

# Obituary

KHSAA Hall of Fame coach, John Dee Wilson, age 84, of Bledsoe, KY, passed away on Monday, March 20, 2023, at the Greg and Noreen Wells Hospice Center in Hazard, KY.

John was born on April 7, 1938 in Wallins Creek, KY, to Johnny W. and Nannie Cox Wilson. He received his early education, grades 1-6, at Green Hills Elementary School; grades 7-8 were completed at Beech Fork, in Leslie County; and he graduated from Loyall High School in 1956. John participated in every sport that was offered at the time he attended high school - baseball, basketball, and football. He never missed a practice and some days had to hitch-hike home across Pine Mountain after practices. John graduated from the University of the Cumberlands with a degree in education. He went on to obtain his master's degree and his Rank 1. He became an educator and a basketball coach. His teaching and coaching career spanned a total of 55 years and included Pine Mountain Settlement School, Green Hills Elementary School, Loyall Junior High School, Cawood High School, Webster County High School, and Red Bird Christian School.

As a coach and teacher, Mr. Wilson received numerous honors and awards. He was successful as a coach, leading his Loyall basketball team to a KY Jr High School Championship in 1974, while earning a trip to the National Junior High School tournament. He was also featured in a basketball documentary on ESPN. In 2009, he was inducted into the University of the Cumberlands Hall of Fame, where he had taught college courses. In 2013, Mr. Wilson was inducted into the KHSAA 13<sup>th</sup> Region Hall of Fame.

Mr. John Wilson was preceded in death by his parents, Johnny and Nannie Wilson; a brother, Jim Wilson; a sister, Alice Fields and her husband, Chester.

Left to cherish his memory is his loving, devoted wife of 63 years, Mary Bowman Wilson of Bledsoe; a daughter, Kathy Wilson Nelson, and husband, Paul, of South Carolina; a son, Jeff Wilson and wife, Gina, of Harlan; a sister, Ann Wilson, of Freeport, TX; a brother, Bill Wilson and wife, Jovene, of Harlan; three grandchildren: Matthew Nelson and wife, Allie, Jennifer Wilson, Mary Katherine Nelson; two great-grandchildren: John Paul Nelson, James Maddox Nelson; a host of extended relatives and many dear friends.

Visitation for Mr. Wilson will be Friday, March 24, 2023, from 12:00-2:00 at the Loyall Funeral Home with funeral service beginning at 2:00. Reverend Buddy Turner, Pastor Robert Amundsen, and Pastor David Gross will be officiating. Burial will take place at the Resthaven Cemetery, Keith, KY, with Matthew Nelson, Mike Fields, David Horton, Tim Bowman, Michael Howard, Harold Wendall Lewis serving as pallbearers. Honorary pallbearers will be Mr. Wilson's former basketball players.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Bluegrass Care Navigators, 57 Dennis Sandlin, MDCV, Hazard, KY 41701-1552

Loyall Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Mr. John Dee Wilson.

(Contributing information from The University of the Cumberlands and Mr. Luther Blanton)

To plant Memorial Trees in memory of **John Dee Wilson**, please [click here to visit our Sympathy Store](#).

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