



## Judge Seth Walker Norman

April 6, 1934 - September 25, 2023

Judge Seth Walker Norman, April 6, 1934 - September 25, 2023

The Tennessee judiciary is mourning the loss of retired 20th Judicial District Judge Seth Walker Norman, who passed away at the age of 89. Judge Norman served as a criminal court judge in Nashville from 1990 until his retirement in 2018. He is often considered the father of the state's recovery court system. Judge Norman established the groundbreaking Davidson County Drug Court (DC4) in 1996. It was one of the first recovery courts in the country. In 1998, the program started the first court-operated residential drug court in the United States. He also founded the 13th Judicial District Recovery Court in 2011 and the Morgan County Residential Recovery Court in 2013. Today, there are 82 recovery courts in Tennessee, including several specialized courts focused on Veterans, juveniles, and other special populations.

Judge Norman was a Nashville native and the fourth of five children of Jack and Carrie Norman. After attending John B. Ransom grade school, Judge Norman graduated from Duncan Preparatory School for Boys. Shortly after enrolling at Vanderbilt University, he left college to enlist in the United States Air Force. He served from 1953 to 1957, including in the Korean War and missions in Southeast Asia. He was a navigator on B-29, C-47, C-119, C-118, B-26, C-54, SA-16 and C-124 planes and traveled to Europe, Africa and the Middle East. He continued his service in the Tennessee Air National Guard until 1965. Judge Norman graduated from the Nashville School of Law and

gained his law license in 1962. While in law school, he worked as a deputy clerk in the Davidson County General Sessions Court Clerk's office. In 1960, Judge Norman was elected president of the Davidson County Young Democrats. Soon after, he was elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives. He was a member of the Tennessee Democratic Executive Committee. He was a delegate to the 1968 Democratic National Convention and served on the Democratic National Platform Committee.

Judge Norman was in private legal practice at the law office of Jack Norman, Sr., his father, for 28 years. Since his election to the bench in 1990, Judge Norman amassed a long list of accomplishments and awards. He served in a number of different capacities on a number of different government committees and councils over the years, including the United States Department of Education's Advisory Committee on Safe and Drug Free Schools and former Governor Phil Bredesen's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. Among his many awards and honors are a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Tennessee Association of Alcohol, Drug, and other Addiction Services (TAADAS), his 2018 induction into the Nashville Bar Foundation, the Nashville Bar Association's Jack Norman Award in 2016, the Tennessee Association of Drug Court Professionals Judges' Award in 2015, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Nashville Prevention Partnership in 2011, to name just a few.

Judge Norman was a member of the Corinthian Masonic Lodge, Scottish Rite, and the Al Menah Shriners.

Preceded in death by his wife, Donnie Creighton Norman; parents, Jack and Carrie Norman; brothers, Robert Sneed Norman, Jack Norman, Jr., and Julian Norman. Survived by his children, Jay Norman, Frances Norman Scott, and Jack Norman (Kerry); grandchildren, Seth Thomas Norman (Andrea), Jason Walker Norman, Ross McMillan Scott, Carrie McClain Norman Lamb (Brandon), Jackson Norman (Whitnie), William Dylan Norman, and Jenni Grace Norman; great-grandchildren, Olivia Emerson, Laurel Grace, Jack, Jett, Josie, Hayes, Layla, and Marlow; sister, Carolyn Norman Tune.

Visitation will be at Phillips-Robinson Funeral Home Thursday, September 28th from 3-8pm. Services will be conducted at Woodmont Christian Church, 3601 Hillsboro Pk. Nashville, TN 37215, Friday, September 29th at 1pm with visitation 1 hour prior. Honorary Pallbearers: DC 4, Morgan County Residential Recovery Court, Womens Residential Recovery Court Alumni, Board of Nashville Recovery Court Support Foundation, Judge Angelita Dalton, Judge Mike Pemberton, Judge Don Elledge, Judge Gary McKenzie and other members of the judiciary, Governor Phil Bredeson, Governor Bill Haslam, Governor Bill Lee, Commissioner Marie Williams, Commissioner Doug Varney, Commissioner Tony Parker, Commissioner Derek Schoefield, Commissioner Bill Gibbons, and the Honorable Scott Burns. In lieu of flowers please make memorials in Judge Norman's name to the Nashville Recovery Court Support Foundation, 1300 Division St. Suite 209 Nashville, TN 37203.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP **28.** 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Phillips-Robinson Funeral Home - Nashville Chapel  
2707 Gallatin Pike  
Nashville, TN 37216  
(615) 262-3312  
info@phillipsrobinson.com  
<https://www.phillipsrobinson.com/>

## Visitation

SEP **29.** 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Woodmont Christian Church  
3601 Hillsboro Pk.  
Nashville, TN 37215

## Memorial Service

SEP **29.** 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Woodmont Christian Church  
3601 Hillsboro Pk.  
Nashville, TN 37215

# Tribute Wall

SG

“ So so sad to hear that Mr. Norman has passed. I took care of his wife Donnie for about 3yrs and he was just such a nice person to me and my son . He gave my son his 1st flying drowm that we still have and he always liked hanging out with my son. Seth and Donnie were just great people and it was such a pleasure working for their family. I will never ever forget them. With so much Love  
Shanika

Shanika Gibson - January 12, 2024 at 03:57 PM

JD

“ Judge Gloria Dumas purchased the Dreams From the Heart Bouquet for the family of Judge Seth Walker Norman.



Judge Gloria Dumas - September 28, 2023 at 01:21 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Judge Seth Walker Norman.



September 28, 2023 at 12:05 PM



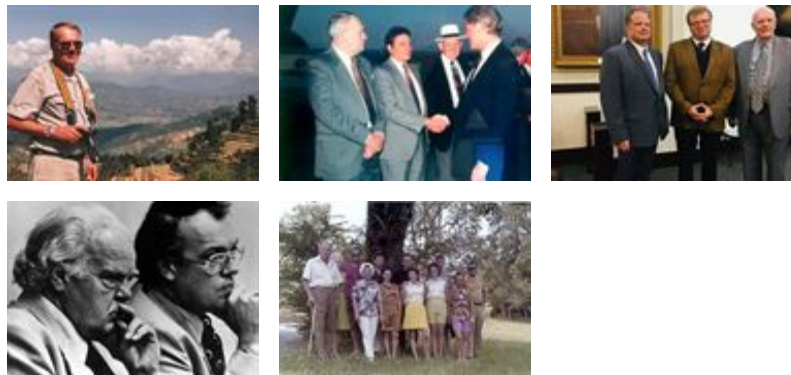
“ 73 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Phillips-Robinson Funeral Home - September 28, 2023 at 12:01 PM



“ 60 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Phillips-Robinson Funeral Home - September 28, 2023 at 10:07 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Judge Seth Walker Norman.



September 28, 2023 at 08:31 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Judge Seth Walker Norman.



September 27, 2023 at 01:48 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Judge Seth Walker Norman.

September 27, 2023 at 01:48 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Judge Seth Walker Norman.



September 27, 2023 at 01:25 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Judge Seth Walker Norman.



September 27, 2023 at 11:49 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Judge Seth Walker Norman.

September 27, 2023 at 11:49 AM

JV

“ Judge Norman saved my life and his vision gave people another chance at life. He gave not only me hope for happiness but my family also. I will forever be grateful to this man and will never forget him

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**Jerrah Vincent** - September 27, 2023 at 06:47 AM

VM

Judge Norman gave me an opportunity to live start a new life one I never dreamed of he gave me that chance I would never forget him telling me what do I want to do with my life thank you for everything you have done for me

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**Vincent Mchollin** - September 27, 2023 at 12:36 PM

LW

“ Judge Norman was a good man and fair judge. He gave people a chance and believed in recovery. He will be deeply missed.

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**LaRhonda Williams** - September 26, 2023 at 09:43 PM

DS

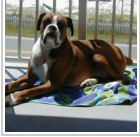
“ Family,

Not only did I work for Judge at Drug Court, but he married me and my husband in 2005. He was the most caring, funny and warm person. I will forever remember his guidance and care.

*Diane (Stark) Sanders*

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**Diane Sanders** - September 26, 2023 at 08:16 PM



“ *Dear Norman Family: We're mourn the lost of our good, good friend. I knew Seth for over 50 years. He was my buddy. 43 years ago, when Bill and I married, he became Bill's friend, too. Please know we share in your grief of this honorable friend. You're in our thoughts and prayers. God Bless you all!*

*Bill and Diane Tucker*



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**Diane Tucker** - September 26, 2023 at 05:14 PM