



Dr. Luther Rayford Rogers

April 13, 1934 - November 8, 2020

Luther R. Rogers, age 86 and a resident of Tallahassee, Florida since 1977, transitioned to his heavenly home on November 8, 2020.

Luther was born in Roopville, Georgia on April 13, 1934, to the late Rev. Luther Guy and Vesta Kent Rogers. He met the love of his life, Betty Jean Arrington, in high school and they were married for almost 65 years.

Luther graduated as valedictorian from Heard County High School in Franklin, Georgia, attended Berry College in Rome, Georgia, and earned degrees from West Georgia College in Carrollton, Auburn University and the University of Florida, where he earned both a specialist's and doctor's degree in educational administration.

His distinguished career in education included serving as a teacher, principal, county staff worker and superintendent in Brevard County, Florida, and in leadership positions for the Florida Department of Education and Florida Association of District School Superintendents in Tallahassee, until his retirement in 2013 at age 79.

Luther was also a veteran, having served in the U.S. Army as a translator during the Korean War. Most importantly, Luther was a born-again Christian. He was an active member since 1977 of First Baptist Church, Tallahassee, where he served as a deacon and Sunday School teacher.

Luther was a man of faith, generosity and integrity who loved his family and his Lord. He especially enjoyed Southern Gospel quartet music, reading (particularly westerns), working outside, spending time with his wife and other family at the Hemlock Inn in Bryson City, North Carolina and at the family farm in Ridgeway, Georgia, eating peanut butter, and supporting the ministries of the Lighthouse Children's Home.

He is survived by his wife, Betty Arrington Rogers; son, Lance Rogers of Tallahassee, Florida; daughter and son-in-law, Melba and Donnie Jacobs of Tallahassee, Florida; son

and daughter-in-law, Doug and Lori Rogers of Pike Road, Alabama; grandchildren, Kyle Rogers (Liza), Trevor Rogers, Anna Jacobs, Katie Jacobs, Bethany Rogers Franklin (Sam), Emilee Rogers and Zack Rogers; great-grandson, Jensen Jacobs; sister, Sara Cutler, Charleston, South Carolina; brother, Ray Rogers (Janie), Rockledge, Florida; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. He was preceded in death by infant brother, Kent Rogers; sister, Charlotte Rogers Hester; and brother-in-law, George Carey Hester.

If would like to honor Luther with a gift, please consider making a donation in his name to the Lighthouse Children's Home in Tallahassee or Big Bend Hospice, Inc.

The family would like to express their appreciation to Azalea Gardens Assisted Living and Memory Care in Tallahassee for their compassionate care for Luther over the past year.

Arrangements are being handled by Abbey Funeral Home and Tallahassee Memory Gardens, 4037 North Monroe Street in Tallahassee. A visitation time will be held Wednesday, November 11, 1-2 p.m. EST at the funeral home, followed by a Celebration of Life Service at 2 p.m., also at the funeral home. A brief graveside service will follow at the adjoining Tallahassee Memory Gardens. Social distancing guidelines and face masks will be in place for all gatherings.

For those who are unable to attend in person, the Celebration of Life service at 2 p.m. EST will be livestreamed. Visit www.abbeyfh.com, click on Dr. Luther R. Rogers on the front page, then Photos and Video, then Webcasting Video to view the video live or after the fact.

Cemetery Details

Tallahassee Memory Gardens

4037 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32303
<https://www.abbeyfh.com/>

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 11. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Abbey Funeral Home
4037 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32303
abbeyfh@comcast.net, rocky@abbeyfh.com

Service

NOV 11. 2:00 PM (ET)

Abbey Funeral Home
4037 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32303
abbeyfh@comcast.net, rocky@abbeyfh.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Abbey Funeral Home and Tallahassee Memory Gardens created a Webcast in memory of Dr. Luther Rayford Rogers*



Abbey Funeral Home and Tallahassee Memory Gardens - November 11, 2020 at 01:40 PM

DC

“ *I had the opportunity to work for Dr. Luther Rogers at the FL DOE as well as at FADSS. He served as my mentor and motivator to pursue my doctorate in Educational Leadership at FSU.*

I am forever grateful to have known and been guided by a man who taught me that all PK- 12 leadership decisions must be based on what's best for the students. He instilled in me that politics should play no role in doing the right thing for kids. We need to strive to keep more “Luther Rogers” in leadership positions. I miss talking and visiting with him; he was always uplifting. Dr. JoAnn Cox

Dr. JoAnn Cox - January 23 at 07:50 AM

RS

“ *Rodney S. purchased a sympathy card for the family of Dr. Luther Rayford Rogers.*



Rodney S. - December 16, 2020 at 03:54 PM

RS

“ Tribute to One of Florida's Outstanding Educators

When Dr. Rogers joined the Florida Department of Education in the 1970s he was welcomed as a brilliant outstanding leader and administrator from Brevard County, Florida, and as well a person of great moral value. Working directly with Luther, hand-in-hand with virtually all of Florida's district school superintendents, I became impressed by his command of leadership and his efficiency in handling complex detail. A memory that has stayed with me over the years is his once recalling to me the death of his father. "I came upon him sitting still in a rocking chair," Luther said, "On his face was a peaceful smile of faith it seemed to me, and then I realized that he had passed away sitting there. At that time I rededicated myself, so that in my passing I, also, would know that I have served the Lord, loved my family, and left the world a better place in whatever way my humble God given talent and spirit would lead me."

It is my belief that Dr. Luther R. Rogers has more than lived up to his rededication.

Rodney Pennell Smith, Jr., Ph.D.

*Former Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction
State of Florida Department of Education*

Rodney Smith - December 16, 2020 at 03:29 PM

TG

“ *The memories I have of Dr Rogers always start with the sparkle of mischief that was ever present in his eyes especially when he smiled. I couldn't help but smile back. The loving way he provided for his family always making sure everyone was okay. He was always interested in any story or simply how you week/day was going. He was an intense listener. Made you feel like he truly cared to hear what you were saying. Dr Rogers was an intelligent man and left his mark on the education system in Florida where he would create a team to make recommendations to turn around a school that was in need of help. And that was only one part of a long successful career.*



Dr Rogers was the closest to a father figure I have had since my father died when I was 27.

I now wonder if he knew how much I enjoyed knowing him and if he knew how much he meant to me.

God Bless him.

Tawni Glover - November 13, 2020 at 02:48 PM

“ From Ray Rogers (part 1): Luther was my big brother who I loved (still do) and held in high esteem (still do). Sometimes he would introduce me as HIS big brother because of my larger stature. There was no doubt in my view of him deserving the “big” status because he was older, and he set the bar of attainment and excellence in achievement out of reach. I occasionally joked with others saying I had the “looks” thing going for me which was some consolation. I’m not convinced, however, that was ever true.

I was most fortunate to be able to call my brother my friend. He did things for me I did not even request through his caring, kindness and initiative. During one period of my life I lived alone in an apartment and early on, I hadn’t taken time to acquire a bed. There was a knock on the door and when I opened it, Luther had a bed in the back of his truck. He had driven all the way from Tallahassee to Cocoa. Who does that? Right after Janie and I were first married in 1990, Luther, Betty and family came all the way to Rockledge to meet Janie and welcome her into the Rogers’ family with open arms. Luther and Betty allowed Janie and I to evacuate to their house during a hurricane in the middle of night and with our puppy accompanying us. Not everybody would do this for sure. I could share dozens of good will experiences over the years shared with Janie and I by Luther and Betty. Luther and I had the pleasure of sharing many family times together, going to many events, family reunions, and vacation spots together. Janie and I especially enjoyed meeting Luther, Betty, Sara and family members when the leaves change in the mountains at Hemlock Inn in Bryson City, NC. We would sit by the fireplace and tell stories of the past or go on the balcony to view the beautiful scenery. Janie and I learned the history of extended family when we enjoyed our stays at Luther and Betty’s farm. We had many long “save the world conversations” that lasted for hours. I learned so much from Luther and appreciated how he valued my thoughts and opinions. He gave me many books, recordings and memorabilia. He was always sharing and was TOO generous picking up the tab at restaurants. I can truly say that Luther and I never had harsh words. We disagreed at times but all the “back and forth” was low key and girded by our love and respect for each other.

Luther and I grew up under similar circumstances whereby our dad made certain we learned the work ethic. Both Luther and I worked at the sawmill, helped construct chicken houses and beach houses and performed many other physically demanding jobs before we finished our degrees and assumed white collar jobs. I congratulate Luther for his outstanding service to his country. We had the opportunity to work together professionally, both in the public-school system and in the consultant realm. When Luther was superintendent and I was a principal, I would occasionally hear comments about “what was it like having your brother as superintendent?” First of all it is important to understand, Luther was not my direct supervisor, the area superintendent was. Nepotism policies prohibit direct supervision by a relative, so no policy was violated. When I would talk to people about the issue, I would say “I guarantee you that I was required to toe the line as much or more than any other administrator.” I will share one experience as an example. Every school was required to submit a Teacher of the Year selection to the district office. My school was the only one that did not. I received a call

directly from the Superintendent (Luther). It was a short but effective conversation and there was a letter on his desk from me the next morning with the name of my school's Teacher of the Year. He gave me a chance to make a better decision. Luther was a strong Christian man. He was honorable, respected, ethical, and unceasingly filled with integrity which he consistently demonstrated. The world is a better place for Luther having lived and

Ray Rogers - November 11, 2020 at 08:40 PM

“ From Ray Rogers (part 2): In our retirement years we began to have more discussions about the scriptures. He had great insight and helped me to have greater understandings of the Word of God. Luther was a beloved family man and he has a great family. Betty, Lance, Melba, Doug, spouses, grandchildren, may God comfort you in your time of grief.

There would never be a doubt in my mind that Luther is in “The Lambs Book of Life” and will joyfully go through the pearly gates. His Savior awaits. Luther may already be there because Jesus told the thief on the cross who acknowledged his deity – “this day you will join me in paradise.” So we know there can be a quick transition...it is possible – only God knows.

I will always treasure Luther’s last words to me that I have on tape, wishing me a happy birthday. I find comfort in my words to him when he could no longer speak but could hear: Luther was my big brother who I loved (still do) and held in high esteem (still do). Sometimes he would introduce me as HIS big brother because of my larger stature. There was no doubt in my view of him deserving the “big” status because he was older, and he set the bar of attainment and excellence in achievement out of reach. I occasionally joked with others saying I had the “looks” thing going for me which was some consolation. I’m not convinced, however, that was ever true.

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physically demanding jobs before we finished our degrees and assumed white collar jobs. I congratulate Luther for his outstanding service to his country.

Ray Rogers - November 11, 2020 at 08:38 PM

RR

“ From Ray Rogers (part 3): We had the opportunity to work together professionally, both in the public-school system and in the consultant realm. When Luther was superintendent and I was a principal, I would occasionally hear comments about “what was it like having your brother as superintendent?” First of all it is important to understand, Luther was not my direct supervisor, the area superintendent was. Nepotism policies prohibit direct supervision by a relative, so no policy was violated. When I would talk to people about the issue, I would say “I guarantee you that I was required to toe the line as much or more than any other administrator.” I will share one experience as an example. Every school was required to submit a Teacher of the Year selection to the district office. My school was the only one that did not. I received a call directly from the Superintendent (Luther). It was a short but effective conversation and there was a letter on his desk from me the next morning with the name of my school’s Teacher of the Year. He gave me a chance to make a better decision.

Luther was a strong Christian man. He was honorable, respected, ethical, and unceasingly filled with integrity which he consistently demonstrated. The world is a better place for Luther having lived and loved and worked on it for 86 years. He was well known in Florida and nationally. He was a mentor to many rookie superintendents. He was a “go to” person for superintendents and other leaders and professionals. Luther was an accomplished educator and leader in many venues and at the highest levels.

In our retirement years we began to have more discussions about the scriptures. He had great insight and helped me to have greater understandings of the Word of God. Luther was a beloved family man and he has a great family. Betty, Lance, Melba, Doug, spouses, grandchildren, may God comfort you in your time of grief. “Luther I love you. I’m praying for you. You are the best brother anyone could ever have.”

What more can I say? I’m convinced that God knows what we had as brothers and it was something special. I will miss Luther, I will never forget him, and I pray that we will know each other in heaven. I know we will both be there. We have a promise from God, an inheritance as children of God, that nothing or no one can take from us. Luther, you have fought the good fight, you have kept the faith. Praise the Lord, you are ready for your reward.

Ray Rogers - November 11, 2020 at 08:34 PM

DO

“ *Our prayers are with you Melba. Sorry for your loss.
Dan, Melissa and Kerri*

Dan, Melissa and Kerri Outten - November 11, 2020 at 01:19 PM

RR

“ *Second part of my tribute to Luther and family was cut off somehow:*

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Raymon Edward Rogers - November 11, 2020 at 01:21 AM

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Raymon Edward Rogers - November 11, 2020 at 01:15 AM

SB

“ *Luther was a man to admire personally and professionally. We new each other from my days on the School Board. He set a standard for all of us. A true Christian model to be admired by young and old.* Sy Baker

Sy Baker - November 10, 2020 at 09:52 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dr. Luther Rayford Rogers.*



November 10, 2020 at 08:49 PM



“ *61 files added to the album LifeTributes*



Abbey Funeral Home and Tallahassee Memory Gardens - November 10, 2020 at 03:02 PM

VT

Our condolences and prayers

vivian thompson - November 11, 2020 at 12:18 PM

BS

“ *Buck Tina Meherg And Roy Rogers Stanley lit a candle in memory of Dr. Luther Rayford Rogers*



Buck tina meherg and Roy Rogers Stanley - November 10, 2020 at 11:58 AM

AH

“ *Luther will be missed. He was one of my many Rogers cousins. I remember him when he came to see my mom before she passed. Prayers for the family.*

Alice Reimer Hathcock - November 10, 2020 at 10:59 AM

MR

*A wonderful mentor and a great Christian man I admired greatly.
Mark Rains, retired Dixie County School Superintendent*

mark rains - November 11, 2020 at 11:13 AM

KR

“ *Kyle and Liza Rogers purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Dr. Luther Rayford Rogers.*



Kyle and Liza Rogers - November 09, 2020 at 09:49 PM