



## Gilbert Soesbee

November 17, 1956 - March 28, 2026

Gilbert Soesbee, 1956-2026

Gilbert Soesbee, 69, of Newport, died on Saturday, March 28.

Soesbee retired in 2000 as the managing editor of The Newport Plain Talk. He had also served for a number of years as the news editor of the local newspaper. He retired early due to his health, but he returned after about a year to cover local court for a few years.

Before reporting for the Plain Talk, Soesbee worked as an intern in Lenoir City, where he covered the infamous snail darter fish that halted construction of the Tellico Dam for a time.

At the Plain Talk, Soesbee was well-known for his coverage of local court and government. Court coverage extended into a story that continued for years: the Pigeon River's pollution by the former Champion International paper mill in Canton, North Carolina. For his coverage, Soesbee won two first place awards presented by the Tennessee Press Association.

In retirement, Soesbee was a voracious reader, especially of history and constitutional law. He particularly had enjoyed combining both interests when he joined the Newport Theater Guild as Hornbeck in "Inherit the Wind." He

also collected rock and alternative music, especially on vinyl.

He was a drummer in the Pisgah High School band in Canton before going to the University of Tennessee at Knoxville where he graduated in 1979 with a bachelor's degree in journalism.

He was raised in the Baptist faith in his hometown of Canton, North Carolina, where he sang in a variety of productions at First Baptist of Canton.

Soesbee was preceded in death by his parents, Paul and Bertie Soesbee, and his brother-in-law, Michael White.

He is survived by his wife of 42 years, Nancy Oberst Soesbee; their son, Ian Soesbee, of Newport; and his sister, Sheron White, of Chattanooga. He is also survived by his sister-in-law, Dottie Oberst Pruenok, of Rossville, Georgia; brother-in-law Joe Oberst and his wife Patty Oberst, of Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia; and nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his brother-in-law James Oberst and wife Peggy Oberst, and Darleene Oberst.

A memorial Mass will be at 11:30 a.m., Friday, April 24, 2026 at the Church of the Good Shepherd at 2631 Cosby Highway, Newport, TN with Father Pontian Kiyimba officiating. The family will receive friends from 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. on Friday at the Church of the Good Shepherd prior to the memorial Mass.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Good Shepherd, which distributes help to people in Cocke County. Please mail donations to 2361 Cosby Highway, Newport, TN 37821.

# Previous Events

## Receive Friends

APR **24**. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM.

Church Of The Good Shepherd Prior

## Memorial Mass

APR **24**. 11:30 AM (ET)

Church of the Good Shepherd  
2361 Cosby Hwy  
Newport, TN 37821

# Tribute Wall

SW

“ Nancy I am so sorry to hear of your loss. Praying for comfort for you and your family.

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**Sherrie Weeks** - April 19 at 06:47 PM

MF

“ Nancy and Ian -- my sympathy to you both for your loss. As you know, Gilbert and I were first cousins, and we played together a lot as kids growing up in Canton. We always had a good time; he was a lot of fun. And I played my Sgt. Pepper album for him, and that got him hooked on rock music. My late brother was always complimentary of Gilbert's writing in the Newport newspaper because Gilbert was so fastidious. Prayers to you both. Margaret Doutt Foote, Richmond, KY

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**Margaret E Foote** - April 13 at 02:48 PM

SW

“ Sending love and prayers to Nancy, Ian, and Family, Tim, Stephanie, and Carly Williams

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**Stephanie Williams** - April 06 at 12:08 PM

LC

“ I am so sorry to hear of Gilbert's passing. I worked with him at the NPT. He was always so kind and helpful to me. My thoughts and prayers are with his family.

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**Lynn Crum** - April 02 at 07:49 PM

LG

“ We are so very sorry to hear about Gilbert passing away. Please let us know if you need anything.

*Wilsons Sav Mor*

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**lisa giles** - April 02 at 11:04 AM

VW

“ Nancy & Family, We are so sorry for your loss. But very thankful that we got to experience the friendship, love and gratitude throughout the years of the Newport Plain Talk. Asking God to comfort you all during these difficult days. We Love you and are thankful for the opportunity to have known Gilbert and you. Love, Hoover & Vida

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**Vida Williamson** - April 02 at 09:12 AM



“ Prayers for the family 🙏🙏



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**Jeff Kyker** - April 01 at 08:28 PM

DG

“ Sending my Deepest Condolences to All of the family and friends 🙏🙏🙏🙏



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**Debra A Gann** - April 01 at 10:55 AM

CB

“ Carol brace

*Nancy I am so very sorry to hear of the passing of your husband.*

*I knew him from working at the court house and visited him years ago in the hospital when my husband was there. Great man*

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**Carol brace** - April 01 at 10:38 AM

SO

“ So sorry to hear of Gilbert's passing, Prayers for you and family at this time. ShaRon Ottinger and family

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**ShaRon Ottinger** - April 01 at 10:25 AM

LD

“ Nancy, I was so very sorry to read of Gilbert's passing. Since my retirement, I have not seen you and kept up with you all, but I will always fondly remember you both through my working years, and especially "Inherit the Wind" also. Those were some of the 'good old days' for us! Please know I will be keeping you and Ian in my prayers as I share this grief with you. I shall never forget Gilbert, as we had some interesting conversations. May God bless and comfort you during this difficult time and in the days ahead, and bring you peace.



*Matthew 5:4*

*Sincerely,  
Linda Dawson*

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**Linda Dawson** - April 01 at 09:17 AM

SC

“ Nancy  
Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

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**Sheryl Clevenger** - April 01 at 06:58 AM

DO

“ I do hate to hear this. Gilbert was the consummate professional and it was my distinct privilege to be associated with him at the Newport Plain Talk. My sincere condolences to Nancy and Ian. May angels walk beside you in the coming days.

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**Duay O'Neil** - March 31 at 05:41 PM

BM

“ I worked with Gilbert at The Newport Plain Talk for many years, he was a valuable member to the success of the newspaper, he will be missed a remember  
Betty McMillan

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**Betty McMillan** - March 31 at 04:43 PM

BC

“ Nancy I am so sorry in the passing of Gilbert. I enjoyed working with him at The Newport Plain Talk. You and Ian will be in my prayers.  
Love you all.

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**Brenda Crum** - March 31 at 04:42 PM