



## Worku "Mr. B" Bihonegne

June 7, 1947 - April 20, 2023

Agawam - Worku "Mr. B" Bihonegne, Beloved Father, Husband, Brother, Uncle, Friend & Godfather. Worku "Mr. B" Bihonegne, 75 years young, returned home and entered eternal rest, peacefully, surrounded by the love and comfort of his son, at home, on April 20, 2023. Worku was one of six siblings, born on June 7, 1947, in Sekota, Ethiopia. He came to America in 1965 at the age of 18 with the help from the late Bob Douyard, a Peace Corps volunteer and beloved family member of the Bihonegne's. His arrival became national news reaching several states across the county. Worku attended South Hadley high school and quickly began playing soccer, a sport he loved playing in Ethiopia. He was selected to the Schoolboy Soccer All-Star team his senior year before graduating from STCC then Westfield State with his master's in education. In 1969, he was selected to appear in the 1968-69 edition of "Who's Who Among Students in American Junior Colleges" in recognition of his merits & accomplishments at STCC. In 1970, he won the New England State College Soccer Championship as a Westfield State student. After college, Worku began his teaching career and the nickname "Mr. B" was officially born, as no one could pronounce his last name correctly. Mr. B was a devoted science teacher and assistant principal at Kiley Middle School for 35 years, receiving numerous awards for his dedication to education and the students. He had a passion for making students feel comfortable and welcomed, while making science and school fun! In his spare time, Mr. B would coach the school's and his hometown's soccer teams. He

was usually the fastest one on the team! After retiring at the age of 59, his passion for giving back did not stop there, as Worku was often seen helping around his community keeping the area clean & safe. Worku got married in 1984 and was a devoted husband for 39 years. Worku enjoyed reading books, taking photos, bowling, playing soccer, bicycling, taking long walks, gardening, dancing, having long conversations about anything, with anyone who crossed his path, taking trips to the casino for a little Blackjack, but most of all, he loved to spend time with his family and being a father. Worku always tried (and did) make this world a better place, one smile at a time. He was a certified EMT in 1977, an honorary sheriff deputy in 1989, was 21 hours away from obtaining his flying license, his article "Building Body Systems" was published for a national audience in 1997, but his highest achievement was being the best father any child could ask for. He would give you the shoes off his feet if you were in need and would never ask for anything in return. He was truly a remarkable human being and will be missed by many. He is survived by his son Tesfaye, niece Helen and siblings Tsehaynesh, Tadesse and Azebegash. New England Funeral & Cremation Center, 25 Mill Street, Springfield, MA has been entrusted with the arrangements. Please visit Mr. B's memorial page at [www.nefcc.net](http://www.nefcc.net) for expressions of sympathy. Thank you, Dad. I love you! Please click the following link to view livestreaming of his services:

<https://view.oneroomstreaming.com/index.php?data=MTY4MjU2NjAwOTI0ODI4MSZvbWVyb29tLWFkbWluJmNvcHlfbGluaw==>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR **27**. 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

New England Funeral & Cremation Center  
25 Mill Street  
Springfield, MA 01108  
(413) 733-1522  
[info@nefcc.net](mailto:info@nefcc.net)  
<https://www.nefcc.net/>

## Reflections

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# Tribute Wall

PC

“ So sorry to learn of Worku's passing. I knew him from our Westfield days....long ago! We were freshmen and he was a senior, but he took us under his wing and we loved every minute!! We became known as the "Desta" crew....an Ethiopian word he bestowed upon us. Lost touch after graduation in 1975, but found him again at Kiley when my job took me to Springfield. Worku was a good man, good friend.....my sympathy to you.  
*Patty Crosbie Couhig*

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**Patricia Crosbie Couhig** - November 04, 2023 at 05:53 PM

DA

“ I'm very sorry to hear of Mr. B's passing and send out my sincere condolences to his family. I was a student in his science class in 1976/77. After all these yrs. I remember him and his class like it was yesterday, he made learning fun. He was a great teacher! May he rest in eternal peace.

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**Donna Armannsson** - September 22, 2023 at 09:41 PM

CS

“ My condolences to the family.  
Worku rest peace, I will miss running into at different stores and have long conversations.  
*Charlesetta*

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**Charlesetta Smith** - May 07, 2023 at 09:33 PM

MC

“ Sometimes you meet special people in your life that really stand out.

*I met Worku 20 years ago as a neighbor a few doors down and soon realized he was a special person. I would see him going by blowing leaves from the sidewalk or shoveling in the winter.*

*Some memories I want to share:*

- Holding a tiny shivering puppy close to him he got “for my son” that became Worku’s side kick. He named him Tofu*
- appearing with a huge fan to blow the many oak leaves in my yard.*
- shoveling sidewalks including mine*
- bringing me his pine needles that I asked for; barefoot and pushing his small wheel barrel.*
- sharing stories about books, foods, work, Ethiopia, and everything else.*

*Worku made many friends “along the way” he met throughout his life. One was a landscaper that Worku approached while at a site working nearby. Worku started to help and they worked together on jobs till Worku got sick. That relationship lasted till Worku left us.*

*Just reading the memories people have written describes Worku so well and I miss him. But, I’ve gained a friendship with his son Tesfaye who cared for his father and demonstrated such love for him during times of grave sickness and suffering Worku was experiencing.*

*What a lifelong role model we had.*

*Mary Carleton*

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**Mary Carleton** - May 07, 2023 at 09:10 AM

MV

“ Who could forget his beautiful and warming smile.If it wasn't for "Mr. B's contant prodding and patience I don't think I would have made it through Junior at Kiley without him. I will miss him dearly.Tesfye,know his smile and kindness live in you! He was good friends with my father at Kiley,who I know enjoyed working with him.He was so proud of you and loved knowing you and my son were born the same day.

Mark V. - May 02, 2023 at 03:15 PM

CZ

“ To the Bihonegne family, I was deeply saddened to learn of Worku's passing. I worked with him at Kiley and at Central High in the soccer program. He was one of a kind who made everyone feel important and liked. His infectious smile and personality was enjoyed by all. He will be missed. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.  
Chris Zguro

Chris Zguro - April 30, 2023 at 12:47 PM

MC

“ Mary Carleton purchased the Hickory Farms Savory and Sweet Snacker Gift Basket for the family of Worku "Mr. B" Bihonegne.



Mary Carleton - April 29, 2023 at 05:21 PM

RL

“ Mr. B was one of the best teachers I ever had. Every kid loved him so much! He made us laugh so much!  
I'll never forget the squirter gun!  
RIP Mr.B!

Ronald Lassonde - April 29, 2023 at 02:30 PM

BH

“ Worku's smile brightened everyday for his friends. It has been many years since we were together, but I have not forgotten those days.  
BC

Barbara Coffey Hahn - April 28, 2023 at 05:47 PM

KB

“ I enjoyed working with Worku for many years at Kiley. He was a kind, compassionate soul who went out of his way to greet people and brighten their day. He will be missed.

Kate Belhumeur

Kate Belhumeur - April 28, 2023 at 09:19 AM

ES

“ My deepest condolences to the family. Mr B was one of my favorite teachers. Foot races without shoes.  
Favorite Mr B quote (YOU GET THE ZAPPA). Great times that will never be forgotten. Rest Easy and one day i will see you again.

Esia - April 27, 2023 at 04:16 PM

RS

“ My condolences to Mr. B's family. Although I did not have him as a teacher, I remember him. He was always kind and encouraging.

Robin Smith - April 27, 2023 at 12:00 PM

DM

Mr. B. Was a great man. “ See you Tuesday “!

Dave McDonough - April 29, 2023 at 04:39 PM

DC

“ I truly enjoyed teaching with Mr. Bihonegne at Kiley Middle School, almost as much as I enjoyed our after school gatherings and chatting with him when he came around to make his collections when the lottery jackpot got large--he wanted us ALL to share in it. The many tributes from former students make it clear he was loved by them. Know too, that he was loved by the staff as well. Rest in Peace, my friend.

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**Dr. Barbara A. Choiniere** - April 27, 2023 at 11:12 AM

MW

“ My deepest condolences to the family of Mr B. I was fortunate enough to be a student of his roughly 40 years ago at Kiley, yet I remember how much I enjoyed being in his class and how fun he made learning! He is one of very few teachers that I remember so fondly through my school career and I mention him every time I talk about my days at Kiley. My prayers are with you at this difficult time.  
Mike W

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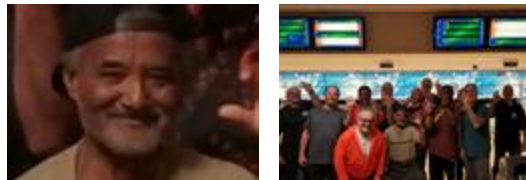
**Mike W** - April 27, 2023 at 09:38 AM



AW

“ Tesfaye, family and friends of Worku "Mr B". There never seems to be any words that express the loss we all feel. I waited to post something here, but after reading the many responses felt the need to do so. First, it's obvious from the responses that B touched many lives, you may not be aware of how many until now. I've known him since I was a young student at Kiley, then when I started bowling with him and other Kiley teachers. He was one of my teammates at bowling. I don't believe we would have taken first place in the league without B this last time around, he came through in a clutch. I'm happy his last time bowling gave him a championship. Tesfaye, your dedication to his care speaks volumes as to what your dad instilled in you. Since I can only say that he's been my friend for about 47 yrs, and he spoke to me of you often, I'll tell you that he is proud of you and grateful for your care and compassion. I will miss him immensely, but won't ever forget him! Worku, "Mr B" RIP until we meet again my friend. 🙏

Al Witkowsky



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Al Witkowsky - April 26, 2023 at 03:44 PM

CH

“ Mr. B was my teacher at Kiley. I will never forget his smile. Such a nice man. My condolences to his Family and friends.

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Charlene - April 26, 2023 at 02:53 PM

NK

“ My condolences to the family. Mr. B was definitely one of my favorite teachers at Kiley. Even after all these years I still remember him and was just talking about him the other day to my son. Rock the heavens Mr B just like you did here. You touched many hearts and left timeless memories.

Nadiyah King - April 26, 2023 at 01:18 PM

WM

“ My sympathy to the family I loved Mr.B through my years at Kiley such a great soul and teacher may he rest peacefully

wendy miranda - April 26, 2023 at 11:54 AM

JR

“ Worku, a true friend and a brother to me. You were always there when I needed someone to lean on or just having a good time with a great friend. I will miss our phone calls which were always a special time for me and I always looked forward to. Good bye my friend you will be with me forever. Jimbo

James Reveruzzi - April 26, 2023 at 11:52 AM

JT

“ Worku, you were so much fun, to bowl with and against...you would always use, your imaginary DART GUN on me, so I wouldn't get a strike or you would point two fingers, as though you were putting a hex on me. I will definitely miss you, sir



Johnny Torres - April 26, 2023 at 10:37 AM

VB

“ As a retired teacher at Kiley Middle School, I have fond memories of "Mr. B". He had the ability to de-escalate any situation while respecting the integrity of teachers and students alike. He was one of a kind! Vera Baker

Vera Baker - April 26, 2023 at 09:06 AM

EC

“ Only principal I ever liked what a wonderful human.he will be missed but never forgotten because he touched the lives of so many people R.I.P Mr.B

Eric C. - April 26, 2023 at 08:47 AM

KE

“ Mr B was my favorite teacher at Kiley. My thoughts and prayers are with his family .

katie Donahue embryo - April 26, 2023 at 08:30 AM

GP

“ Mr B was my science teacher at kiley . He made science class fun . He was my favorite teacher.sorry for your loss. Gail paige

gail paige - April 26, 2023 at 07:33 AM

PO

“ So sorry to hear about Mr B he was my favorite teacher at Kiley Jr High so many good memories of him. He will be very missed.

Phyllis Ortona - April 26, 2023 at 04:55 AM

WI

“ Condolences to Mr. AB’s family. I remember him bopping me upside my head anytime I was in trouble. Thank you Mr B for being the one teacher who did all he could to encourage some knuckleheads to do right.

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**william** - April 26, 2023 at 01:04 AM

RG

“ I had the honor to have known Mr.B from Kiley middle school. He was always with a smile and always took the time out to actually know who you were as a person rather than just seeing us as students. He had a strong sense of humor and filled of jokes. Mr.B also happened to be my mothers teacher back in the day. He’s one of the very few that I can remember clear as day and I always wanted to go back and visit him. My thoughts and prayers are with the loved ones of Mr.B, he was such a great person!

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**Renaé Gauthier** - April 26, 2023 at 12:06 AM

KM

“ I absolutely loved Mr. B. His class was fun and he expected your best.  
I still talk about his class and him to friends and my kids. I am happy he lives a great life. I am sorry for your loss- I too lost my father this past year. I know you will honor his memory.

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**Kristin Nelson Meza** - April 25, 2023 at 11:41 PM

LF

“ I still remember Mr. B standing outside of his science room at Kiley to greet (or make fun of ;) ) us as we entered class. It was over 30 years ago but I still reference how he taught us to never say “I know how you feel”. He explained that everyone’s feelings are so individual that you may understand what they’re going through and relate, but you’ll never be able to know how they actually FEEL without being them. All these years later, I still think of that when trying to comfort or relate to someone. RIP Mr. B.

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**Lori Friedenber**g - April 25, 2023 at 10:57 PM

JS

“ Tesfaye as you know well, your Dad was a great guy. As a new teacher, I don’t know if I would have made it without your Dad’s help. I went on to become a Principal and used most if not all of the things he taught me...kindness, empathy, courage...we had many conversations about you as you and my daughters were pretty close in age and had many of the same hardships. One thing is for sure, he loved you to the deepest marrow of his bones. Remember, every time you think of him or talk about him you will bring him back to life. I wish you and your family peace during these very hard times. Mr. Saunders

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**Jay Saunders** - April 25, 2023 at 10:56 PM

WY

“ Wendy Yacovone lit a candle in memory of Worku Bihonegne



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**Wendy Petri Yacovone** - April 25, 2023 at 10:04 PM

WY

“ Me B was the nicest funniest and the best teacher I ever had.. he was always smiling and always had a kind word to say..And he really cared about all of his students..heartfelt prayers to his friends and family..he will truly missed..rest in the sweetest peace Mr B!!!!  
🙏💕 with love Wendy Petri Yacovone

Wendy Petri Yacovone - April 25, 2023 at 10:02 PM

GM

“ He had a gift of making his students comfortable and interested in science. Always a fun class to be in. Rest in peace Mr. B!

Greg McCarthy - April 25, 2023 at 08:44 PM

LC

“ Mr B was my science teacher at Kiley Middle School! Blessed rising worku bihonegne Worku Bihonegne.. may the ancestors line your path, may your transition be blessed.  
🙏 L. Cisero

L Cisero - April 25, 2023 at 08:20 PM

ED

“ He was my middle school principal.  
I was always in trouble and he was always so kind and very patient with me, with all his students that got sent to his office. He always made jokes, kept us laughing but kept us on our toes. I'm very sad to hear the news. I always think about him since my kids were going to that school before we moved away. I spoke to my kids about him and always wondered how he was doing and where he was. May he sleep in peace. ❤️

Elizabeth Dejesus - April 25, 2023 at 08:19 PM

MR

“ *Mr. B never gave up on the kids who just needed a little extra guidance. The world truly lost a great man. You will forever be missed! Thank you for being such an amazing assistant principle at Kiley and just overall person! My thoughts and prayers are with the family. Rest peacefully*

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**Megan Rodriguez** - April 25, 2023 at 08:04 PM

TK

“ *To Mr. B's family .I'm so sorry for your loss .Mr B was an exceptional man who Was a really great friend to my father Ted Keefe and all the Keefe boys .one of the nicest men to walk this earth*

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**Tim Keefe** - April 25, 2023 at 07:34 PM

JM

“ *Mr. B was my teacher at Kiley and soccer coach at Classical and Central. We were lucky to have him. He was always very kind and upbeat, even when we were goofing off. And, yes, he was the fastest one on the field by a long shot, even though he was about 40 at the time... A great guy and positive influence on a lot of kids. My condolences.*

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**Jim McDonald** - April 25, 2023 at 06:55 PM

SG

“ Mr. B was one of the best teachers ever! He was so amazing that I kept my science project from his class.. !!  
(That was 7th grade, I am now 55)  
He will forever be my favorite science teacher. Condolences to his family .  
May he rest in peace



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**Stephanie Mallalieu Guyer** - April 25, 2023 at 03:57 PM

PA

“ He was the best Science teacher at Kiley. Always having a smile on his face and always willing to help any student out. He will be missed.

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**Paulette** - April 25, 2023 at 03:36 PM

JD

“ I have wonderful memories of Mr. B as a science teacher and a soccer coach. I was a terrible student and soccer player, but Mr. B got through and made me better at more than science and soccer.

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**Jerold Duquette** - April 25, 2023 at 02:48 PM



DW

“ I'm deeply saddened by his passing. Mr B was my science teacher at Kiley way back in the day. He was such a great guy. His sense of humor was one that really kept your attention and even when he was being funny, you were learning something. He was dedicated to his students and was always available. I'm sure many students will miss him, both young and old. Mr B was one of the best!

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**Dave Wezniak** - April 25, 2023 at 01:52 PM

TN

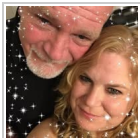
“ One of my favorite teachers from Kiley! (83-86) He always had a smile & a joke! He would take you by the ear to the principles office!😭 I would always see him at the bowling alley, with other teachers from Kiley and, he would always smile & say.. he always loved my mom cuz she had to put up with us! Lol May you RIP Mr. B 🙏❤️

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**Tara Newhouse** - April 25, 2023 at 01:26 PM

SC

“ Thinking of you T & Em during this difficult time 🙏 May you take comfort in knowing that he isn't suffering. And smile when thinking of the extra memories that you guys made when he lived with you guys the last few months of his life ❤️  
He was so proud of you & loved you so much !!!

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**Sue Chenard** - April 25, 2023 at 12:44 PM



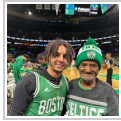
“ Mr. B was one of the best teachers I ever had. I know a lot of kids who felt the same. My condolences to his family!

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**Lisa Hall** - April 25, 2023 at 12:20 PM

WP

“ i'm very sorry for your loss

Wendy A Patruski - April 25, 2023 at 11:21 AM

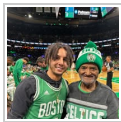


Tesfaye Bihonegne - April 25, 2023 at 11:26 PM

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He was so proud of you & loved you so much !!!

Sue Chenard - April 25, 2023 at 11:15 AM

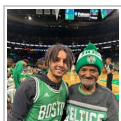


Tesfaye Bihonegne - April 25, 2023 at 11:26 PM

CF

“ Mr. B was my science teacher at Kiley in the 80's. He was certainly a one of a kind teacher. One I never forgot! I remember going on field trips with him. He made science fun and always had a smile on his face. And his sneezes were the best! He always gave nicknames to his students-yes I had one. Reject- and nope I didn't mind. I can't remember why but there was a reason! I have thought of him often. RIP MR B! Fondly, Christine Pooler Fontaine

Christine Pooler Fontaine - April 25, 2023 at 09:17 AM

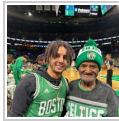


Tesfaye Bihonegne - April 25, 2023 at 11:26 PM

MM

“*Mr. B was my science teacher at Kiley in 1983. I never forgot him he always has a way of making science fun and exciting. I saw him a year ago or so at Pizza Shop and said hello. He said he remembered me although I’m not sure he really did. We’ll just go with it though. It was great seeing him again. He will forever be remembered by me and the many students who’s lives he touched. I’m so sorry for your loss.*”

Monique Mccoy - April 25, 2023 at 09:17 AM



Tesfaye Bihonegne - April 25, 2023 at 11:26 PM

HO

*At the end of 1982, few Habesha people, like Wubshet, Taddese, Dereje, Ketzela may God save their souls, Myself, Sentay, Girma and Mimi, Tareke, Yemane, Afework etc..... immigrated from Ethiopia and Eritrea through Sudan at the same year all ended up in Springfield MA. As newcomers we were in culture shock. We were looking for someone to talk to get an idea on how to start our life in a new land. Fortunately Worku was there as an older brother and friend supporting us with ideas. We always gathered on Friday nights for laughs and exchange of ideas, to Tibsi and beer. I miss his laughs, fast talking in english and amharic. He was happy when Berhane came into his life and of course when Tesfaye was born too. Then I moved to Connecticut, however we kept in touch and never stopped having good times until his departed. Thank you for your friendship and RIP. May God save his soul.*

Hadis

Hadis Ogbe - April 29, 2023 at 09:09 AM

OH

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*Hadis*

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**Ogbe Hadis** - April 29, 2023 at 06:20 PM