



*Eleanor "Nell" Faye
Shull*

Dec. 18, 1932 - May 24, 2026

Eleanor "Nell" Faye Shull, 93, of Morganton, NC, passed away Sunday, May 24, 2026.

Born in Burke County, NC on December 18, 1932, she was the daughter of the late Burgin Rhoney Shull and Jessie Hull Shull.

She graduated from Appalachian State Teachers College and began her career as an elementary and physical education teacher. She later went on to teach and coach high school basketball, becoming one of the first and finest female coaches of her time. In the early 1960s, she began working at Barium Springs Home for Children, where she served for many years as a recreation leader and teacher. Around that time, she made Statesville her home, where she would remain for more than 60 years.

Nell eventually returned to the public school classroom and gymnasium, dedicating many years to students as an extraordinary physical education teacher and coach before retiring from the public school system.

In 1989, Nell came out of retirement and joined Judy Sutton at Statesville Montessori School (SMS), where she taught fourth grade. She soon began teaching physical education classes as well, sharing the fundamentals of numerous sports with her students. Later, she became SMS's first Athletic Director, supporting countless student athletes, coaches, and school leaders. Nell was instrumental in creating the

STUDENT ATHLETES, COACHES, AND SCHOOL LEADERS. NELL WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN CREATING THE school's athletic program, which continues today.

In March of 2003, Statesville Montessori School honored Nell by naming the school gymnasium in her honor. A plaque was placed on the gym wall reading: "In recognition of her instruction and love given to the young people of SMS, this

gymnasium is dedicated in honor of Nell Shull. 'A Strong Body builds and a Strong Mind.'" Her brothers, church family, and many friends joined her for the dedication ceremony. Nell retired from her role as athletic director of SMS in 2018. Throughout her remarkable life and career, she touched the lives of countless people. She was a Sunshine Volunteer at Davis Regional Medical Center for over 10 years and rang bells for donations for the Salvation Army at Christmas, as long as she could.

Nell was a devout Christian and member of Forest Park Presbyterian Church in Statesville for over 60 years. She served as a deacon and elder multiple times, and she received the Presbyterian Women's Honorary Life Membership in 1984. Nell served as a Sunday school teacher and youth group leader for over 50 years each. For many years she accompanied the youth group to Camp Grier. Nell founded the Forest Park Day Camp, a three week faith-based summer camp that impacted thousands of Statesville/community children.

Those left to cherish her memory include a brother, Bobby Shull and wife, Marie, of York, PA; special nephew guardian, and caregiver, Greg Shull; and a number of nieces, nephews, and extended family.

In addition to her parents, Nell was preceded in death by two brothers, Merlin Shull and Jim Shull.

A celebration of Nell's life will be held at Forest Park Presbyterian Church in Statesville; details pending but will appear on the Sossoman Funeral Home website when finalized.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.