



Dr. Jane Walters

SEP 1, 1934 - AUG 19, 2020



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MEMORIAL PARK
Funeral Home & Cemetery

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Dr. Jane Walters

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Dr. Jane Walters, 85, of Memphis, passed away on Wednesday, August 19, 2020.

Dr. Walters knew she wanted to be a teacher from the age of 7 and spent over 50 years in education. She had a passion for children, teachers, public education, and the arts and dedicated her life to their service becoming nationally recognized for her efforts.

She began her career in 1956 as a math and music teacher at Messick High School. After a sojourn at the Board of Education, she was tapped in 1974 to serve as principal of Craigmont Jr. High School. In 1979, she became principal of both the Jr. and Sr. High Schools, becoming only the 2nd woman principal of a high school in the Memphis City Schools. During Dr. Walters' distinguished tenure at Craigmont the school established the first optional program for International Studies and was chosen by the U.S. Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon School.

Dr. Walters left Craigmont in 1994 to become the 21st Commissioner of Education of the State of Tennessee – the first woman to assume that office in state history – in Governor Don Sundquist's administration. She served in that capacity until 1999 when she retired for the first time. However, she was called back into service to lead the non-profit PIPE (Partners in Public Education). She retired (again) from PIPE in 2003 but didn't stay retired for long. She was approached to serve as the founding principal of the Grizzlies Academy. She agreed only if the school served students who were two grades behind. In 2009 she retired for the last time.

She was a graduate of Central High School; Southwestern College (now Rhodes) with a Bachelor of Music and a Bachelor of Arts; Memphis State University (now University of Memphis) with a Master's in Counseling; and obtained her Doctorate in School Administration from Duke University.

As a patron of the arts, she was a supporter and/or a board member of Opera Memphis, the Memphis Symphony, the Memphis Youth Symphony, among many others.



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She was the recipient of numerous awards, including: recipient of the first Horatio Alger Association National Educator Award; Memphis Education Association Principal of the Year; University of Memphis Educator of the Year; Rhodes College Honorary Doctor of Humanities; and she was one of the first inductees into the Memphis City Schools Education Hall of Fame.

Quoting from the Tennessee Senate Joint Resolution 403 that honored Dr. Walters upon her retirement as Commissioner of Education: "Even though there were times during her tenure as Commissioner of Education that she wondered if, "Forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit." (The Aenid, Book I, Line 203), she continued to march through Tennessee, stamping out ignorance and spreading culture while fighting for the children and teachers of Tennessee's public education system Her straightforward and honest answers are always based upon the perspective of the children, and not on politics ... she was loved and respected by those whose lives she has touched."

She is survived by her brother, Arthur Walters; nieces, Elizabeth (Lane) Reams; Barbara Walters (Keith) Price; great nieces and nephews, Nicholas (Jenni) Reams; Evan and John Reams; Sarah and Anne Price

Funeral services will be held Friday, August 28 at 1 o'clock in the Riverside Chapel of Memorial Park Funeral Home with a visitation beginning at 12 o'clock. Interment will follow in Memorial Park.

To view Dr. Walters' Memorial tribute video please click the link below.

<https://www.tributeslides.com/tributes/show/34NRKM8FG43KKRCK>

Please click the link below to view the services for Dr. Walters.

<http://webcast.funeralvue.com/events/viewer/35880>

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to either Reach Memphis

(<https://www.reachmemphis.org/ways-to-give>)

REACH Memphis

4646 Poplar Avenue, Suite 327

Memphis, TN 38117

or



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Friends of Tennessee School for the Blind (<http://www.friendsoftsb.org/donate.html>).

Friends of TSB

P.O. Box 140057

Nashville, TN 37214-0057

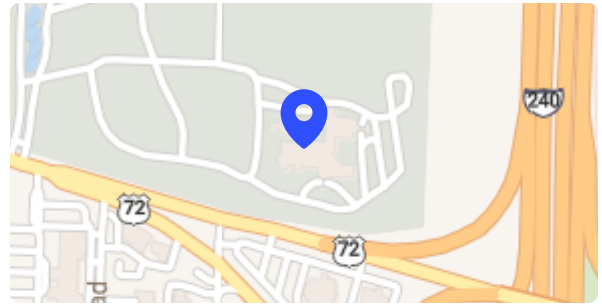


Events

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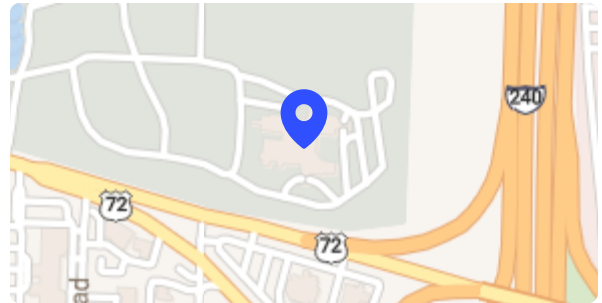
Visitation

- 📅 **Friday, August 28, 2020**
- 🕒 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM CT
- 📍 **Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery**
5668 Poplar Avenue, Memphis TN 38119



Funeral Service

- 📅 **Friday, August 28, 2020**
- 🕒 1:00 PM CT
- 📍 **Memorial Park Funeral Home**
5668 Poplar Ave, Memphis TN 38119



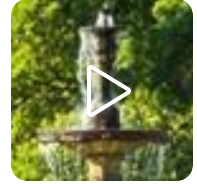


Tribute Wall

Dr. Jane Walters
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Memorial Park Funeral Home And Cemetery shared a **Video**.



August 27 at 10:02 AM



Toniko Harris lit a candle in honor of Jane.



August 30 at 2:46 AM



James Kelley posted:

Dr. J was truly an amazing woman who made a lasting impact on the quality of education in the state of Tennessee & beyond. I feel blessed to have crossed her path & cherish so many thoughtful, humorous & meaningful conversations with her. Rest is peace my colleague & friend, Ada Jane.

August 28 at 4:32 PM



Susan C. Brooks lit a candle in honor of Jane.

Dr. Walters was a blessing in my life, and I loved her. She was my first principal in 1980, and she remained my friend throughout my career. I called her when I retired in 2014 and thanked her for all she did to guide me and make me a better teacher and a better person. I always wanted her to be proud of me. Rest In Peace



August 28 at 2:41 PM



Anne Marie Poppa posted:

She believed in me when no one else did. I'm a teacher today because of her ❤️

August 28 at 2:02 PM



Betty Hall posted:

One of a kind. Born educator and an honor to have known her and worked for her!

August 28 at 9:05 AM



Tribute Wall

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Bob Archer posted:

I had the privilege of working with Dr. Walters in the Memphis City Schools. She was the epitome of a professional educator and a consummate humanitarian. Bob Archer

August 28 at 7:41 AM



Anna Tate lit a candle in honor of Jane.

What a remarkable life lived by a remarkable woman. She expected the best from her students and teachers. She could command a room full of high school kids with one stern look. She was kind, thoughtful and had a great sense of humor. She will not be forgotten. Anna Class of 82



August 27 at 11:19 AM



Anonymous sent a Sentiments of Serenity Spray to the Walters family.



August 27 at 5:02 AM



Patrick L Lewis posted:

Dr. Ada Jane Walters: What a remarkable, incredible, phenomenal woman!! She was the head Chief at Craigmont all the years I attended from the 7th thru the 12th grade. She was a tremendous leader, educator, and administrator who was well respected by all. Dr. Walters had the unique ability of making all of her students feel so special. She was firm and fair. I will forever cherish her memory. My life has been made the better because of people like you. Take your well deserved rest Dr. Walters for you have served and given us your best. I will see you in the morning when we can celebrate with great joy in the presence of our Savior. Much Love.....Patrick L. Lewis Class of 1985

August 26 at 3:58 PM



Minyun Britton lit a candle in honor of Jane.



August 26 at 2:05 PM



Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent a Beautiful Heart Bouquet to the Walters family.



August 26 at 1:15 PM



Walter's! Barrar lit a candle in honor of Jane.

So sorry to hear of Ms Walters' death! She was assistant principal at Messick High School when I went there! She was highly respected as an educator! My sympathy & prayers to her family! RIP, Ms Walters!



August 23 at 8:13 PM



Ann Kiestler lit a candle in honor of Jane.



August 23 at 4:33 AM



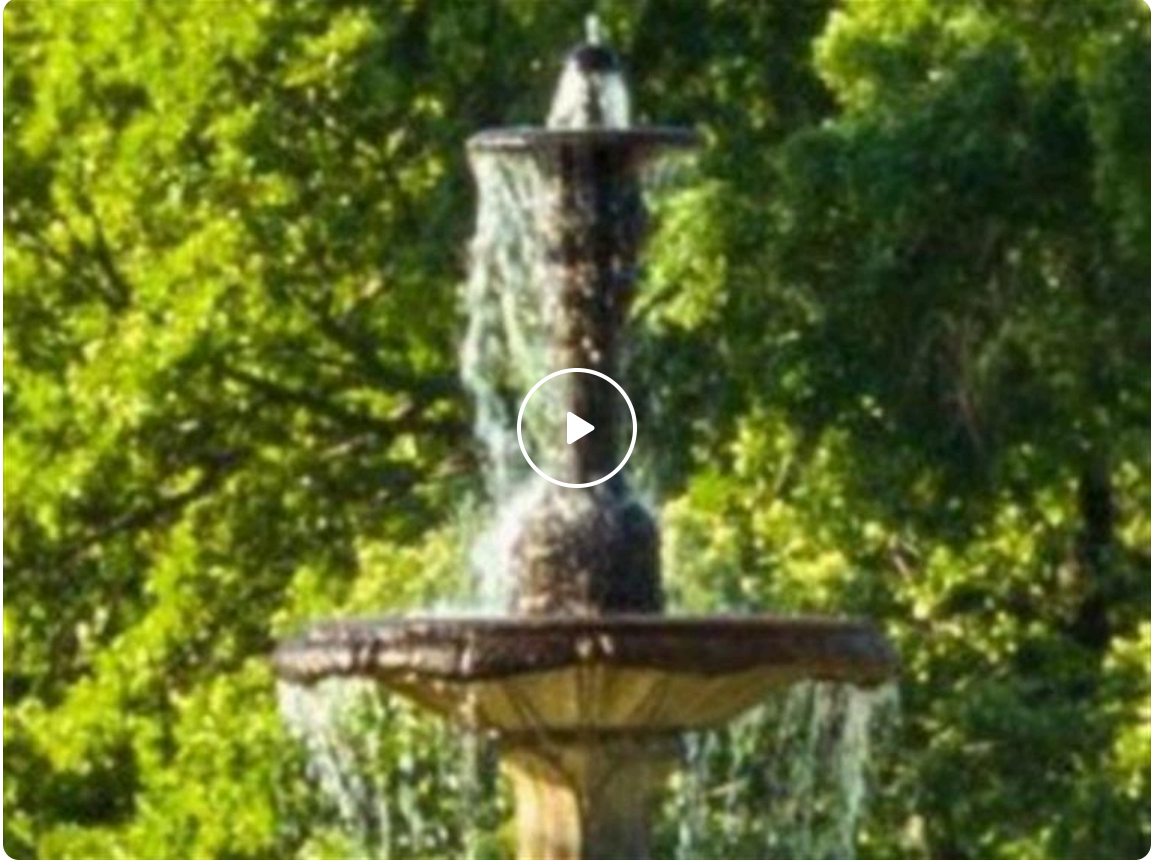
Media

Dr. Jane Walters
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Memorial Park Funeral Home And Cemetery shared a **Video**.

August 27 at 10:02 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Jane by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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