



Burt Alan Sellers

May 27, 1946 - May 5, 2025

Burt Alan Sellers, PhD, 78, passed away peacefully at home in Sanford, Florida, on May 5, 2025 after a lengthy illness. Burt was born in Buffalo, NY, on May 27, 1946 to his loving parents Eleanor Hoffman Sellers Bender and Burt Neil Sellers. After the passing of Burt Neil Sellers, he was raised by his kind and loving stepfather Norman Bender.

After graduating from the University of Buffalo with a love of science, Burt became a biology teacher at Tonawanda High School. His students loved him and he was awarded the 1979 Teacher of the Year in the City of Tonawanda. Dr. Sellers believed that a sense of belonging is of crucial importance in adolescence and helped his students to feel cared for by actively listening to them.

His love of education and the desire to support both students and teachers led Burt to obtain his Doctorate in Education from the University of Buffalo. He was hired as the Vice Principal at Amherst High School. These important five years prepared him for his next role as Principal of Maryvale Middle School. An example of Burt's amazing way of inspiring others to reach their best selves includes when he “rocked on the rooftop” of the Maryvale Middle School for reading. His promise to read, sitting in a rocking chair, on the school’s roof helped inspire his middle school students to reach their goals in a year-long reading program that was a huge success (the students read a

combined 390,928 pages, averaging 591 pages per student in sixth, seventh and eighth grades)! Burt's caring, innovative, optimistic and professional attitude was exemplified by the work he accomplished with his therapy dog, Dora, who spent four years at Maryvale Middle. This therapy work allowed students to read to Dora, do their homework with her, walk her and help to train her. He continued this partnership with his dogs, Doofus and Hope, bringing joy and companionship to hospitalized patients and elders living in nursing homes.

Burt was honored and awarded throughout his career and enjoyed speaking engagements in which he could share his vast knowledge with others. He was a member of the honorary educator's fraternity Phi Delta Kappa International. Burt received the Jenkins Memorial PTA Award for Middle and High School in 1985 in Appreciation of Exceptional Service to Young People. He received the Community Award at both the Amherst, NY, School District in 1985 and the Maryvale, NY, School District in 1994. Burt was given the Maryvale Community Service Award in 1994 for the development of the fitness and activity centers at the Middle School, creation of a peer mediation model for students, leadership in supporting the World University Games, and his unwavering support at middle school functions. He received the 1994 Cheektowaga Action Partnership Award for his involvement with the criminal justice committee. In 1996, Dr. Sellers was appointed to a three year commitment with the National Association of Secondary School Principals to assist in the redesigning of "The High School for the 21st Century." Burt was a featured speaker at the New York State Middle School Conference in Niagara Falls, NY in 2002 on the topic, "The Use of a Therapy Dog in Middle School." The SPCA, in 2004, presented Dr. Sellers with the Judy Silver Humane Educator of the Year for Excellence in Providing Lessons of Kindness and Compassion to Children. Burt was published in professional journals and held membership on many boards including Clarence High School Band Boosters, University of Buffalo's Medical School Parents Council, Crystal Beach Hill

Cottage Association, Cheektowaga Police Advisory Board, Cheektowaga Action Partnership, Life Member of the National PTA, Friends of the Wekiva River, Friends of Crystal Beach, and 2006 Commodore of the Buffalo Canoe Club.

Burt's favorite hobby was as a Crystal Beach Amusement Park historian and collector. He collected thousands of Crystal Beach postcards, photographs and numerous memorabilia. During his retirement, he enjoyed giving presentations about the amusement park at Crystal Beach.

Burt's other favorite pastime was cheering on his beloved Buffalo Bills! His family has many happy memories of going to games in Orchard Park with Burt and also lying around on the carpet in the living room rooting for the Bills!

Burt is survived and was supported by his wife of 53 years, Roslyn Purcell Sellers, daughter Ellyn Sellers-Selin MD (Steve), son Burt James "BJ" Sellers (Tracy), grandchildren Hickory Selin, Adelaide Sellers, Wren Selin, and Olive Sellers.

A Celebration of Burt's life will take place in Point Abino, Ontario later in the summer.

In lieu of flowers, if desired, please donate to:

Alzheimer's Association <https://tinyurl.com/alzheimers-donation>

Parkinson's Association <https://support.apdaparkinson.org/>

Plant Trees for Impact <https://onetreepanted.org/>

Tribute Wall

DG

“ I am deeply saddened to learn of Dr. Sellers passing. I served as the counseling coordinator during his time as Maryvale Middle School Principal, he was just so bright, dedicated and resourceful. My deepest sympathy to his family.

Denis Gould - December 31, 2025 at 05:59 PM

WG

“ Burt Allen Sellers was undeniably my favorite teacher of all time. He made learning fun and many times an adventure. He helped me fulfill my dream of becoming a SCUBA diver, later leading me to teach many divers as a Master and IDC Staff instructor with PADI and a Technical Diving Instructor with TDI... and ultimately wreck and cave diving and diving the wreck of the Andrea Doria. Without his mentoring in the THS SCUBA club and the inspiration of his teaching, I doubt I would have reached these goals or touched these many lives. I am sad to learn of his passing, but celebrate his life and many accomplishments and the testimony of his influence on others. May God Bless him eternally as well as his family... in the knowlege he was appreciated by so many.

William Graham - November 07, 2025 at 02:52 PM

DZ

“ Mr. Sellers was one of my teachers during the 70's at THS. He made science fun!!! The photo is from our 1976 yearbook. R.I.P. Mr. Sellers



Darlene Zygmunt(Snedden) - July 31, 2025 at 08:22 PM

B'

“ *But Sellers was 1 of my fav teachers at THS. He made learning easier & fun. I know he touched the lives of many, many students through the years. My prayers & thoughts go out 2 his family & loved ones. He will truly be missed in this world.(Roslyn, hugs 2 u. U are on my fav list 2)*

Becky Davis-Strauss. Class of '76 - July 31, 2025 at 07:19 PM

MS

“ *So sorry for your loss of Burt! Wonderful Man and Family!❤️🙏😞.
Mary Scorsone and Family*

Mary Scorsone - May 28, 2025 at 10:58 AM

CG

Sorry for your loss

Cindy Crocker Geisler - August 01, 2025 at 12:30 PM