



## Arthur Laxton "Ike" Eller

November 5, 1933 - October 21, 2024

On October 21, 2024, just a few weeks shy of his 91st birthday, Arthur Laxton "Ike" Eller passed peacefully into the arms of his Savior and Lord Jesus Christ.

Ike was born on November 5, 1933, in Chilhowie, VA to the late Arthur Laxton Eller Sr. and Evelyn Britton Eller. He was middle brother to June James and Edward Eller. Both the Eller and Britton families were large families, and Ike, June, and Ed had 42 first cousins.

Ike graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 1955 with a B.S. in Animal Husbandry. He went on to work as Assistant County Agent in Tazewell County and the next year as County Agent in Russell County. Ike met Carolyn while working there, and in the fall of 1957, he joined a Bristol Reserve Unit and spent 6 months active duty. In 1960, Ike received a Master's Degree in Animal Breeding and Genetics from VPI, and in 1972 was awarded a PhD in Animal Breeding and Genetics from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Dr. Ike Eller provided exceptional leadership for the livestock industry for 45 years. He served Virginia Tech as Extension Animal Scientist and Project Leader. He led the development of beef cattle performance programs in Virginia and nationally. His international cattle work took him to Europe, South

America, and Africa. Among many recognitions are the American Society of Animal Science National Extension Award and the Progressive Farmer's Man of the Year in Service to Virginia Agriculture Award.

He is survived by his wife Carolyn and children Amy Eller Saunders (Jim), Evelyn Eller Haycocks (Gavin), John Leonard Eller, and Karen Eller Buddington (Rich). Grandchildren include James (Megan), Andrew (Leighanne), Phillip, Jacob, and Nathan Saunders, Casey Schurtz (Andy), Anna, and Cullen Haycocks, Connor (Kayla) Eller, and Spencer and Eller Buddington. Great grandchildren Tripp and Tatum Saunders, Eller Saunders, and Lainey Eller have been a blessing to Ike and Carolyn. He is also survived by his sister, June James and brother, Edward B. Eller (Helen).

Ike was a member of the Church on Main, formerly Blacksburg Baptist Church, and served as deacon and Sunday School Director and teacher, an avid Hokies sports fan, and an active Rotarian. He loved people, the camaraderie of many good friends from all walks of life, telling a good joke or recounting a story, reading, a competitive bridge or golf game, and driving through the countryside with Carolyn.

A celebration of life will be held Sunday, October 27, at 2:00 pm at the Inn at Virginia Tech, 901 Prices Fork Rd, Blacksburg, 24061. There will be a reception to follow.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks to consider a donation to the Dr. Arthur L. Eller, Jr., Scholarship, which supports students majoring in Animal Science at Virginia Tech. Please make checks payable to the Virginia Tech Foundation and include Eller Scholarship – 884244 on the memo line. Gifts may be mailed to: Virginia Tech Foundation, Inc., Gift Accounting 0336, 902 Prices Fork Road, Blacksburg, VA 24061

At Ike's request his body has been donated to medical research. Therefore there will be no viewing of the body. Arrangements are with McCoy Funeral Home in Blacksburg.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

OCT **27**. 2:00 PM (ET)

Inn at Virginia Tech  
901 Prices Fork Road  
Blacksburg, VA 24060

# Tribute Wall

DM

“ Dear Mrs. Eller, I was really saddened to hear about Dr Eller's passing. He will be greatly missed. My deepest sympathy to you and your family. I am glad i was able to see him in the past year, being his usually friendly, cheerful self, always joking and you his faithful wife by his side. I have many fond memories from my youth through adulthood of the times i saw you and Ike as we called him. But always Dr Eller in my younger years. It was either at college gatherings or at my parents house, or some other function. We always had a good time. I wish i had gotten to know your children better, adults now, with kids of their own. Time has flown by way too fast, and i miss the simpler days that we had. The little International was always a favorite of mine, and the Block & Bridle get togethers. It was a real pleasure to mingle with so many professors, of which Ike was a favorite. May God give you strength, courage, peace and comfort in the days ahead. I wasn't able to attend the Celebration of Life as i was in Martinsville at a celebration of life for a long term friend who had passed away in late August and stayed over to comfort the Husband left behind. I know my Twin will or has been by to see you. Melody lives in Williamsburg now, so it is a long trek for her. I am in Roanoke now. Again my sincere wishes for you and your family. Ike was an amazing person and i was blessed to have known him. Don Marlowe



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**Don Marlowe** - November 19, 2024 at 11:55 AM

RB

“ Jovial times on the VT golf course . an inspiring friendship Roland Byrd

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**Roland Byrd** - October 28, 2024 at 10:19 AM

CK

“ I was so sad to learn about Dr. Eller's passing. I first met him many years ago at 4-H cattle shows in Southwest Virginia. He was often the judge when my brother and I showed our steers. Dr. Eller was also a colleague and good friend of my father, Morris Fannon. In fact, he and his brother, Ed Eller, travelled to Pennington Gap to attend my father's funeral back in 2010. That meant so much to me that day and still does. My sincere condolences to Dr. Eller's family.  
Cynthia Fannon Kinser

Cynthia Fannon Kinser - October 26, 2024 at 10:39 AM

DC

Remember watching him judge at shows and mentor the youth

Debbie Campbell - October 26, 2024 at 06:24 PM

PF

“ Page Richardson Coulthard & family purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Arthur Laxton "Ike" Eller.



Page Richardson Coulthard & family - October 26, 2024 at 10:00 AM

DB

“ Dr Ike was a great man and I really appreciate all he did for me at the end of his career and the beginning of mine. It was mentioned in his obituary, but his contributions to the Beef Improvement Federation are enormous. Thanks Dr Ike and rest in peace.

Darrh Bullock - October 24, 2024 at 03:49 PM

EE

“ Edward Britton Eller( Brother)  
Growing up on a Livestock Farm in the 40's& 50's was very interesting!  
Ike was my big brother( 2 yrs older)!  
Had many good times together, from playing Cowboys & Indians to Hoeing fields of corn! It was all a part of growing up!  
I always looked up to Ike as he was older very good at all he strived to be!  
I could go on but we did have a goodlife! A lot of remembrances tucked away!!  
Ike was always optimistic and had a funny joke ready to tell!  
I will miss him greatly but know he's in a better place!  
Ed

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**Edward B. Eller** - October 24, 2024 at 12:42 PM

KB

*He loved you so! I loved hearing his stories of growing up on the farm. The love of family runs deep. ☐☐☐*

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**Karen Buddington** - October 26, 2024 at 09:33 AM

W!

*Met Dr. Ike at the great log Ensminger Schools which usually had a presentation by Ike. So full of useable facts taken from new research. He was a real source and highly admired by all!*

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**William “Bill” Eaton, Clear Dawn Angus !** - January 02, 2025 at 05:40 PM

DH

“ Dr. Eller (\*I never called him 'Ike') had quite an impact on me, when I graduated from Va Tech 40+ years ago. I fondly remember Dr. Eller giving me his 'seal of approval' on several heifers I purchased at the Red House Test Station on multiple occasions, and that encouragement still lingers today, as descendants from those animals are still in the herd. I never knew until today, that my father and Dr. Eller are both 1933 models, and I extend my sincere condolences to the family. Please know you are in my thoughts and prayers.... Darryl Holland, Henry Co.



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**Darryl Holland** - October 23, 2024 at 11:18 PM

SP

“ (1st Cousin) Page Richardson Coulthard wants to share that the 4-H Club and Eller family reunions are the greatest memories for her because of their commitment to excel and to strive to be the best in every endeavor ~ this made her so proud to be part of the family! Ike has a special place in our hearts and we are fortunate to have spent time with him during our lifetime. May your family find strength and comfort knowing that he touched many lives. Page, Sharon & Family

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**Sharon Penley** - October 23, 2024 at 09:25 PM

RY

“ My father Everett Yowell never went to college but quoted Ike as if he had been a student in the classroom. Ike was what extention agriculture was all about. My prayers go out to his family.

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**Ralph Yowell** - October 23, 2024 at 09:01 PM

BN

“ My first job out of graduate school was as an Extension Specialist at VPI. Ike was my boss and I traveled a lot of miles with him. One night while driving home late from a meeting we were running out of gas in the middle of nowhere. He pulled into a driveway and “said don’t worry, we can get gas here”. He knew the people on that farm quite well. We got some gas and got back on the road to Blacksburg. I think Ike knew every road in Virginia and apparently, most of the people! He was a great friend, boss and man. I treasure the memories with him.

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**Bob Nusbaum** - October 23, 2024 at 08:46 PM

KB

*He indeed knew so many people in Virginia! Thank you so much for sharing, Karen (daughter)*

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**Karen Buddington** - October 24, 2024 at 10:39 AM

DB

“ Keeping the Eller family in my thoughts and prayers.

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**Diane Bibb** - October 23, 2024 at 04:47 PM

LW

“ My Uncle Ike was one of the most fun people on the planet! He was the best joke teller ever. The best part was how tickled he got when he arrived at the punch line...almost like he didn't know it was coming! 😂

*I will miss Uncle Ike and his killer bear hugs, bone-crushing handshakes, and attentive conversation so much. He has been a steady and caring presence in the Eller clan for so many years. We were all blessed to have him in our lives for such a long time. But it feels like it still wasn't quite enough. I guess that's how we should all want to go...leaving the people wanting more!*

*We are praying for you, Aunt Carolyn, Amy, Evelyn, John, and Karen. I know Uncle Ike was a loving husband, father, and grandfather as well as a good friend to many. I'll bet he is enjoying a whole new audience for his jokes in heaven! I can just hear him now..."Hey Lord, did I ever tell you this one?!" And my dad is getting to laugh at the jokes all over again! 🙏*

*May God bless your family with sweet memories of Uncle Ike that will last until you see him again.*

*Much love to you all,  
Leslie (James) Weakland (and Mike)*

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**Leslie Weakland** - October 23, 2024 at 03:10 PM

KB

*Thanks so much for your kind words, Leslie! We have indeed been laughing as well as crying together in memories of him. Love to you and your family. Karen*

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**Karen Buddington** - October 24, 2024 at 10:41 AM



“ *Ike meant a lot to me. He was my boss for a summer when I worked for VA BCIA The we were students at Univ Tenn at the same time and then when I became n Extension Specialist he was my mentor. I loved his stories and how he could light up a meeting. He is leaving a wonderful legacy.*

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**Curtis Absher** - October 23, 2024 at 02:52 PM



“ *Dr. Ike Eller was truly a gentleman and scholar. His support of Beef Producers and Extension Agents and Specialists was wonderful. He will truly be missed by so many.*



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**Cynthia Gregg** - October 23, 2024 at 02:40 PM