



Joel Taylor

December 21, 1930 - June 23, 2014

Malcolm Joel Taylor, a leader in modernizing South Carolina public education, died Monday, June 23, 2014, at the age of 83 at the Saluda Nursing Center.

Services will be held at 2:30 PM Thursday at St. Paul United Methodist Church in Saluda. The family will greet friends before the service in the J. N. Deloache Sunday School Room in the church basement from 1:00 to 2:00. After the service the family will depart for the committal at Zion United Methodist Church in Prosperity. Ramey Funeral Home of Saluda (rameyfuneralhome.com) is handling arrangements.

Joel Taylor was born December 21, 1930, in the Stoney Hill section of Newberry County to Malcolm Samuel Taylor, a house builder, and Lura Venetta Whitman Taylor. Joel was the youngest of five sons, including brothers Ernest Carroll Taylor, Homer Whitman Taylor, John Ralph Taylor, and Richard Darr Taylor. The family moved to Prosperity, S. C., when Joel was ten years old. There he met Nelle Harmon, whom he married in 1951. The couple shared life together until her death in 2007. The couple had two sons: Thomas Joel ("Tommy") Taylor (1958) and Timothy Harmon Taylor (1968).

Joel was graduated from Prosperity High School in 1947. He commuted to Newberry College—often by hitchhiking—where he earned a B.S. in Secondary Education in 1951. In 1957 he received his M.Ed. from the University of South Carolina.

Mr. Taylor's career began with student teaching of algebra at Hollywood School in Saluda County. In 1952-53 he served as radar operator with the US Air Force 114th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron in Bitburg, Germany, attaining the rank of staff sergeant. When Joel returned from service, he taught junior high school math and became principal of Saluda Elementary School, while Nelle taught English at Saluda High School. Having been an outstanding high school athlete, Joel also coached several junior varsity football squads and girls' varsity basketball from 1955-58, taking his team to the state finals twice. Many summers he earned extra money inspecting peaches for the USDA.

In 1965 Joel was hired by State Superintendent of Education Cyril Busbee as an elementary education consultant. During his tenure with the department, Taylor helped guide elementary schools to incorporate guidance, art, music, and physical education. He helped institute textbook selection guidelines and was instrumental in the institution of public school kindergartens in the state. Mr. Taylor promoted schools' accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), serving as chairman of the SACS Commission on Elementary Schools, and traveling as a member of the Committee on Latin American Schools to evaluate 20 schools in six countries. Having attained the title of Deputy Superintendent for Instruction with the S.C. Department of Education before his retirement in 1991, Taylor was selected for the SACS Distinguished Educational Leadership Award.

Joel and Nelle were members of St. Paul United Methodist Church, where he oversaw construction of a ramp as chairman of the Board of Trustees. He tabulated ballots in many Democratic primaries and general elections and became active in the American Legion in later years.

Joel enjoyed rabbit hunting from the time he was a boy and many of his closest friends were his hunting companions. He loved raising beagles and Boykin spaniels, vacationing in the mountains of North Carolina with his family, experiencing other cultures through travel, researching genealogy, studying U.S. history, and attending USC Gamecock athletic events.

Joel Taylor is survived by sons, Tommy and Timothy (wife Melinda Wash Taylor), grandson Luke Harmon Taylor, his brother Darr, and numerous nephews and nieces.

The family would like to thank Joel's caregivers Annette Chappell, Amanda Cook, Pat Maroney, and Louise Mathis; housekeeper Akemi Powell; home health care nurse Allyson Martin; the staff of Saluda Nursing Center; and physician Dr. Bill Sawyer.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorials be made to the St. Paul United Methodist Church Family Life Center Fund (102 E Butler AVE, Saluda, S.C. 29138) or to the Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org).

Cemetery Details

Zion United Methodist Church Cemetery

80 Zion Circle
Prosperity, SC

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN **26**. 1:00 AM - 2:00 PM (ET)

St. Paul United Methodist Church
102 East Butler Avenue
Saluda, SC 29138

Funeral

JUN **26**. 2:30 PM (ET)

St. Paul United Methodist Church
102 East Butler Avenue
Saluda, SC 29138

Tribute Wall

RB

“ I am sorry to hear of your loss. Please find comfort in the resurrection promise at John 5:28, 29 that reads: "Do not be amazed at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out."

R Brown - June 24, 2014 at 08:35 AM