Barbara Witten

Barbara Michele "Barb" Witten, 47, of Somerset, Kentucky, passed away on November 5, 2026.

Visitation will be held Saturday, November 21, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Southern Oaks Funeral Home. A funeral service will follow the visitation at 1:00 p.m. in the Chapel of Southern Oaks Funeral Home.

Southern Oaks Funeral Home is entrusted with the arrangements for Barbara Michele "Barb" Witten.

SOUTHERN OAKS FUNERAL HOME

Our deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones. Prayers for peace and comfort.

SCC awarded $1 million NSF grant

SCC

SOMERSET — Somerset Community College has been awarded a $1 million, three-year grant from the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program to expand education and workforce training in concrete 3D printing, an emerging technology that is transforming the construction industry.

The project, titled Building a Concrete Ecosystem for the Manufacturing Education of New Technicians in 3D Printing (CEMENT-3D), will strengthen partnerships between education and industry while preparing students and technicians for careers in concrete 3D printing (C3DP).

As automation continues to reshape industries ranging from transportation to manufacturing, concrete 3D printing is changing how homes, infrastructure and other structures are designed and built. As adoption grows, demand is increasing for workers with specialized skills in operating equipment and understanding C3DP processes.

Through the grant, SCC will expand capabilities within its Additive Manufacturing Center and enhance its Concrete 3D Printing Laboratory. The project will support the development of new courses and technician certificates, workforce training programs, industry demonstration workshops, and online non-credit coursework available to professionals nationwide.

The initiative also includes a train-the-trainer model designed to prepare educators to deliver C3DP instruction and help expand programming throughout Kentucky and beyond.

CEMENT-3D builds on SCC's leadership in additive manufacturing and recent achievements in concrete 3D printing. In 2025, with support from USDA Rural Development, SCC completed Floodbuster 1, Kentucky's first concrete 3D-printed house, and assisted with a second concrete-printed home currently nearing completion.

Eric Wooldridge, SCC professor of Advanced Manufacturing Technology, director of the KCTCS Additive Manufacturing Center, professional engineer and registered architect, will serve as principal investigator for the project. Eldon Whitis, SCC additive manufacturing faculty member, will serve as co-principal investigator.

"Concrete 3D printing is rapidly changing the construction industry," Wooldridge said. "Our goal is to help students and employers understand the opportunities this technology creates while building the education, workforce and industry partnerships needed to support its growth."

The project gives SCC a unique opportunity to develop educational pathways around a technology that is still emerging.

"By working directly with industry partners, we can provide hands-on training that prepares students and current workers with the skills employers need today and in the future," Whitis said.

SCC leadership praised the work of those who have made this opportunity happen for the local Somerset community.

"This $1 million investment from the National Science Foundation is a tremendous recognition of the innovative work happening right here at Somerset Community College," said Dr. Carey Castle, SCC Chancellor. "Our faculty have positioned SCC at the forefront of emerging technologies, and this grant allows us to build on that momentum by creating new educational pathways and preparing a highly skilled workforce for the future. We are proud to lead efforts that not only expand opportunities for our students but also strengthen Kentucky's role in advancing the future of construction and manufacturing."

College officials said CEMENT-3D is designed to do more than teach a new technology. The project aims to develop the workforce, partnerships and educational infrastructure needed to advance concrete 3D printing while positioning Kentucky as a leader in the field.

Neighbor is taking attendance at church



ANNIE'S MAILBOX

Annie Lane

Dear Annie: My wife and I are members of a local church, though I will admit we are not exactly front-pew regulars. We go about once a month, sometimes more during holidays or when life is calmer. Our faith matters to us, but we practice it quietly and privately.

One of our neighbors and her husband also belong to the same church. They are much more involved. He does readings, and she sings in the choir. I respect that, and I admire people who give so much of their time.

The problem is that this neighbor seems to have appointed herself the church attendance monitor. At neighborhood cookouts, driveway chats and casual gatherings, she will say, in front of others, "I didn't see you in church on Sunday."

It always lands like a little public scolding. My wife and I both feel embarrassed, as if we have been called to the principal's office in front of the whole class. Sometimes there is a perfectly good reason we missed church. Sometimes we were tired, traveling, helping family or just needed a quiet Sunday at home. But I do not think we should have to explain ourselves.

We like our neighbors and do not want to create hard feelings. At the same time, our church attendance is personal, and I do not appreciate being shamed over potato salad at a block party.

What can I say that is polite, firm and maybe even a little humorous, so she gets the message without turning it into a neighborhood feud? — Keeping the Faith Privately

Dear Keeping the Faith: Your neighbor may have an important role singing in the choir, but that does not make her head of admissions.

The next time she points out that she didn't see you in church on Sunday, smile and say, "We must have missed each other. But thank you for thinking of us." Then change the subject.

If she insists on figuring out what you did in the time you weren't at church, say something even clearer, such as, "We prefer to keep our church attendance private." Translation: It is none of her business. But that is subtly said with a hymnal in one hand and good manners in the other.

You do not owe her any explanation on what you do with your own time and how you observe your own religion. Faith is something that many people consider to be deeply personal, and you have every right to keep yours private.

"Out of Bounds: Estrangement, Boundaries and the Search for Forgiveness" is out now! Annie Lane's third anthology is for anyone who has lived with anger, estrangement or the deep ache of being wronged — because forgiveness isn't for them. It's for you. Visit http://www.creatorspublishing.com for more information. Follow Annie Lane on Instagram at @dearannieofficial. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

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