



William F. Lee, Jr.

February 13, 1943 - February 7, 2025

The Honorable William Francis Lee, Jr., of Newnan, Georgia, died Friday, February 7, 2025.

Judge Lee (Billy) was born February 13, 1943, in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He was the son of William Francis Lee and Martha Park Culpepper Lee. Billy graduated from Newnan High School in 1961. During high school he enjoyed playing football, running track, and earned the rank of Eagle Scout. He received a degree in history from the University of Georgia and a juris doctor from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1967. He was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity.

On July 27, 1968, Billy married Emily Susan Penland of Decatur, Georgia. They were married for 56 years.

After graduating from law school, Billy began his 45-year career as a law clerk for U.S. District Court Judge Lewis Render Morgan. For three years he practiced law with Latimer, Hadden & Stanfield in Atlanta, Georgia.

In 1972 he returned to his hometown of Newnan, Georgia, and set up his private law practice. He served part-time as an assistant district attorney for Coweta County and was appointed district attorney in 1975. He was elected as a Superior Court judge for the Coweta County Judicial Circuit in 1980, held the position until 2012, and remains the longest-serving Superior Court judge to date for the Coweta Judicial Circuit.

With deep roots in the legal profession, Billy's legacy is intertwined with the law through his maternal grandfather, Nathan Culpepper, and great-

grandfather, John W. Park, who practiced law together in Meriwether County. Park also served as one of the first presidents of the State Bar of Georgia. The legal profession ran through Billy's veins, a natural continuation of a family tradition.

Billy was a fifth-generation lifelong member of Central Baptist Church in Newnan, Georgia. He was also a member of the Newnan Rotary Club and the Georgia Bar Association for many years.

In addition to his wife, Billy is survived by daughters Emily Lee Dean (Alan) and Martha Park Lee, both of Newnan; brother Robert Lewis Lee (Pam) of Newnan; sister Martha Lee Child of Atlantic Beach, Florida; grandchildren Sarah Louise Dean, Thomas Park Dean, and Caroline Stephens Dean, all of Newnan; and multiple nieces and nephews.

Condolences may be expressed online at www.mckoon.com

The family is deeply grateful to all who provided care during Billy's final days. The funeral is 11 am Monday, February 10, 2025 at Central Baptist Church, 14 West Broad Street, Newnan, GA, with Rev. Matt Sapp and Dr. Joel Richardson officiating. Following the funeral, the family will greet friends in the church fellowship hall. A private family burial will be at Oak Hill Cemetery. Rather than flowers, the family respectfully requests contributions to Central Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1221, Newnan, GA 30264 or <https://centralbaptistnewnan.org/>

McKoon Funeral Home, Newnan, Georgia

Previous Events

Funeral Service

FEB 10. 11:00 AM (ET)

Central Baptist Church
14 West Broad St./P.O. Box 1221
Newnan, GA 30264

Visitation

FEB 10. 11:45 AM (ET)

Central Baptist Church
14 West Broad St./P.O. Box 1221
Newnan, GA 30264

Tribute Wall

NT

“ *Sending love and prayers to Susan and the family. He will be missed.* ”

Nancy Twomey - February 13, 2025 at 08:07 AM

SW

“ *Sherrill Whiddon lit a candle in memory of William F. Lee, Jr.* ”



Sherrill Whiddon - February 10, 2025 at 05:36 PM

BE

“ *Prayers to the family. Judge Lee was a great man and will be missed.* ”

*Clay and Beth Bryant
Troup County*

Beth - February 10, 2025 at 12:01 PM

TS

“ *Billy, Bobby and Martha were my best friends when we all visited in Greenville. How time flies but memories last. Love to all the family.
Render Terrell Stanley
Macon GA* ”

Terrell Stanley - February 09, 2025 at 10:39 PM

CJ

“ I first knew Billy Lee when I became the District Attorney for Murray and Whitfield Counties in 1977 and it continued through our years on the Superior Court. I enjoyed his enthusiasm. At District Attorney and Superior Court Judges meetings you always knew if Billy was in the room. He was not shy about expressing his opinions which were insightful. Billy usually expressed what the rest the younger judges were thinking or a view no one had considered. He bubbled up like opening a hot can of shaken Coca-Cola. Billy expressed his love for Newnan and the Coweta Circuit many times. He always wanted to do the right thing. What a character. I will treasure his memory. Godspeed Billy.

Judge Charles A. Pannell, Jr.
Senior U.S. District Court Judge
Northern District of Georgia

Charles A. Pannell, Jr. - February 09, 2025 at 01:37 PM

MY

“ Our prayers and condolences to Ms Susan, Daughters, Bobby, Martha Ann and the Lee family. May God’s peace and comfort guide each of you in the days ahead. Judge Lee was a friend and a damn good Judge. Enjoyed many years working with him and serving in his courtroom. A man who could work with anyone and render fair, firm and swift justice. He left a huge footprint with the court system in our community. Retired Sheriff Mike and Bev Yeager

Mike&Bev Yeager - February 08, 2025 at 09:26 PM

JW

“ Joy Williams lit a candle in memory of William F. Lee, Jr.



Joy Williams - February 08, 2025 at 02:24 PM

BM

“ My condolences to Judge Lee’s family.
Thankfully I never had to be on the other side of his bench.
I know his brother, Bobby, and still see him often at my job.
I always admired Martha, but haven’t seen her since high school.
What a great family to have known.

Bill Manget

Bill Manget - February 08, 2025 at 12:17 PM

BJ

“ I’m sorry to hear about Judge Lee. My dad’s room was next to his at Wesley Woods. I enjoyed speaking w him in the dining room at lunch. I did not know him well, but please accept my deepest condolences. He was an icon in Newnan.

Beverly Jennings

Beverly Jennings - February 08, 2025 at 11:20 AM

GP

“ *Gaylene Yeager Pronevitch lit a candle in memory of William F. Lee, Jr.*



Gaylene Yeager Pronevitch - February 08, 2025 at 09:59 AM

MA

“ *Sending my sincere condolences to the entire Lee family ❤️ Marit*

marit - February 08, 2025 at 09:48 AM

RD

“ *Judge Lee was very supportive of my legal career, and I will miss his words of encouragement and counsel. My thoughts and prayers are with his family.*

randall w. duncan - February 08, 2025 at 06:52 AM

JH

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with Ms. Susan and family. Unfortunately, due to health issues i will be unable to pay my respects to a Great Judge. May God continue to bless and comfort this family*

Joan S. Hanson - February 08, 2025 at 02:25 AM

AB

“ This is Ann G Bone. Condolences to the Lee family. Three members of the old guard in the last three weeks. God bless us all who remain.

RIP: Jimmy Bone

RIP: William Hamrick

RIP: Judge Lee

Ann G. Bone - February 08, 2025 at 12:39 AM

GW

“ My sincere condolences on Billy's passing. May he rest in eternal peace.



Geraldine Welch - February 07, 2025 at 05:49 PM

PW

“ Patricia Stanford Williams lit a candle in memory of William F. Lee, Jr.



Patricia Stanford Williams - February 07, 2025 at 04:38 PM

JS

While judge Lee and I have met over many years, it is through the words of his friend since grade school, judge jack camp, that I know Billy the best. Jack, my dearest of friends post army and Vietnam, mourns the loss of his bud and from him, I mourn for both. Jud starr

Jud Starr - February 08, 2025 at 06:11 PM