



## Bobby Wayne Welch

November 27, 1937 - July 24, 2021

Bobby Wayne Welch, 83, passed away in Newnan, Georgia on July 24, 2021. He was born November 27, 1937, the son of John Albert and Eula Pearl Penton Welch of Autauga County, Alabama. He graduated from Coosa County High School in Rockford, Alabama in 1956 and graduated from Jacksonville State College (now University) with a B.S. in Education and from Auburn University with a Master's degree. He graduated from Georgia State University with a Six Year degree in Educational Leadership.

He and his wife Geraldine Smith Welch of Alexander City, Alabama, moved to Newnan in 1962 and he began teaching 6th grade at Elm Street School. In 1964 he moved to teach at the old Newnan Junior High School.

He quickly moved through the ranks, becoming the principal of Arnco-Sargent Elementary School, Western School and then Elm Street Elementary School. In the early 1970s, he took the position of personnel director for Coweta County School System. He served as Assistant Superintendent, Associate Superintendent and then served as Superintendent for six years, retiring in 1994.

After his first retirement he worked for the Georgia Youth Science and Technology Consortium to establish science centers in school systems across Georgia. He also served as the interim executive director of the Newnan-Coweta Chamber of Commerce after his second retirement since he was always a community servant at heart.

In 1998 Mr. Welch became the Executive Director of the Rutledge Center in Newnan on Hospital Road. He served for 20 years, retiring in 2018 at age 80.

He served on various local boards and held many positions of leadership in community groups over the years. He was a member and officer of the Newnan Civitan Club, the Optimist Club and the White Oak Golden K Kiwanis Club and First United Methodist Church of Newnan. He was the president and board member NCARC/Rutledge and president of the Newnan-Coweta County Chamber of Commerce. He was chosen Outstanding Young Man of the Year by the Newnan Jaycees in 1972 and Coweta County Citizen of the Year by the Newnan-Coweta County Chamber of Commerce in 2007. He volunteered at his granddaughters' schools by making his famous homemade biscuits for students even as the granddaughters entered high school.

He was so very pleased to be honored in 2006 with the opening of Bobby Welch

Elementary School where he volunteered for many years.

One of the things he was the proudest of was the work that he did with the desegregation of the Coweta County Schools in the early 1970s. He directed the process and worked tirelessly to accomplish a smooth transition for the students, teachers and entire community for two years.

In his "spare time" he loved to travel and take his children and later his grandchildren on trips. He and his wife traveled to all forty-eight contiguous states, four continents and most of the European countries often multiple times and with various grandchildren.

Mr. Welch is preceded in death by his son, Jonathan R. Welch, sister Patricia Wingard, brother-in-law Olin Wingard, brother Carl Welch and sister-in-law Dixie Welch.

Surviving are his wife, Geraldine Smith Welch of Newnan, daughter Jennifer Welch Egas (Oswaldo) of Orange Beach, Alabama, granddaughters, Hannah Polasek (Adam) of Dahlonga, Katherine Schneider (Chris) of Anderson, South Carolina, Caroline Harkleroad of Newport Beach, California, Amelia Harkleroad of Atlanta, grandson Andrew Welch of Atlanta, two step-grandsons, David Egas of Atlanta and Sam Egas of Athens, Georgia. He is survived by two great-grandchildren, William Blaine Schneider and Lainey Grace Polasek. In addition, he is survived by his older brother, Charles K. Welch (Judy) of Prattville, Alabama, brother-in-law, Robert O. Smith of Alexander City, Alabama, and many nieces, nephews and cousins who will miss him greatly.

The memorial service is 11 a.m. Monday, July 26, 2021, at The Donald W. Nixon Centre for the Performing and Visual Arts, 1523 Lower Fayetteville Rd, Newnan, GA 30265 with Dr. Joel Richardson. The family will greet friends following the memorial service. The family expresses their gratitude for the care provided by Sacred Journey Hospice and Brookdale Senior Living. The care these organizations provided over the eighteen month illness from pancreatic cancer was exceptional. We will be forever grateful.

Condolences may be expressed online at [www.mckoon.com](http://www.mckoon.com)

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to Mr. Welch's favorite charities or the charity of one's choice.

- St. Jude's Children's Research Center, 501 St. Jude's Place, Memphis, Tennessee 38105.
- The Rutledge Center, 61 Hospital Road, Newnan, Georgia 30263.

McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory (770) 253-4580

# Cemetery Details

## Forest Lawn Memorial Park

656 Roscoe Road  
Newnan, GA 30263

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JUL **26**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

The Donald W. Nixon Centre for Performing and Visual Arts  
1523 Lower Fayetteville Rd.  
Newnan, GA 30263

## Reception

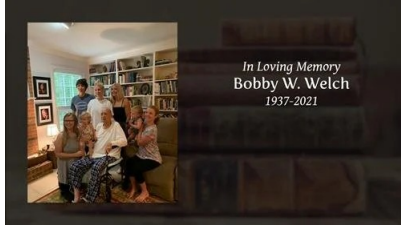
JUL **26**. 11:45 AM - 12:45 PM (ET)

The Donald W. Nixon Centre for Performing and Visual Arts  
1523 Lower Fayetteville Rd.  
Newnan, GA 30263

# Tribute Wall



“ *McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Bobby Wayne Welch*



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**McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory** - July 25, 2021 at 11:37 AM

SO

“ *Mrs. Geraldine and Family,  
I'm so sorry for your loss. I worked under Mr. Welch with CCSS for numerous of years. I know heaven is rejoicing. God will give you and your family the strength to make it through this. You and your family are in my prayers.  
Lovingly submitted,  
Shirley Orr-Cox*



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**Shirley Orr-Cox** - July 28, 2021 at 10:41 AM

JW

*Thank you so much, Miss Shirley. I remember well!*

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**jJennifer Welch** - July 28, 2021 at 07:33 PM

GW

*Thank you so very much.*

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**Geraldine Welch** - August 02, 2021 at 02:13 PM

JH

“ *Jimmy & Rachel Hucks lit a candle in memory of Bobby Wayne Welch*



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**Jimmy & Rachel Hucks** - July 28, 2021 at 01:50 AM

GW

*Thank you, Rachel.*

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**Geraldine Welch** - August 02, 2021 at 02:14 PM

P(

“ Patricia T. Grubbs (Pat) lit a candle in memory of Bobby Wayne Welch



Patricia T. Grubbs (Pat) - July 27, 2021 at 10:52 PM

GW

Thank you, Pat.

Geraldine Welch - August 02, 2021 at 02:15 PM

RM

“ My thoughts and prayers for all of Mr. Bobby's family and friends. He will be missed. ❤️🙏  
Love, Robin Barron Mann



Robin B Mann - July 27, 2021 at 06:48 PM

GW

Thank you so very much, Robin.

Geraldine Welch - August 02, 2021 at 02:15 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Papa



Jennifer Welch - July 27, 2021 at 05:26 PM

GW

Thanks.

Geraldine Welch - August 02, 2021 at 02:17 PM



“ 3 files added to the album Papa



Jennifer Welch - July 27, 2021 at 05:25 PM



I'm just now seeing this. So glad you added it.

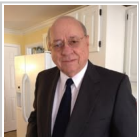
Geraldine Welch - August 02, 2021 at 02:18 PM



“ 3 files added to the album Papa



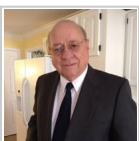
Jennifer Welch - July 27, 2021 at 05:24 PM



“ 6 files added to the album Papa



Jennifer Welch - July 27, 2021 at 05:23 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Papa



Jennifer Welch - July 27, 2021 at 05:22 PM

GW

*Love this picture. Papa was so happy to meet Charley Pride thanks to Tony Owens.*

**Geraldine Welch** - August 02, 2021 at 02:21 PM

RP

“ *Renee Garner Proctor lit a candle in memory of Bobby Wayne Welch*



**Renee Garner Proctor** - July 27, 2021 at 03:21 PM

GF

“ *We have been fortunate enough to know Bobby. He had great joy in preparing Sunday breakfasts for his grandkids and family. Knowing that I would not survive in Iowa without it, he taught me the rules of (American) football, which I am grateful. He will be missed.*

*Our deepest condolences to the Welch Family.*

*Gunay Family.*

**Gunay Family** - July 27, 2021 at 03:10 PM

GW

*Thank you, Hikmet and the Gunay Family. Thank you also for the donation to St. Jude's.*

**Geraldine Welch** - August 02, 2021 at 02:20 PM

RC

“ *Ms. Geraldine, I'm so sorry to learn about your husband's passing. He did a lot for education. May God be with you and your family during this time of sorrow.*

*Ray Craven  
Ft. Walton Beach, FL*

**Ray Craven** - July 26, 2021 at 10:57 PM

GE

*Thank you so much, Ray.*

**Geraldine** - July 27, 2021 at 02:37 PM

KH

“ *Tim and I were so sorry to hear of Mr. Welch's passing. He was such an integral part of this community for decades. As a student I benefited from his leadership of the school system, and as an adult I benefited from his friendship, leadership and wisdom in civic organizations, at Rutledge, and the Chamber.*

*Mrs. Welch and family, you will be in our prayers.*

Kim Higgins - July 26, 2021 at 03:18 PM

GE

*Thank you, Kim.*

Geraldine - July 27, 2021 at 02:38 PM

JM

“ *Junie Austin Merkle lit a candle in memory of Bobby Wayne Welch*



Junie Austin Merkle - July 26, 2021 at 01:14 PM

DS

“ *Prayers for Mr Bobby's family*

Don Slaton - July 26, 2021 at 11:35 AM

TS

“ *Our deepest condolences to Geraldine and family. Mr. Welch was instrumental in helping my mother correct clerical errors with the State of Georgia teachers retirement, after my father's death. She was always grateful for his help to ensure my father's wishes were carried out. I always remember Mr. Welch taking the time to ask how you were and how was your family doing. He genuinely cared about people and their well being and will be missed.*

*Tim Shoemake*

Tim Shoemake - July 26, 2021 at 09:53 AM

JW

*Thank you so much, Tim! I loved your mom and Lisa!*

jJennifer Welch - July 26, 2021 at 09:04 PM

GE

*Thank you, Tim.*

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**Geraldine** - July 27, 2021 at 06:04 AM

NS

“ *What a wonderful journey this has been! I believe I was a member of the first sixth grade with Mr. Welch at Elm Street and the first eighth grade at the junior high. That group was quite a challenge: Cathy, Carol, Cyanne, Merry, Frank, and a wide array of talkative students! He was a wonderful teacher from the very beginning. Then, we had Mrs. Welch in the ninth grade for a firm foundation in English and an example of grace under pressure. Lots of changes that year and a baby on the way, but you showed us how to be a lady in a professional role. What a blessing your family was to the class of '69 and to me personally. May God's peace and love be with you and your family.*

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**Nancy Stripling** - July 26, 2021 at 07:43 AM

GE

*Oh, my, Nancy, what a sweet tribute to both of us. He was also fond of you and over the years, I'd mention things about you I had seen on Facebook. I really appreciate those kind words, even more than you can imagine.*

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**Geraldine** - July 26, 2021 at 07:52 AM

AA

“ The first time I met Mr. Welch was when I was in 8th grade. I had won the geography bee at Evans Middle School, then the county level, then got to go to Atlanta for the state competition. My mom couldn't drive and my dad worked nights, so my parents were never involved in any extra-curricular activities I chose on my own to do.

Mrs. Welch, the librarian, had coordinated for her husband to take me to the state competition on a Saturday morning. When I met him I was struck by the similarity he had to my own dad. The leather loafers, the slacks, the plaid short-sleeve shirt, the breast-pocket with reading glasses and pen and paper, the hairline. It was probably just a common look at that time for men born in the 1930s, but as a kid it was like meeting Bizarro Superman. But unlike my dad, he was very friendly and supportive and encouraging. I realized he was the Superman and I'm the one who lived in a Bizarro world.

Years later as an adult I heard they had opened a Bobby Welch Elementary School and that's when I learned he was a former Superintendent and the school was named after him. I had no idea a man of such local prominence would be willing to take the time from his busy life to take a poor kid to Atlanta for a competition on a weekend. Just feeling one day of his encouragement gave me a little insight into the great impact he must've had on his family, friends, and community.

So sorry for your loss, Mrs. Welch.

Sending love from Alaska.

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**Alex Adan** - July 26, 2021 at 05:55 AM

GE

Goodness, Alex! What a lovely tribute. Your kind words are truly appreciated.

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**Geraldine** - July 26, 2021 at 07:54 AM

MY

“ Our prayers to the family during this time. Bobby was a tremendous friend and mentor. He was instrumental in Bev becoming a principal in the Coweta County School System. It was a pleasure to serve on the Rutledge Board during his time as Director. He will be missed. May God's peace and comfort be with each of you in the days and weeks ahead. Retired Sheriff Mike and Bev Yeager Family

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**Mike/Bev Yeager** - July 25, 2021 at 09:27 PM

GE

Thank you so much, Mike and Beverly.

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**Geraldine** - July 26, 2021 at 05:06 AM

GP

“ Geraldine and family So sorry to hear of Bobbys death. Please know that you are in our prayers. Many memories of Bobby when he was principal at Elm Street School. May God grant you peace and comfort at this time.

Gerrie and Ray

Gerrie and Ray Petty - July 25, 2021 at 03:44 PM

GE

Thank you so much, Gerrie.

Geraldine - July 25, 2021 at 06:43 PM

MP

“ Mildred Parks sent a virtual gift in memory of Bobby Wayne Welch



Mildred Parks - July 25, 2021 at 01:40 PM

JG

“ Mr. Welch was a Newnan and Coweta Counry fixture. I always seemed to miss him as a principal, but I knew him from so many organizational functions over the years. He was truly a wonderful man. The last time I saw him was a few years ago at the "singing" on a week night in Sargent. I was amazed to see him there...then get on the stage and sing! Quite well, I might add! Just another accomplishment to add to his mammoth repertoire. Autauga County, Alabama's loss was DEFINITELY Coweta's lifelong gain. You will be missed by so many, Mr. Bobby.

Jennie Gillihan - July 25, 2021 at 01:36 PM

GE

Thank you so much for your kind words.

Geraldine - July 25, 2021 at 06:46 PM

DC

“ Our deepest condolences to Geraldine and the family. Bobby was an awesome man and I am privileged to have known him. He never failed to threaten to 'cut down some trees' whenever we crossed paths. :-) Professional, he had few peers. Personally, he stood above most. He will be missed but his awesome influences will decidedly live on.  
*Dan'n'Deb Coleman*

Dan Coleman - July 25, 2021 at 01:25 PM

GE

*Thank you so much for your kind comments.*

Geraldine - July 25, 2021 at 06:47 PM

GE

“ *This video is very long but it is hard to compress his life into a few minutes.*

Geraldine - July 25, 2021 at 12:09 PM

JB

“ *Geraldine,  
I'm so sorry to hear about Bobby. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.  
Jesse E. Bradley, Jr.*

Jesse & Marsha Bradley - July 25, 2021 at 11:58 AM

GE

*Thank you so much, Jesse!*

Geraldine - July 25, 2021 at 06:48 PM

FG

“ *Frank And Barbara Grubbs lit a candle in memory of Bobby Wayne Welch*



Frank and Barbara Grubbs - July 25, 2021 at 11:10 AM

PC

“ Pam Clemons lit a candle in memory of Bobby Wayne Welch



Pam Clemons - July 25, 2021 at 09:28 AM

SW

“ I began substitute teaching in Coweta County in 1989 and have been in schools where Mr. Welch was my supervisor. I have a teaching degree but it expired and I really enjoyed the variety of subbing in every school in Coweta until 2015 when arthritis prevented me from working. I am so proud to have worked under Mr. Welch's supervision and want to extend my deepest condolences to Mrs. Geraldine and all of their loved ones. I'm both shocked and saddened to see this notice today. My son is a Northgate graduate and a successful business man and I think Mr. Bobby played a role in his education by being a pioneer in Coweta county and laying the groundwork for all future educators. God bless all of you as you navigate this loss and please know that he's looking down from above watching over all of you.

Susan Weegar - July 25, 2021 at 07:23 AM

JH

He was a good man! He will surely be missed!

Judy Hill - July 25, 2021 at 10:23 AM

TN

“ Our Deepest Sympathies for your family. Mr. Welch was a kind man and we are grateful for his service to Rutledge, the school system and our Community.  
Toni, Jerry and Jimmy Noles

Toni Noles - July 25, 2021 at 06:25 AM

GE

Thank you so much.

Getaldine - July 25, 2021 at 06:54 AM

GA

“ I'm deeply saddened to hear of Mr. Bobby's passing. He was a strong leader during my years in school as well as a great friend. My sympathies for his loved ones. He will surely be missed.

Guy Alexander - July 25, 2021 at 06:09 AM

GE

*Thanks so much for the kind words.*

**Geraldine** - July 25, 2021 at 06:49 PM

WB

“ *Mr. Welch hired me to serve as principal at Fairmont Elementary School in 1990. I shall always be grateful for the faith he had in me and for the tremendous support he always demonstrated. I remember well his visits to my hospital room when i was stricken with bacterial meningitis. He very well could have sent an assistant: but, he came himself. Rest in peace my dear friend. Wayne Badie*

**Wayne Badie** - July 25, 2021 at 04:43 AM

JM

“ *Thinking of you all. I always enjoyed seeing Mr Bobby.*

**Julie Olmstead Marthews** - July 25, 2021 at 01:23 AM

TJ

“ *Auntie and Momma always considered Mr. Bobby a great man who was fair at all cost and would not dare lead you wrong. His love for mankind was indeed his highest asset and he led with every ounce of professionalism no matter the task. Rest in peace dear Mr. Bobby for your job here on this earth is now done. You will be missed Mr. Bobby but you have left us with memories that will last a life time. I will remember the last time we spoke in the store and it made me smile that you instantly remembered exactly who I was and even asked about the girls. That kindness is what I will forever remember the most....*

**Tanya Jones** - July 25, 2021 at 12:15 AM

PC

“ *He was my boss, friend and neighbor. He actually found me a place to live in Newnan and watched my kids at lunch while I called Mrs.Wortham to setup an appointment to look at her little house. Mr. Welch was an extraordinary man. Prayers for the family.*

**Peggy Covey** - July 24, 2021 at 10:52 PM

KG

“ Papa was the true definition of an amazing man. He was kind and loving, and not just to family. We were lucky enough to “join” the family through friending granddaughter, Katherine, where we were welcomed with opened with open arms. Papa treated Olivia, who at the time of first meeting was a toddler, like she was his own. He had so much love to give. Our family will be forever grateful to have had such love and memories. We’re sending all of our love to the entire family- Nana, Jennifer, ‘Waldo, and the grand girls. We love you all so, so much <3

Katt Gatewood - July 24, 2021 at 10:35 PM

CD

“ Bobby was an excellent superintendent for the Coweta School System but he was an even better human being. He was one of the first persons I met when I arrived in Newnan and he was instrumental in my being hired as a middle school teacher. My prayers are with Geraldine and his family.

Cindy Dewey - July 24, 2021 at 09:16 PM

JT

“ Geraldine and family, I am so sorry to hear of Bobby's passing. He was such a good and sweet man! Please know you are in my prayers. Jenny Carlisle Toney

Jenny Carlisle Toney - July 24, 2021 at 09:16 PM

SR

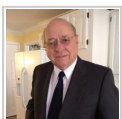
“ Sending our sincere condolences to the Welch family. Bobby hired me in my first position with the school system right after I graduated from West Georgia College. I am grateful for his friendship while we lived in Newnan.  
Jim and Sue Roberts  
Lake Wylie, SC

Suzanne Roberts - July 24, 2021 at 08:40 PM

MR

“ Jennifer, I am so sorry for your loss! We will keep your Dad and all of your family in our prayers . May he rest in the peace of our Lord.

Marife Casares and Mario Riofrío - July 24, 2021 at 08:00 PM



Thank you so much, Marife!

Jennifer Welch - July 25, 2021 at 05:30 PM

DW

“ *What a great principal and person he was.*

Deborah Dean Wynn - July 24, 2021 at 07:57 PM

GE

*Thank you for the kind words.*

Geraldine - July 25, 2021 at 06:50 PM

EG

“ *I am so sorry to hear about Mr. Welch. Prayers to all of you during this difficult time.*

*Elaine and LeeAnne Groover*

Elaine Groover - July 24, 2021 at 07:38 PM

YC

“ *Geraldine, how sorry I am to learn of Bobby's transition. He certainly looked out for me and worked closely with me when I moved to Newnan. Being from the same home town and both attending the same college (JSU) then ending up in Newnan was amazing. So many conversations and fond memories of home... I will certainly continue to lift you and the family in my prayers! May His peace be with you.....*

YoLanda Jones Colton - July 24, 2021 at 07:38 PM

AF

“ *I was in Bobby's first 6th grade class he taught at Elm Street School. When we went out for recess I was always bringing up the rear, he nicknamed me Lightning! Love you Bobby, Autry Freeman*

Autry Freeman - July 24, 2021 at 07:32 PM

GE

*Thanks for the sweet memory, Autry.*

Geraldine - July 25, 2021 at 06:13 AM

JA

“ *I first met Mr. Welch when he was my principal at Arnco-Sargent during sixth grade. I have always had tremendous respect for him and was happy to also call him my friend. I will miss running into him around town. Sending prayers for your family. Judy Anderson.*

Judy Anderson - July 24, 2021 at 05:51 PM

GE

*Thank you so much.*

**Geraldine** - July 25, 2021 at 06:14 AM

TO

*So sorry to hear about Mr. Welch's passing. He taught me in junior high school. Most recently I have had the good fortune to play country music with him at Durrrough's Country Music Barn. Who would have thunk that Mr. Welch was a really good country singer? He loved it so much! He was such a joy to be around and fought his battle to the bitter end. He will be missed by all that knew him. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to enjoy his friendship and smiling face over the past year. God rest his weary soul. He was a great and caring man with so many accomplishments in his life ! We should all aspire to be like him.*

**Tim Oliver** - July 25, 2021 at 03:44 PM

Marianne Thomasson

*Geraldine, all of the comments I've seen about Bobby here have been sincere and heart-felt. I have a comment that shows the humorous side of Bobby. I won't go into details, but you probably will remember: While Bobby was Superintendent I ran across the new NHS yearbook. My eyes popped when I saw the name of the book. I called Bobby and said I'd share the secret if he'd give me a copy of the yearbook. He did and I did. We had a private guffaw over it and there was never a public outcry.... One more thing: I covered a lot of politicians when I worked at the Times-Herald. Not all of them were honest. Bobby ALWAYS was, regardless of his position. I'm proud to call him a friend and I'm glad you had each other and your children, and grandchildren, and ... on it goes.*

**Marianne Thomasson** - July 26, 2021 at 11:58 PM

GW

*Thank you, Marianne. I remember well that incident!*

**Geraldine Welch** - October 10, 2021 at 08:00 AM