



David S. Neilson

October 4, 2018

Darlington, South Carolina

David S. Neilson of Darlington passed away on Thursday, October 4, 2018 at the McLeod Hospice House in Florence, SC.

Funeral services will be held on Sunday, October 7, 2018 at 2 PM at Central Baptist Church, 512 Spring Street, Darlington, SC 29532. The family will receive friends following the service Sunday at the church. Burial will be on Monday, October 8, 2018 at 3:00 PM at Oconee Memorial Park in Seneca, SC. All services are being directed by Kistler Hardee Funeral Home of Darlington.

Coach Neilson was born in Chicago and lived most of his life in South Carolina. He was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Howard Neilson. Dave graduated from Aiken High School and earned his 4 year letterman scholarship for basketball with the University of South Carolina where he majored in Business. He served his country in the United States Army and was very instrumental in starting the first A and W Root Beer franchise in South Carolina. Dave taught history and marketing at St. John's High School in Darlington which later became Darlington High School. He coached basketball for many years, and won the State Championship 27-0. Dave retired and continued his coaching career at Byrnes Academy in Quinby. He along with his wife were members of Central Baptist Church where he served as Deacon. Dave also officiated with the South Carolina Independent Schools to include football, basketball, baseball and soccer. He inspired many people

and enjoyed performing magic shows. He will be sorely missed by his community in which he called home "Darlington".

Surviving are his wife, Denny Woodall Neilson; his brothers-in-law, G. Michael Woodall and S.Y. Woody Woodall (Brenda); his sisters-in-law, Katherine W. Cartee and Bette Hair (William); his nieces and nephews, Lawrence Woodall; Gary Cartee, Esq.; Travis Cartee; Dr. Greg Cartee; Caylor Nuth; Kimberly Chandler; Kim James (Roy); Sherri Gaulin; and Vic Woodall; and several cousins and extended family.

Dave was preceded in death by his brother, Colonel Eugene Neilson.

In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to Central Baptist Church, 512 Spring Street, Darlington, SC 29532.

Family and friends are invited to sign the online guest book at www.kistlerhard.eefuneralhome.com

Previous Events

Service

OCT 7. 2:00 PM (ET)

Central Baptist Church
512 Spring St
Darlington, SC 29532
(843) 393-8581

Tribute Wall

TJ

“ *TINA JORDAN lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson*



TINA JORDAN - October 23, 2018 at 11:11 AM

TJ

Was the best men I know I will always remember him

TINA JORDAN - October 23, 2018 at 11:12 AM

RF

“ *I am so sorry to hear of the passing of Coach Neilson, further, I'm sorry that I never got the opportunity as an adult to tell him that of all the men I've known in life, he was the one who was most influential in my success. The greatest lessons I learned from "Coach" had very little to do with basketball. He taught me to have courage in the face of adversity. Thank you, Coach Neilson, May God Bless You!*

Ronnie Foxe, SJH, 1974

Ronnie Foxe - October 15, 2018 at 05:09 PM

PN

“ *Penny Norwod lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson*



Penny Norwod - October 10, 2018 at 06:56 PM

RP

“ October 8, 2018

To: The Bereaved Family Of: David S. Neilson

For your loved ones bravery, hard work and dedication to our country, we thank you. Extend our heartfelt condolences. May God bless and keep you.

Sincere Sympathy,

Darlington County Veterans Affairs Office

Ronda M. Parrott - October 08, 2018 at 09:11 AM

AE

“ *Although I was only fortunate enough to play for him for two years, his impact on my life was immeasurable. Many things I learned under his leadership (how to be a leader, toughness, character, integrity, how to never give up, teamwork, etc) carried over into my college career and on into my personal and business life to this day. He was a Monster of a Man in so many great ways and could always lay a joke or card trick on you to make you laugh. He was a great teacher, husband, friend and most important a Man of God with impeccable values and love. RIP my friend and Coach.*

With Love and Respect,

Al Eads

Al Eads - October 08, 2018 at 07:23 AM

MC

“ I will always remember Coach Neilson as a wonderful person who really loved "coaching" the young folks in his life. I remember him well from his time as basketball coach at Seneca High School. May God Bless his loving wife, Denny, and their entire family!

Mike Cannon - October 08, 2018 at 12:33 AM

RG

“ Denny and Family, please take comfort in knowing that Dave was a "gift from God" to all who knew him. He possessed a rare way of touching the very heart of anyone who spent time in his presence. That kind of "Anointing" comes only from God. We are truly "Blessed" to have known Dave! You are in our thoughts and prayers. ~ Rev Ethel Grinkley and Family

Rev. Ethel K. Grinkley - October 07, 2018 at 09:30 PM

JB

“ Jeanette Blackmon lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Jeanette Blackmon - October 07, 2018 at 09:26 PM

RP

“ Denny, I am so sorry to hear about Dave, he was such a sweet man and was so good to my son, Jonathan, who looked up to him and loved it when Dave let him perform magic with him. I hate I couldn't make it to the funeral but I had to work. I love and miss you Denny

Robin Richardson Pietarinen - October 07, 2018 at 07:13 PM

JP

“ I was at Seneca when Coach Neilson was there. Always admired him. Sorry for your loss.

Judy Barnett Potter - October 07, 2018 at 04:32 PM

MK

“ Mary Ann Tadlock Kelley lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Mary Ann Tadlock Kelley - October 07, 2018 at 03:14 PM

BW

“ Dave Neilson was a mentor and friend when I returned to Darlington to teach and coach the Jr. high basketball teams for 5 yrs. He was always giving me good advice concerning basketball tactics, coaching kids and skill techniques to use in practice. He always had a positive and encouraging manner. We even shared a few poker games at my house during my time in Darlington. He was a friendly, good man and I will miss him. My heart and prayers go out to Denny. Billy Ward

Billy Ward - October 07, 2018 at 02:17 PM

BS

“ I know that Denny will certainly miss Dave. Our sympathy goes out to her. I have wonderful memories of Dave as my High Scholl Teachers.

Fondly,
Bill & Sandra Sandifer

Bill Sandifer - October 07, 2018 at 08:08 AM

DJ

“ Dear Denny,

I am disappointed that I am not able to be in attendance today to pay tribute to my friend and former employee Dave. I have just been released from the hospital following major surgery which is the only reason I am not present.

The eight years I served as principal of St. John's High School were made more interesting and enjoyable by the many relationships I had with Dave during that time. He coached two of my boys on the basketball team, helped to make the transition of combining two high school basketball teams into a state championship team when Rosenwald was closed and combined with St. John's in 1982-83, participated in many outstanding Distributive Education events. assisted the Darlington Optimist Club to be a leader in the state Optimist programs and above all was a genuine down-to-earth friend and companion to not only all the students he supervised but to those of us in administration as well as his fellow teachers at St. John's High and Darlington Career Center. Beyond even those accolades, he was persistent and even led me to return to the basketball court in my 60's to participate with him in the State Seniors 3 on 3 basketball competition. I was also impressed with his steadfast support of you during your fight to recover from the automobile accident. We had many conversations as I was able to visit with him at the hospitals in Columbia over that time period often.

I know that Dave was a genuine, caring, God-fearing man and I look forward to being with him again throughout eternity in our Heavenly Home. May God Bless you and your family and give you Peace during this time of separation as well as comfort.

Al Eads, Jr., Ph.D.

Dr. & Mrs. Al Eads, Jr. - October 07, 2018 at 08:05 AM



“ *Denny, my dear friend,
My heart was broken when I heard of Dave's passing. What a wonderful man and role model he was. Please know I have you in my heart and prayers. May GOD wrap his arms around you and give you comfort and peace.
All my love, Olivia*

Olivia Baird - October 07, 2018 at 07:36 AM

JR

“ *Denny, our deepest condolences. I am sorry I can't make the funeral or visitation tomorrow. You know we thought a lot of both you and Dave. If we can be of assistance let us know. You will be in our prayers. Joyce Rouse*

Joyce Rouse - October 06, 2018 at 09:53 PM

MA

“ *Myra Anderson lit a candle in memory of
David S. Neilson*



Myra Anderson - October 06, 2018 at 09:50 PM

JC

“ *Judy Cabbagestalk lit a candle in memory of
David S. Neilson*



Judy Cabbagestalk - October 06, 2018 at 09:04 PM

DM

“ Denny, you have my deepest and sincerest sympathy. I know Dave was well LOVED and respected. He had a great character and a big heart. It was my pleasure to have a friend like Dave for over 40 years. On top of his other talents Dave was also a very good chess player. He was a good man. Donald Morse

Donald Morse - October 06, 2018 at 07:57 PM

DC

“ Debbie Chandler-Baker lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Debbie Chandler-Baker - October 06, 2018 at 07:36 PM

SK

“ Susan Kirven lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



susan kirven - October 06, 2018 at 06:48 PM

TJ

“ Dave was very great in helping me when I started coaching and teaching in 1983. A good man is in heaven. God Bless Dave and Denny. Ty Hubbard Jr.

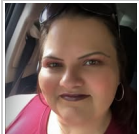
ty hubbard jr. - October 06, 2018 at 05:30 PM

GS

“ Thoughts & prayers to Ms. Neilson and family. Mr. Neilson had a heart of gold that loved everyone & everything. One of the sweetness persons I have ever known, even after graduating high school I still would see him & Ms. Denny all over Darlington. My children that are now grown had the pleasure of knowing him & his magic. Rest in Peace Coach Neilson!!!!
St. John's High School class of 1985



Gloria Tyner Smith - October 06, 2018 at 03:52 PM



“ Coach Neilson's you were the man. You taught me more than any one. Everytime I saw you, you were always telling me, "Keep your head high!" As a coach, teacher, mentor, magician and anything else I missed, you did it amazingly. No just some but all 200% at a time. Mrs. Denny you and the family are in my prayers. FLY HIGH COACH DAVE!!!



Christina Savoy - October 06, 2018 at 03:17 PM

DH

“ Diane Hancock lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Diane Hancock - October 06, 2018 at 01:45 PM

BC

“ Had the honor of playing for Coach at B C High. He was a good man, Coach and friend.

Bill Cash - October 06, 2018 at 01:25 PM

GA

“ I can remember as a small child that coach would come by the house in his station wagon talking to my dad about basketball and the upcoming optimist club meeting. He would walk up to me and pull a coin from behind my ear. I was so amazed. He loved to do magic and I can remember him doing a magic show for one of my birthdays. Me and my family adore Mrs. Denny and coach. Prayers for Mrs Denny lifting her up during these next few days and upcoming weeks. Going to Miss you Coach!!!! Gary August



Gary August - October 06, 2018 at 01:21 PM

DR

“ David Redick lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



David Redick - October 06, 2018 at 01:20 PM

Kelly Willis

“ When I was growing up.. Mr. Neilson and Ms Denny were always people I knew I could go to to talk about my childish problems.. They have both touched way more lives than they know.. He definitely has a place beside the throne of God!! My prayers are with the family!! GOD bless!

Kelly Willis - October 06, 2018 at 12:32 PM



“ Denny, We are saddened to learn of Dave’s passing. May the memories, life and legacy you shared sustain you through this transition. The Lord bless and keep you.



James and Maureen Thomas

Maureen Thomas - October 06, 2018 at 11:22 AM



“ Denny, Leah and I were saddened to hear of the loss of our friend Dave. We will never forget how he was always at your side during your many campaigns and events. I will never forget his jokes, his pipe, his coin tricks, and how he never met a stranger. He was probably the most outgoing and enthusiastic person I have ever met, and his joy for life was contagious and no doubt influenced thousands of young people during his many years as a coach and mentor. The people of Darlington were his family, and your's too. It is hard to imagine this town without him. Denny, please know that we are here for you in this difficult time.

Tony and Leah Watkins

ANTHONY C WATKINS - October 06, 2018 at 10:49 AM



“ Tobie Reynolds lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Tobie Reynolds - October 06, 2018 at 09:55 AM

CB

“Darlington because of coach and Denny. I am proud to be a part of his '68 and '69 teams. He taught me the value of doing anything you do with all that you have. His love of God and kids was his greatest magic. Chesley Benjamin

Chesley Benjamin - October 06, 2018 at 09:52 AM

SS

“Sharon Clark Simon lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Sharon Clark Simon - October 06, 2018 at 09:04 AM

Jl

“Johnnie & Susan Iseman lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Johnnie & Susan Iseman - October 06, 2018 at 08:06 AM

Jl

“Johnnie & Susan Iseman sent a virtual gift in memory of David S. Neilson



Johnnie & Susan Iseman - October 06, 2018 at 07:58 AM

Jl

I always called him Coach in high school. I have fond memories of those days long ago. Mrs. Neilson taught me at the Career Center and Coach Neilson taught his classes over there also. He will be greatly missed and was a good man. Praying for Mrs. Neilson and the family.

Johnnie & Susan Iseman - October 06, 2018 at 08:05 AM

CA

“ Connie & Rose Anne lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Connie & Rose Anne - October 06, 2018 at 07:30 AM

 Teresa Hancock

“ Denny, I am so sorry for your loss! I loved his magic shows at the Catfish Festival. He was loved and will be missed by many. Prayers going up for you and the family.
Teresa Hancock

Teresa Hancock - October 06, 2018 at 07:14 AM

CK

“ Coach was one of my favorite people. A good man! Mrs. Denny, I pray for peace and strength for you today and the days ahead.
Hugs and love to you.

Cathy Britt Kemmerlin - October 06, 2018 at 06:27 AM

WD

“ WAYNE DUDLEY lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



WAYNE DUDLEY - October 06, 2018 at 05:26 AM

MH

“ Marilyn And Derman Hodge lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Marilyn and Derman Hodge - October 06, 2018 at 03:47 AM

YD

“ Yolanda Davis



Yolanda Davis - October 06, 2018 at 12:29 AM

FB

“ Dave was my World History teacher at Seneca High School. Because of our class activities I learned to love history, later majored in and taught history! Much sympathy to all of you.

Frankie Cleveland Bonnette - October 05, 2018 at 11:01 PM

JR

“ Julie And Larry Rhodes lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Julie and Larry Rhodes - October 05, 2018 at 09:49 PM

JM

“ Janet Lee Merriman lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson



Janet Lee Merriman - October 05, 2018 at 09:42 PM

AB

“ I have known Mr. Nelson for a long time from high school. He did alot for the community and for kids. He was a good man and is going to be missed. R.I.P thoughts and prayers for his family 🙏



April Bailey - October 05, 2018 at 08:50 PM

JC

“ Judy Calhoun sent a virtual gift in memory of David S. Neilson



judy calhoun - October 05, 2018 at 08:43 PM

GO

“ *Grady L O'Neal lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson*



Grady L O'Neal - October 05, 2018 at 07:13 PM

GO

“ It has been my greatest honor to know such a great Teacher, Magician and over all best friend. I have many things I could share about Dave S Neilson. First off I have never met a teacher that would use his hand as a writing pad for notes, boy did I ever fuss at him about that, I imagine Denny has too as well, When I first went to St Johns High School and choosing the courses I wanted to take, I went over to the Darlington Career Center, and there stood the tallest guy I gave ever met, I said to myself, Definately Basketball affiliation for sure. He drove this bug yellow gran Torino and it was loaded every single day from front passenger seat to the back of it, I thought how in the world does he fit in this packed out station wagon. But he did. I will never forget when I joined the DECA CLUB.....we were going to be attending DECA Convention way off someplace I asked HOW are we getting there?? Dave said We're driving my car, I'll fit you all in. I dunno how he done it but we managed I was like are you serious"" :) As time went on we had a Fashion show, there and someone said they couldnt figure our from a photo if I was praying or serving drinks (I was DECA CHAPLAIN then) While I was the executive VP of Student Council, Dave gave me alot of encouragement. that was appreciated. In class he never called me Grady, He would always call me Grade (He left the Y off) He taught me what it was like to be a true Business man at anything. We have had many a conversation on the phone over the 30 plus years after I left SJHS in 1985. He would always tell me I owed him a make up test. then one phrase would always stick with me as we ended phone chats or I start to leave class or his home he would always say " DONT FORGET THIS ONE THING" I would ask him What was that?? His reply? "KEEP IT IN THE ROAD" Rest on my brother, you have completed a remarkable journey while here on earth, you may be gone but never to be forgotten. Thanks for our many years of laughter, fun and friendships in class and through visits at your home. DENNY, My heart goes out to you. I am praying for you and the family as you face the days ahead. I will never forget Dave pulling me in to assist with your campaign as you ran for your house seat many years ago. . Thanks for allowing our friendship to have lasted as long as it has I feel like Ive lost a big brother. much

*love and prayers are coming your way from my family and I
Grady O'Neal and Family*

Grady L O'Neal - October 05, 2018 at 07:11 PM

DB

“ *Denny, My thoughts and prayers are with you.
May the Lord comfort you now and in the
days a head. 💖*



Des Brown - October 05, 2018 at 06:23 PM

LS

“ *Great memories of Mr Neilson at SJH (class
of 71')
Dave could always find a coin in my ear !
Always enjoyed his Magic tricks.*



Larry Spivey - October 05, 2018 at 06:03 PM

TJ

“ *Tina R Jordan lit a candle in memory of David
S. Neilson*



Tina R Jordan - October 05, 2018 at 05:33 PM

TJ

I will never forget you always in my heart

Tina R Jordan - October 05, 2018 at 05:34 PM

BR

“ *Betty Millsaps Ralley lit a candle in memory of David S. Neilson*



Betty Millsaps Ralley - October 05, 2018 at 05:28 PM



“ *Ms. Denny,
We are truly saddened to hear about Mr. Dave. He was a remarkable man. He will be missed by everyone in the community and beyond. On behalf of Singletary Auto Repair, please accept our deepest sympathies and sincerest condolences.*



Rebecca Kelly - October 05, 2018 at 04:26 PM

JH

“ *Sorry to hear about coach . So many memories. From school to going to Columbia. What a great man going to be missed.*

Jason hathcock - October 05, 2018 at 04:22 PM

BB

We are so sad to hear about Dave. We have so many wonderful memories of Dave on and off the basketball court as he and my husband, Bobby, were coaching against each other for many years. Bobby held Dave Neilson in high esteem. Our thoughts and prayers are with Denny and the family during this most difficult time. Betty and Bobby Bridgeman

Betty Bridgeman - October 05, 2018 at 04:53 PM

DM

We love you Denny and our heart breaks to know you are hurting, as are we. You are in our every thought and prayers. There will never be another Dave and Denny, you both have done so very much for so many people. Donna and Mitch Mims

donna mims - October 05, 2018 at 11:04 PM

BC

Denny, I write on behalf of my mother, Ruth Odom, who thought the world of you. You have been a blessing in the lives of so many, and I pray that God will give you peace and surround you with His love. Beth Odom Capell

Beth Capell - October 06, 2018 at 09:51 AM

FB

Denny, I was so saddened to learn of Dave's passing. You and Dave were so kind to my mother and me when we lived in Darlington. I was not aware that Dave had taught in Seneca. My mother graduated from Seneca High School. Also, I have many relatives interred in Oconee Memorial Park. Dave and I both shared the love of old books. He was indeed a very fine man.

Fred Bischoff - October 06, 2018 at 12:29 PM

KL

Prayers going up for you Denny at this time. Hold strong to your faith. Dave will always hold a special place in our hearts.

Kathy Lawhon - October 08, 2018 at 11:50 PM

RA

Dear Denny, I was deeply saddened when i read about David's passing.I have fond memories that go back many years , Serving on the Board of Advisers for the Darlington Career Center with David , not only did i find a very good friend, he was an outstanding coach and mentor .May all the warm and special memories you shared with David stay with you and bring you comfort through all the days ahead.You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Bob Ammirati

Retired President / CEO, Nytronics

Robert J Ammirati - October 11, 2018 at 03:50 PM