



## Norris Lee Fox

February 14, 1933 - July 15, 2018

Norris L. Fox was born February 14, 1933, in Searcy and passed away peacefully July 15, 2018 at Unity Health in Searcy.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years Emogene Walmsley Fox and two children, Dana Fox and husband, David Wigley of Atlanta, Georgia, and Jay Fox of Little Rock.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Charlie E. and Katherine Shoffner Fox and his brother, Donald Pat Fox.

A 1951 graduate of Bald Knob High School, Fox was captain of the basketball and football teams, President of both the Beta Club and Senior Class and enrolled at State Teachers College (now UCA) and volunteered for the Army before the draft.

Childhood sweethearts, he and Emogene married February 13, 1954 and by the end of that year was stationed in Germany during the Korean Conflict. Following his discharge, Fox returned to play both basketball and baseball at Southern State College in Magnolia (now SAU). After graduation, he accepted a job at Bald Knob High School teaching history and serving as high school counselor, where the yearbook was dedicated to him in 1964. He and Emogene also owned the Dairy Queen and Fox was elected Mayor in 1965

where he served until 1970 and he would later serve in the same capacity 1990-1994. Working with the Board of Aldermen, some of the highlights include building the Bald Knob Public Library, over hauling the city wastewater treatment plant, building a sports complex and with private funding the Bald Knob Country Club. Fox was also Director of the Region I Migrant Educational Service Center from 1976 to 1989.

As a high school junior working for his parents at the Fox Motel, Restaurant & Service Station, he met Pryor Evans who was looking for an official to help referee a basketball game that night. Despite being “scared to death,” Fox accepted the request and developed a love for officiating that lasted nearly 40 years. Long regarded as the state’s best basketball referee as the number one ranked official in both the Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference (AIC) and the Arkansas Officials Association (AOA), where he was an inaugural inductee in its Hall of Fame and also received the inaugural Jerry Hall Award.

He also officiated in several Division I Conferences such as Southwest, Southland, Trans-America and Missouri Valley Conferences and was selected to referee five consecutive NAIA National Championship Tournaments in Kansas City, later serving on the National Committee. He was also an International Referee travelling to all parts of the globe with teams including China, Australia and Russia. He served as Referee-in-Chief at the state high school basketball tournaments, high school overall tournament and National AAU Tournaments. In 1981, he passed on his expertise establishing the Norris Fox Referee Camp.

Fox retired from officiating in 1991 with his last game being the annual “Battle of the Ravine” between Ouachita Baptist and Henderson State. At last count he wore the stripes for more than 5,000 games on the hardwood and several years on the gridiron including national championship playoff games in the NAIA and state high school championships.

He was an avid golfer, founding member of the Bald Knob Country Club, long-time member at Searcy Country Club and a supporter of the Arkansas State Golf Association attending every Arkansas Golf Awards Banquet from 1994. A voracious reader, he was working on his own book until his declining health.

In lieu of flowers the family requests that donations be made to the Norris Fox Scholarship at Southern Arkansas University (SAU, 100 East University, Magnolia, AR 71753), the University of Central Arkansas (UCA, P.O. Box 2014, Conway, AR 72035) or the First Presbyterian Church (400 West Arch Ave., Searcy, AR 72143).

A visitation will be held at Powell Funeral Home, 2602 West Beebe-Capps Expressway in Searcy with the family receiving friends 5:00-7:00 pm Wednesday, July 17. The family will also receive friends 9:00-10:00 am on Thursday, July 18 at First Presbyterian Church Educational Building in Searcy. Funeral service will begin at 10:00 am at the First Presbyterian Church. Burial will follow at Shady Grove Cemetery in Bald Knob.

The family would like to thank the staff at Unity Health including Dr. David Covey and his team of doctors and nurses, especially retired registered nurse Barbara Norman for her outstanding care.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL 18. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services (Searcy)  
2602 W. Beebe-Capps Expy  
Searcy, AR 72143  
(501) 268-7220  
searcy@powellfuneralhome.net  
<https://www.powellfuneralhome.net/>

## Funeral Service

JUL 19. 10:00 AM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church  
400 West Arch Avenue  
Searcy, AR 72143

# Tribute Wall

PH

“ Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services created a Tribute Video in memory of Norris Lee Fox



---

**Powell Funeral Home** - July 18, 2018 at 01:53 PM

TC

“ Dear Emogene and family, I was so sorry to hear about Mr. Fox. I just learned today. He was my boss in the Migrant Program for 10 years. He called me Miss T. On occasions we would see each other through the years - mostly at a visitation. I had surgery on July 19th. This caused me to not know anything til today. I wish I could have been there. He was a great boss and friend. Sincerely, Theresa (Jones) Carrell

---

**Theresa Jones Carrell** - July 23, 2018 at 04:27 PM

HH

“ We are sending our love and sympathy to our longtime friends. Norris and Emogene were friends of ours in Bald Knob when Harold had his first coaching job about 55 years ago. We had many memories that we shared together. May God's love and grace bring all of you comfort and peace.  
Harold and Betty Horton  
Fayetteville, AR

---

**Harold & Betty Horton** - July 22, 2018 at 11:01 PM

LF

“ *Lois. Crosby Rutherford Family lit a candle in memory of Norris Lee Fox*



---

**Lois. Crosby Rutherford Family** - July 22, 2018 at 08:04 PM

JC

“ *Janice Collins lit a candle in memory of Norris Lee Fox*



---

**Janice Collins** - July 22, 2018 at 08:02 PM

PM

“ *Pamela Radaford Mullins lit a candle in memory of Norris Lee Fox*



---

**Pamela Radaford Mullins** - July 21, 2018 at 08:18 PM

PM

“ *Mr. Fox was a wonderful teacher and friend. I will never forget him!*

---

**Pam Mullins** - July 21, 2018 at 05:46 PM

SA

“ Sharon Newberry Ary lit a candle in memory of Norris Lee Fox



Sharon Newberry Ary - July 21, 2018 at 11:07 AM

JJ

“ May God Wrap His arms around his family to comfort them during this difficult time! Norris was a wonderful person and a Great teacher! I will never forget how he treated everyone the same and he will never be forgotten! Rest In Peace Mr. Fox

Jeannie Riley Johnston - July 19, 2018 at 08:16 AM

GJ

“ Norris and I were school mates in the early 1950's at ASTC; we were also fraternity brothers in Phi Sigma Epsilon. After my family moved to northeast Arkansas, we used to look forward to stopping at the Dairy Queen in Bald Knob, where I met Emogene. May Our Lord Bless each of the family. Both Norris and his brother, Pat, were "gentlemen" in the truest sense of the word. Guy Ransom, Jr., Jonesboro, Arkansas

Guy Ransom, Jr. - July 18, 2018 at 01:03 PM

WJ

“ Walter E. Cleland, Jr purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Norris Lee Fox.



Walter E. Cleland, Jr - July 18, 2018 at 12:27 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Norris Lee Fox.*



July 18, 2018 at 11:30 AM



“ *Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Norris Lee Fox.*



July 18, 2018 at 11:17 AM



“ *Mr. Fox was my high school social studies teacher. He and Mr. Moore were my 2 favorite teachers. They are the reason I became a social studies teacher!! He was a very good man, a straight arrow. We need for teacher like him today. Dwight Fritts, Lawton, Oklahoma Class of 1966*

**Dwight Fritts** - July 18, 2018 at 11:02 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Norris Lee Fox.*



July 17, 2018 at 10:29 PM

CC

“ CHBS Leadership Council purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Norris Lee Fox.



CHBS Leadership Council - July 17, 2018 at 04:37 PM

BW

“ Bently and Gloria Wigley purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Norris Lee Fox.



Bently and Gloria Wigley - July 17, 2018 at 04:05 PM

MD

“ Margaret Davis lit a candle in memory of Norris Lee Fox



Margaret Davis - July 17, 2018 at 02:20 PM

MF

“ Prayers and condolences to the family. He was the best teacher back in my time. God be with the family. And know that he is at peace.

Martha Street Foster



Martha Street Foster - July 17, 2018 at 12:02 PM

BB

“ *Buddy & Jackie Brown purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Norris Lee Fox.*



---

**Buddy & Jackie Brown** - July 17, 2018 at 10:17 AM

LR

“ *Dearest all, I am so very sorry for your loss. Sending you thoughts of love and peace.*

---

**Lisa Ray** - July 17, 2018 at 07:43 AM

DA

“ *My condolences to the Fox family. God promises to fortify you and hold your hand during this difficult time Isaiah 41:10. Continue to rely on Him for comfort and strength.*



---

**Darnell** - July 17, 2018 at 06:52 AM

MS

“ *One of the greatest men I ever knew my true friend*

---

**mary lou smith** - July 16, 2018 at 06:59 PM