



Frederick DeMarcus Booth III

October 20, 1946 - April 14, 2026

Frederick DeMarcus Booth III, beloved husband, father, grandfather, educator, public education advocate, and community volunteer, died on April 14, 2026 in Nashville, Tennessee.

Born October 20, 1946 in Erwin, Tennessee, Fred was a 1964 graduate of Unicoi County High School. He attended East Tennessee State University, graduating with a bachelor's degree in history in 1968. On October 12 of that same year, he married Frances Kathryn Ray, beginning a lifelong partnership rooted in shared values and devotion.

Fred began his career as a high school history and government teacher and quickly became known for his passion for the subject and commitment to his students. In 1978 he earned a master's degree in history from ETSU, writing his thesis on the early Watauga settlements of the Appalachian frontier. He was particularly interested in how these early settlements connected to the events that would later culminate in the Trail of Tears, a perspective that was ahead of its time and reflected his deep interest in history and justice.

Fred became involved in the Tennessee Education Association, advocating for fair pay and better working conditions for teachers. He later left the classroom to serve as a UniServ Representative in Northeast Tennessee, supporting and representing educators across the region while he and Kathryn raised their two children in Kingsport, where they lived for more than 20 years. In 1999, they moved to Nashville, where Fred continued his work with TEA as UniServ Manager. Over the course of a distinguished 30-year career with the

organization, he earned the respect and affection of colleagues and educators throughout the state.

Fred retired in 2007, but he did not slow down. The next day he began training for a half marathon, which he completed the following year. What followed was a true “second act” defined by continued purpose and engagement, including work as a lobbyist for the Tennessee Retired Teachers Association, volunteering at Dan Mills Elementary School, participating in the multi-generational summer program Generation Connection, teaching history at WEB Tutorial, spending countless hours with his cherished grandchildren, and contributing his time and energy to the Germantown Neighborhood Association and Friends of Bicentennial Park.

Fred was known for his quick wit and natural ability to put people at ease. He made friends wherever he went and left a lasting impression on all who knew him, often through his fondness for sharing long stories and bits of history, delivered in a soothing voice marked by the twang of his Appalachian roots. Fred was preceded in death by his parents, Virginia Belle (Moore) Booth and Frederick DeMarcus Booth Jr.; his mother-in-law, Berta Lucille (Anderson) Ray; his brothers-in-law, James Thomas Ray, Howard Hughes, Donald Riddle, Joe Hopson, and Keith Butler; and his sister-in-law, Cleo Ray Hughes. He is survived by his wife, Kathryn Ray Booth; his daughter, Emily Kathryn (Booth) Masters, and son-in-law, Randall Masters; his son, Matthew Lowell Booth; and his grandchildren, Nora Belle Masters and Holden Thomas Masters. He is also survived by his sisters, Jennie Lou Ruble, Linda Hopson, and Cathy Butler; his sister-in-law, Judith Riddle, and brother-in-law, Don Ruble; and many beloved cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends.

Fred’s life was defined by his unwavering belief in access to education, his commitment to others, and the deep love he had for his family. His legacy lives on in the countless students, educators, colleagues, and community members whose lives he touched.

Fred was laid to rest at Larkspur Conservation in a private, natural burial April 28, 2026. Details regarding a celebration of life will be shared in the future.

Those who wish to honor Fred's legacy may share memories here and consider donating to one of his favorite causes:

Walden's Puddle: <https://waldenspuddle.org/donate>,

Dan Mills Elementary School: <https://www.venmo.com/u/Dan-Mills-PTO>

Stratford High School: <https://tinyurl.com/stratfordptsodonate>

Fred will be deeply missed and warmly remembered by all who had the joy of knowing him. He lived a life of purpose, connection, and joy.

Cemetery Details

Larkspur Conservation

155 Bear Carr Road
Westmoreland, TN 37186
<https://larkspurconservation.org>

Tribute Wall

LB

“ I’m so happy that our paths in life crossed. I got to experience having a great boss, an awesome role model, a master negotiator, and terrific friend. I’m a better person because of it. There are so many wonderful memories of your ways that changed me: The long stories that kept the attention, the depth of love and joy family brought you, the the consistent advocacy to make the world better, the ability to listen closely and be a mirror when someone spoke so that they had to reflect, clarify and confirm what they really meant, the quiet, calm demeanor in tense situations, and the great sense of humor that lightened and lifted spirits. I’ll forever remember the name that teachers gave you that was so suiting, "Bargaining Jesus." I always be in awe.
Fly high my friend,
Lorrie

Lorrie Butler - April 28 at 08:52 AM

SL

“ Kathryn, may you and the children find comfort in the beautiful legacy Fred leaves behind. As a dedicated teacher with such a distinguished career, he touched countless lives and shaped their futures. God Bless you, Cousin, Scherry

Scherry Lesanto - April 18 at 12:36 PM

EM

Thank you so much for your kind words Scherry. Although it’s clear that Dad lived multiple lives when you consider how much he was able to accomplish and how many lives he touched, he is still gone way too soon. I’m so grateful that he’s my dad.

Emily Booth Masters - April 21 at 08:21 PM