



## Dana Leigh Fox

June 4, 1957 - January 30, 2024

Dana Leigh Fox, award-winning scholar, author, teacher, musician, and golfer, and beloved daughter, sister, and wife, died on January 30, 2024, in her Atlanta, Georgia home, with her family by her side. She was 66.

Born into a family of academicians and athletes in Magnolia, Arkansas, on June 4, 1957, Dana cultivated a love for learning and teaching and a love for sport from an early age. Her parents, Emogene and Norris Fox, nurtured and encouraged Dana to achieve excellence in all she did, to embrace a life of servant leadership, and to treat others with compassion and respect.

Dana enjoyed an idyllic childhood growing up in Bald Knob, Arkansas, where she spent countless hours with her grandparents, Charlie and Katherine Fox and Gladys Joiner. Her love of her hometown, her friends and her family lifted her and strengthened her throughout her life.

Dana graduated from Bald Knob High School in 1975, and attended the University of Central Arkansas, earning both a B.S.E. and M.S.E.E. in English, with a minor in Music. Her participation and devotion to choir gave her the opportunity to perform with the UCA choir in the majestic cathedrals throughout Europe. Dana was recognized as an Outstanding University Student at UCA for exceptional leadership, service, and academic excellence, and during her graduate studies, Dana was awarded a prestigious Rotary Foundation Educational Award to study English and Anglo-Irish Literature as a Graduate Fellow at University College-Cork, Ireland.

Dana has held teaching positions at the University of Arkansas at Monticello,

the University of Missouri in Columbia, and Columbia College, and in 1991, she earned her Ph.D. in English Education at University of Missouri. Her dissertation research has been recognized with multiple awards for outstanding scholarship in teacher education and formed a framework for her future research efforts as a professor.

Dana began her career as a university professor in the Colleges of Education at the University of Georgia, the University of Arizona, and finally Georgia State University in Atlanta, focusing on graduate education in language, literacy, and English Education. Through her mentoring efforts, she graduated numerous graduate students under her research direction, including 28 Ph.D. students, over half of whom are now university professors. She served as co-Editor of two national, peer-reviewed journals in English Education, and her co-edited book,

*Stories Matter: The Complexity of Cultural Authenticity in Children's Literature* is still the definitive treatise and classic text in graduate education courses in this area. Based upon her research in education, Dana was author or co-author on over 100 research papers, book chapters, and peer-reviewed journal articles, and numerous scholarly presentations.

Dana's extraordinary career in academia was recognized with numerous awards for excellence in teaching, research, and mentoring, including the prestigious 2018 Alumni Lifetime Achievement Award from the University of Missouri College of Education, based upon achieving distinction in her field and having demonstrated outstanding success throughout her entire career. In each of Dana's faculty appointments, she took on numerous leadership roles, including Chair of the Department of Middle and Secondary Education at Georgia State University for nearly eight years. During her appointment, Dana exponentially increased outside funding for the Department, mentored faculty through the obstacles of promotion and tenure, selflessly promoted and inspired staff, students, and faculty alike, and built a Department of national and international distinction. Her ability to foster deep and sincere personal connections with her colleagues and students and inspire those

around her to excellence was remarkable.

In 2016, Dana was appointed Associate Dean for Research in the Bagwell College of Education at Kennesaw State University, and in 2019 was appointed Dean of the Graduate College at Arkansas Tech University in Russellville, Arkansas, a position she ultimately was unable to fill due to her illness.

Dana married David Wigley in the summer of 1991, just as she began her first faculty position at the University of Georgia, and a year later, she secured an appointment at the University of Arizona where David was a faculty member. The two lived in Tucson, Arizona for several years before moving to Atlanta, Georgia. Dana is the love of David's life, best friend, and brave companion. Far more significant than any of Dana's academic achievements were her profound kindness, compassion, love, and generosity, and her gracious spirit. Dana was the most loyal of friends and gifted in her sincerity and ability to make each of her friends and acquaintances feel valued and loved. Dana was disarming in her conversation and seemed to listen with the kindness of her eyes. She always remembered names, and anyone who spent even a few minutes with Dana would feel rejuvenated by her thoughtful attention. More than anything, Dana loved her golf. Her happiest moments were in the links with her family and friends. Whether golfing with her family at the Bald Knob Country Club in her youth, the Searcy Country Club later in life, or with dear friends at her own club at Old Waverly Golf Club, Dana was simply elated to be on the course.

Dana is survived by her husband of over 32 years, David Wigley, her mother Emogene Fox, her brother Jay Fox and his wife Leah Fox. Visitation will be held from 5:00-7:00 pm on Friday February 2, 2024, at the Powell Funeral Home in Bald Knob, Arkansas, and funeral services held at 10:00 am on Saturday, February 3, 2024, at the Bald Knob United Methodist Church in Bald Knob. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations in Dana's memory to the Dana L. Fox Scholarship in English Education, the University of Central

Arkansas, Buffalo Alumni Hall, 2490 Bruce Street, Conway, AR 72034.  
Arrangements entrusted to Powell Funeral Home, Bald Knob-Judsonia.  
[www.powellfuneralhome.net](http://www.powellfuneralhome.net)

# Cemetery Details

## Shady Grove Cemetery

Bald Knob Lake Road  
Bald Knob, AR 72010

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB 2. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services (Bald Knob)  
1272 Highway 367 North  
Bald Knob, AR 72010  
(501) 724-3201  
baldknob@powellfuneralhome.net  
<https://www.powellfuneralhome.net/>

## Funeral Service

FEB 3. 10:00 AM (CT)

Bald Knob United Methodist Church  
307 West Center Street  
Bald Knob, AR 72010

# Tribute Wall



“ *Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services created a Tribute Video in memory of Dana Leigh Fox*



Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services - February 02, 2024 at 03:07 PM

DJ

“ *My goodness!! Jay and Ms. Em, I am so, so sorry for your loss and that I am just now learning of it. I would have liked to pay my respects. However, the tribute written was spot on. When I think of Dana and how she made me feel when around her, I do think this paragraph written perfectly spells it out: "Far more significant than any of Dana's academic achievements were her profound kindness, compassion, love, and generosity, and her gracious spirit. Dana was the most loyal of friends and gifted in her sincerity and ability to make each of her friends and acquaintances feel valued and loved. Dana was disarming in her conversation and seemed to listen with the kindness of her eyes. She always remembered names, and anyone who spent even a few minutes with Dana would feel rejuvenated by her thoughtful attention." Love to you and yours!*  
*Dana*

Dana Barger Jones - March 16, 2024 at 07:36 PM

JM

“ *Judy Maddox lit a candle in memory of Dana Leigh Fox*



Judy Maddox - February 03, 2024 at 10:04 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.*



February 02, 2024 at 03:04 PM

LL

“ *Lisa Ray and Sarah Lohnes. purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.*



Lisa Ray and Sarah Lohnes. - February 02, 2024 at 02:06 PM

LL

“ *Lisa Ray and Sarah Lohnes. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dana Leigh Fox.*

Lisa Ray and Sarah Lohnes. - February 02, 2024 at 02:06 PM

KJ

“ *Kim (Moody) Jackson lit a candle in memory of Dana Leigh Fox*



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**Kim (Moody) Jackson** - February 02, 2024 at 11:48 AM

EM

“ *Ewa M. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dana Leigh Fox.*

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**Ewa M.** - February 02, 2024 at 10:46 AM

MJ

“ *Mike And Connie Johnston lit a candle in memory of Dana Leigh Fox*



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**Mike and Connie Johnston** - February 02, 2024 at 09:23 AM



“ *Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.*



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February 02, 2024 at 09:07 AM

MD

“ Margaret Freppon Davis lit a candle in memory of Dana Leigh Fox



Margaret Freppon Davis - February 02, 2024 at 06:39 AM



“ Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.



February 01, 2024 at 09:12 PM

CD

“ Chevron Phillips Chemical IP Department purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.



Chevron Phillips Chemical IP Department - February 01, 2024 at 05:54 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.



February 01, 2024 at 05:38 PM



“ *Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.*



February 01, 2024 at 05:34 PM



“ *Nancy B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dana Leigh Fox.*

**Nancy B.** - February 01, 2024 at 05:34 PM



“ *Chris and Jerry Broome purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.*



**Chris and Jerry Broome** - February 01, 2024 at 04:58 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.*



February 01, 2024 at 03:40 PM



“ *Nelda R. Fuller planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dana Leigh Fox.*

**Nelda R. Fuller** - February 01, 2024 at 03:40 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray* was purchased for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.



February 01, 2024 at 03:11 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray* was purchased for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.



February 01, 2024 at 02:47 PM



“ *From: HR at Eversheds Sutherland US LLP* planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dana Leigh Fox.

**HR at Eversheds Sutherland US LLP** - February 01, 2024 at 02:47 PM



“ *The Raymer Family* purchased the *Divine Peace Bouquet* for the family of Dana Leigh Fox.



**The Raymer Family** - February 01, 2024 at 01:48 PM