



Judge Joseph H. Booth

September 19, 1952 - December 9, 2025

Joseph Henry Booth was born on September 19, 1952 to parents General William Howard Booth and Jean Hood Booth. They raised him in Apple Valley, GA. alongside his three brothers, Bill, John, and Alex. He spent his childhood picking peaches, raising show cows, working the family farm, raking leaves – all this to instill in him a sense of service that he carried throughout his life. He attended Commerce High School and participated in FFA, 4-H, and played football and basketball. His summers were spent as a camp counselor at Rock Eagle, where he developed life-long friendships.

After high school, Joe attended North Georgia College where he was a member of the Corps of Cadets, a founding member of Sigma Nu (Rex) fraternity, and fully enjoyed college life. During his junior year at North Georgia, Joe had a motorcycle accident and became paralyzed. Friends report that while his spirits took a natural dip, he didn't let the injury keep him down, but adapted and resolved to learning new ways of living his life. Joe continued enjoying nature and sports – kayaking, camping, playing basketball and tennis. He returned to college and graduated before moving to Atlanta to attend Atlanta Law School. He practiced law in Dekalb County for 12 years, where he met Susan.

Susan and Joe were at each others' sides for 45 years. Their early years together were filled with adventure of all kinds– from coaching youth

wheelchair basketball teams to spending time with their families, playing tennis to traveling. In 1986, their daughter Whitney was born, and just before her 3rd birthday in 1989, the Booths moved back to Apple Valley. He practiced law in Jackson County, first in private practice and then with Davidson, Hopkins, & Booth in Jefferson for 12 years until 2002 when he was appointed by Governor Roy Barnes to serve the Piedmont Judicial Circuit as a Superior Court Judge. We celebrated his retirement one year ago, after 22 years serving on the bench.

To say that his work mattered deeply to him is an understatement. Joe had a love for the law and a well of compassion for those whom he served. In the courtroom, he acted out of great empathy for parties on both sides of the room, seeking justice, healing, and wholeness for all. But that level of personal investment and care wasn't limited to the legal sphere or his professional life. Among his friends, with his family, in his church, on community/organizational boards— if he was doing something, he was doing it at a level that truly honored the people around him, that sought fairness, and that gave glory to God. He taught Sunday School, led youth retreats, shared gifts of music, and shared his journey with young people who were just beginning their own. In everything he did, his own story of hope and healing shone through. He adored his family and his friends and he gave every ounce of energy he had toward being with the ones he loved and the commitments he had made.

He loved traveling to new places and learning about the world, but nothing was as sweet to Joe as an evening on the porch in Apple Valley with his family. He was a devoted husband, father, brother, uncle, and friend— his kindness and warmth emanated in ways that made us all feel uniquely loved. But no role or relationship fit him quite as well as being “Pop” to his granddaughter Josephine (named after him), who added brightness to his light for the last 4 years.

He is survived by his wife Susan, their daughter Whitney Booth Lockard, son-in-law Mark, and granddaughter Josephine Louise Lockard. Survivors also include his brothers Bill Booth (Jackie), John Booth, and Alex Booth (Fran) and their families, in addition to Susan's siblings Mike Allen (Page Airheart), Cynthia Estill, and David Allen (Heather) and their children and grandchildren.

The family will receive visitors at Little-Ward Funeral Home on Wednesday, December 17 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. A Service to the Witness of the Resurrection will be held at First Presbyterian Church of Athens on Thursday, December 18 at 2:00 p.m., followed by a reception in Fellowship Hall.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts can be made to the 4-H Foundation or the University of North Georgia Foundation: Corps of Cadets Military Leadership Academy.

Little-Ward Funeral Home, Commerce is in charge of arrangements.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 17. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Little-Ward Funeral Home
115 State Street
Commerce, GA 30529
(706) 335-3175
lwfh@windstream.net
<https://www.little-wardfuneralhome.com/>

Service

DEC 18. 2:00 PM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church of Athens
185 E Hancock Avenue
Athens, GA 30601

Tribute Wall

FG

“ Fred G. planted a grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judge Joseph H. Booth.

Fred G. - December 22, 2025 at 10:53 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Judge Joseph H. Booth.



December 17, 2025 at 12:38 PM

TP

“ The Wilbanks Law Firm, P.C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judge Joseph H. Booth.

The Wilbanks Law Firm, P.C. - December 17, 2025 at 12:38 PM

NS

“ Ninth Judicial District Judges and Staff purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Judge Joseph H. Booth.



Ninth Judicial District Judges and Staff - December 17, 2025 at 10:53 AM

JS

“ Sorry to see that Judge Booth has passed. Long before he became a Judge but practicing Law in Jefferson he would stop at the side door of my shop (Jefferson Small Engine) we would do a little tweaking on his wheelchair, always reminded me of the great Mr. Ed Kelley fixing a small lad's bicycle. Judge Booth and Mr. Ed Kelley were two Great Americans. R.I.P. Judge Booth so glad our paths crossed along the way.
Jack Seabolt

Jack Seabolt - December 16, 2025 at 10:01 PM

FA

“ Fran & Alex planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judge Joseph H. Booth.

Fran & Alex - December 16, 2025 at 07:01 PM



“ Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Judge Joseph H. Booth.



December 16, 2025 at 07:01 PM

WL

“ Weinstein & Black Attorneys at Law planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judge Joseph H. Booth.

Weinstein & Black Attorneys at Law - December 16, 2025 at 06:28 PM

WL

“ Weinstein & Black Attorneys at Law purchased the Magnificent Life Spray for the family of Judge Joseph H. Booth.



Weinstein & Black Attorneys at Law - December 16, 2025 at 06:28 PM

DH

“ David and Debbie Huguenin planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judge Joseph H. Booth.

David and Debbie Huguenin - December 16, 2025 at 09:29 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Judge Joseph H. Booth.



December 16, 2025 at 09:29 AM

PB

“ Jo and will be miss great man and his wife and daughter are supper nice people

Polly burns - December 15, 2025 at 07:02 PM

JS

“ I went to NGC and Joe and I were the same age. We were both in the Corp, he in Golf Co, and I in Echo. We were in different fraternities, but shared many friends in all areas of college life. Joe was just Joe to me, and he was the most inspiring person I had the pleasure to have had the honor to call my friend. After college, he went his way, and I went back to my hometown in NJ. We had a reunion (50th) in 2024 in Dahlonga which I had the pleasure to attend, along with many Alumni. It was so special to see my friend again, and when he arrived, and heard that I was asking about him, he sought me out, and though we hadn't seen each other in 50 yrs, We hugged and just laughed and that moment made Everything so neat, He hadn't changed a bit ... he was the same Joe that I knew from NGC. Joe was an inspiration to Everybody that had the blessing to know him. Joe Never lived in the past, nor was bitter ... He was just the same old Joe ... a true gift from God, and I'm sure he is sitting beside God now, and hopefully I will see him again.

Joshua Z Smith - December 15, 2025 at 01:21 AM

SM

“ Judge Booth's impact on our family's life is immeasurable. Finalizing our son's adoption 21 years ago was just the beginning of the kindness and compassion he showed us every time we met. 🙏

Stacy M - December 13, 2025 at 05:33 PM

BH

“ Susan, Linda and I really appreciate you sharing your loving husband with us. His warmth and love of us was felt at every meeting we ever had. He was so special to everyone he met. He was truly an example of Jesus's love personified. We all will miss him. Love to you and Whitney...Bill

Bill Higgins - December 13, 2025 at 12:19 PM

DG

“ *My most heartfelt condolences to the family.*

Donarell Green - December 13, 2025 at 11:10 AM

ND

“ *As a little girl, I attended church with the Booth boys at Apple Valley Baptist Church. I remember Joe well. He was kind and fun with his brothers. They were an awesome team. My sincere sympathy to Joe's Family. God Bless.*

Nancy Smith Dougherty - December 13, 2025 at 10:47 AM

WH

“ *I've known Joe for more than fifty years. We were counselors together at Rock Eagle 4-H Center and became fast friends. I was Cisco and he was Poncho in what started as a joke but became life-long nicknames. We followed similar paths, and we both became attorneys. Though we practiced in different t states and he eventually became a judge, every time we spoke, it was like we'd seen each other the day before. A bright light has been extinguished, and Joe will be missed as a great attorney and judge but more importantly as a great husband, father and friend. I feel a great sense of loss and a tear in the fabric of my life. You will not be forgotten. Adios Poncho.*

Wally Hinesley

Wally Hinesley - December 12, 2025 at 07:12 PM

NG

“ To Susan, Whitney, family and friends Inow my heart is heavy with your loss and time of grief. Joe was an exceptional individual. He was a servant leader in countless ways.

It was nice to know there was a Judge on the bench with the highest integrity to minister on behalf of God to offer fair and just judgments to those appearing before him.

My prayers are now with you all. May you find comfort in Isaiah 57:1.

Norma R Green - December 12, 2025 at 07:08 PM

GF

“ Godfrey family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Judge Joseph H. Booth.



Godfrey family - December 12, 2025 at 06:09 PM

RD

“ i worked with joe at rock eagle 4h camp , he was very positive , hard working, and energetic, interesting how he was in a skit based on the pop tune , ' here comes the judge.'

Roberson Donald - December 12, 2025 at 01:52 PM



“ *Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Judge Joseph H. Booth.*



December 12, 2025 at 01:34 PM



“ *Tony and Liz Adams and Darby Jordan planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judge Joseph H. Booth.*

Tony and Liz Adams and Darby Jordan - December 12, 2025 at 01:34 PM



“ *Judge Booth was always kind, knowledgeable and professional, and his leadership from the bench and off as a community cheerleader for good was inspiring.*

LeAnne Akin - December 12, 2025 at 10:12 AM



“ *Mr Booth was an amazing man having worked private duty for him, you will truly be missed by many, but nothing will ever take away the conversation that we had,,, eat on my brother, my condolences to his wife and family,,May GOD continue to bless his family.... Bobby Roebuck*

Bobby roebuck - December 12, 2025 at 12:11 AM

TG

As Thomas and I had to navigate this parapalegic world 45 years ago. Joe became a mentor to Thomas. Getting him involved in wheelchair basketball and spending many weekends with Susan and Joe as we traveled to wheelchair games all over the southeast. We will miss being able to share with Joe the challenges facing older paraplegics but Joe's faith in God has given him a new glorious body. We love you Joe and Susan.

Thomas and Carol Godfrey - December 12, 2025 at 05:55 PM

AP

Joe and I met in classes at NGC as freshman. My last name was Boyd, and he was Booth. We were seated alphabetically; and he was seated in front of me. The first day we we became acquaintances, and soon friends. Of course, I knew of the Booth family; my aunt worked at Jackson Electric, and Gen. Booth was head of JEMCO. What a good guy a in every way! We later saw each other in random places; a show at the Classic Center in Athens when I was a Pharma Rep. We always were happy to see each other. Later, I found an old JEMCO News that Mama had saved; a picture of the Booth boys growing up, and of course, he was thrilled I sent it to him! Invited me to come to the Barrow Co. courthouse. Same dear Joe! I went several times, but always missed him! Rest, dear friend, you made the world a better place. I will look forward to seeing you walking in Heaven one day! I'm sorry I never met the love of your life. God truly gained a great warrior, who blessed us all with his friendship, wisdom and presence. Sarah "Ann" Boyd Pilgrim

Ann B Pilgrim - December 18, 2025 at 08:37 AM

AP

Ann Boyd Pilgrim

Ann B Pilgrim - December 18, 2025 at 08:39 AM

AR

“ Joe was an outstanding human! I first met him at Shepherd Spinal Center. Years later he became my attorney. I hope your running in the streets of gold!

Amy Ritchie - December 11, 2025 at 09:58 PM

DF

“ Joe Booth was one of the kindest, brightest, nicest people I know. I am just heartbroken that he has passed. I am thinking of him, Susan, their daughter, their granddaughter and sending them love and prayers. It was my honor to know him and the world is dimmer without him in it.

Debbie & Roy Finch - December 11, 2025 at 09:54 PM

CK

“ My name is Craig Kasold. I went to school with Joe back in the early 70s. I haven't seen Joe since we left college, but what I remember about him was that he was always there always helpful and at times quite funny. It appears that he continued his kindness and helpfulness throughout his life. May God bless his wife and his family and may he rest in peace.

Craig Kasold - December 11, 2025 at 09:42 PM

JA

“ Joe exhibited the highest level of integrity throughout his life as evidenced in the many different roles he assumed to benefit people from all walks of life. It was truly an honor to work with Joe on various committees and to observe his never ending support and love for his community, county, region, state and country. Joe's caring spirit had a positive impact on the lives of many, and those of us who had opportunities to work with Joe, in whatever role, are definitely blessed.

Janet O'Kelley Adams

Janet Adams - December 11, 2025 at 07:39 PM

AR

“ I will miss you, my friend! You are one of the finest people I know. And we are all Spirits! We will live forever. Peace be with you.

Arturo - December 11, 2025 at 07:35 PM

TD

“ *The JCHS ELA Department purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Judge Joseph H. Booth.*



The JCHS ELA Department - December 11, 2025 at 03:19 PM