrence Hall and was a strategic checker player. He was also an avid baseball fan. His passion for the St. Louis Cardinals was renown. During their retirement Leon and Norma visited all the MLB parks in the US and Canada and would frequent spring training in Florida and Phoenix. Leon also frequented the friendly confines of Wrigley Field in Chicago. While living their best life, Leon and Norma traveled to all 50 states and 15 countries enjoying every moment.

Leon's legacy will continue on through his son, Norman Leon Neece, and many beloved nieces, nephews, family, friends and students. He leaves those behind rich in love and memories.

A celebration of life was held at the First United Methodist Church in Walnut Ridge followed by interment at the Powhatan cemetery.

Pallbearers were Jennings Smith Jr, Gabriel Guthrie, Ben Robert Bush, Dudley Bassett, John Bland and Randy Golden.

The service was led by Reverend Beth Perdue of the First United Methodist Church and Pastor Tim Campbell of the First Free Will Baptist Church. Eulogies were given by Norma Smith, Robert Engelken and Ken Ehrke. Special music was provided by Jeff Taylor and FUMC Choir assisted by surrounding community churches.

Leon Neece will be dearly missed.

Cemetery Details

Powhatan Cemetery

Hwy 117 spur
Powhatan, AR 72458

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 14. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Bryan Funeral Home - Hoxie
415 N. Texas Street
Hoxie, AR 72433
(870) 886-3434

Funeral Service

FEB 15. 1:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
214 S. W. Second
Walnut Ridge, AR

Tribute Wall



“ *Leon Charles Neece*

January 29, 2023 at 08:29 AM



“ *Gearldine EVANE lit a candle in memory of Leon Charles Neece*



Gearldine EVANE - July 25, 2021 at 01:55 AM



I AM SO SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR PASSING. YOU WERE MY FAVORITE TEACHER. R.I.P.

Gearldine EVANE - July 25, 2021 at 01:57 AM



“ *Norman you have been a great loving and caring son. He was so proud of you. Sorry that we are out of town and could not be there for you. Eggie and I have many fond memories of your dad. We loved being with your mom and dad on softball team trips and during the time I taught with him he was always so respectful and good to me.*

winnie texder - February 16, 2020 at 10:00 AM



Norm, I was so sorry to hear of Leon's passing. I was out of town and I didn't get to be there for the funeral. He was such a good man and you were a good son to him. We hope you will come back and see us often.

kay Mathews - February 16, 2020 at 05:39 PM

SS

As my high school math teacher, Mr. Neece gave me a grounding in math that enabled me to pass the math sections of various tests for college admission and later for entry into my chosen profession. For this I am forever grateful. I hope the family will accept my condolences on their loss.

*Stephen R. Snow
WRHS Class of 1967
U.S. Foreign Service Officer, retired*

Steve Snow - February 20, 2020 at 08:40 PM

NN

Thanks guys! He loved all of his students and fellow teachers. It's a huge loss for me.....

Norm Neece - April 27, 2020 at 01:40 AM

VJ

“ *Mr. Neece taught me geometry and I discovered there was a math I could understand. Thankful for that. Years later worked with him when I was a teacher and he a principal. Good memories forever.*

Vicki Jones - February 15, 2020 at 02:01 PM

NN

Thank you! He loved all of his students!

Norm Neece - April 27, 2020 at 01:39 AM

TH

“ *Loved Leon & Norma both. Many memories. Love and prayers to all*

tuny hunt - February 15, 2020 at 09:09 AM

NN

Thanks Tuny. They both loved you.

Norm Neece - April 27, 2020 at 01:38 AM

RG

“ *Ill miss Leon Neece he was nice man and so sorry for your lost may Jesus comfort each one of you in jesus name amen !!*

Rebecca Godwin - February 15, 2020 at 12:52 AM

NN

Thank you!

Norm Neece - April 27, 2020 at 01:38 AM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Leon Charles Neece.*



February 14, 2020 at 10:03 AM

BN

“ *Bill and Karen Neece purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Leon Charles Neece.*



Bill and Karen Neece - February 14, 2020 at 09:43 AM

JW

“ *Norman
Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this most difficult time.*

Judy and Mary Ann Watson

judy watson - February 12, 2020 at 09:08 PM

PM

“ *Penelope Moreland-Gunn purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Leon Charles Neece.*



Penelope Moreland-Gunn - February 12, 2020 at 06:49 PM



“ *Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Leon Charles Neece.*



February 12, 2020 at 03:52 PM

MK

“ *Sorry to hear of your loss. Know your father will be greatly missed. Try to find comfort in that he is now with your mother and brother.*
MK

MK - February 12, 2020 at 03:41 PM


Tammie
Calhoun

“ *Sorry to hear of your kids prayers* 🙏



Tammie Calhoun - February 12, 2020 at 03:25 PM

DT

*Norman and Family,
We are saddened to hear about you dad and know he will be greatly missed. What a wonderful man! He was the Principal at Highland High School when our daughter Traci attended and graduated in 1988. We also enjoyed a fun trip to Bramson with Leon and Norma during that time. Please know that our love and prayers are with you.
Deloris and a Larry Tolbert*

Deloris Tolbert - February 14, 2020 at 11:02 PM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Leon Charles Neece.



February 12, 2020 at 12:05 PM

LN

“ Love, Shari Neeley purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Leon Charles Neece.



Love, Shari Neeley - February 12, 2020 at 11:08 AM



“ So sorry to hear this....Prayers for family

Carolyn Graves - February 11, 2020 at 11:05 PM

SD

“ So sorry to hear your Dad is gone. You have been a rock for him Norm. He was a good man. I know he was very proud of the man you are as well. God Bless you Norm!

Scott Digman - February 11, 2020 at 10:01 PM

SL

Norman, As you well know your dad will be missed by so many. Love and comfort as you again grieve a close loved one . Thank you for being so kind to Roger's mom and so many others at Lawrence Hall.

Sharon Lakey-Jean - February 12, 2020 at 06:38 AM

NN

Thanks guys...❤️❤️

Norman Neece - February 12, 2020 at 11:21 PM

DL

So sorry for your loss. Leon was such a great mentor to young boys and girls and taught us life lessons. He will be missed and god bless you Norman.

David L Lassiter - February 14, 2020 at 10:57 AM

AW

Leon was younger than me and Conway but we remember him and your mother form the days we lived in Black Rock He was a good man and you have been a wonderful son.

Ada Joe and Conway Weir - February 15, 2020 at 09:20 AM

NB

“ So sorry to hear of Leon's passing. He was a great friend to our family.

Nicki Black - February 11, 2020 at 08:57 PM

CK

“ Thoughts and prayers to you Norm. He was a good teacher. Carolyn Clark Kincade. WRHS class of 1966.

Carolyn Kincade - February 11, 2020 at 08:45 PM

JW

“ I'm so sorry to hear about Mr. Neece. He was a great teacher and friend to so many. Prayers are with his family at this time.

Janet Whaley

janet whaley - February 11, 2020 at 07:30 PM

JC

So very sorry to hear about Mr. Neece, he was a such a gentlemen and one of the best teachers ever, you were both blessed to have so many precious memories to share.

Jo Anne Richey Couturier - February 14, 2020 at 02:16 AM

GW

“ My prayers and sympathy to Norman and family. Mr Neece was a great teacher and the last few years when I would see him he still had a wonderful smile, would love to visit and he he will greatly missed.

Gayla Warden - February 11, 2020 at 07:11 PM

SE

“ He was my bookkeeping teacher great man

Sherry Eaves - February 11, 2020 at 06:29 PM