



Marshall Edward James

December 25, 1940 - February 8, 2020

Marshall Edward “Moe” James was born on Christmas Day, 1940 in Columbia, S.C. His parents, Willie James and Ruth Naomi Marshall James had four children: two girls and two boys. Marshall was their third child and second son.

He was educated at Carver Elementary School, where he met many of the people who continued to be among his lifelong and closest friends. These friends gave him such nicknames as “Moe,” “Mule,” and “Road.” During these formative years, he developed a love for sports and played almost all that were available to him, and he had the athletic skills, the physique, and the talent to boot.

He attended C.A. Johnson High School where he lettered in football, basketball, and tennis. During his junior and senior years, he was the starting center on the varsity football team. He often spoke of competing against the Rev. Jesse Jackson who played football at Sterling High School in Greenville, SC. A few graduates of C.A. Johnson who have moved to other parts of the country would report to Marshall that when they crossed paths with Rev. Jackson at meetings, he would inevitably ask “How’s Big Moe?” Marshall’s formidable presence on the gridiron obviously made an impression. But he was especially proud of the fact that when he was on the team, the C.A. Johnson Hornets routinely beat their cross-town rivals, the Booker T. Washington Tornados. When he was a high school junior, he met a high school senior named Gloria, who also happened to be C.A.

Johnson’s 1957 Homecoming Queen. They quickly became sweethearts.

Marshall graduated from C.A. Johnson in 1959. After graduation, he attended Iowa State University on a football scholarship but ultimately decided that it was a long way from home and much too cold.

He returned home in the fall of 1960 and attended South Carolina State College, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education. While at State, he played on the Bulldog’s varsity football and tennis teams. He graduated in 1963, returned to Columbia, and began working at the S.C. Department of Corrections in the Dept. of Inmate Education.

On New Years Eve, 1964, Marshall married his high school sweetheart Gloria Emmaretta Schumpert, the love of his life and wife of over 55 years. Three years later he joined his father-in-law at the F. B. Schumpert Lumber Company, which was situated along the

banks of the Broad River in Columbia. When Frederick Benjamin Schumpert died in 1974, Marshall became President of the company, which had over 30 employees, many of whom included F.B. Schumpert's wife, brothers, sister, and nephews.

As President, Marshall managed a vertically integrated operation in which he directed the transformation of raw materials into finished goods for sale. He controlled the selection and delivery of timber from the company's timber tracts to its sawmills and planing machines, which were situated over the twenty-acre lumber yard.

If he was not taking and making phone calls in the office, he could be found supervising his employees on the yard. School children visited during field trips, and he guided their tours. During the summers, he kept an eagle eye over his sons Marshall and Michael, and he demanded that they stay focused while they stacked lumber under the blazing sun. As forklifts drove by, he scrutinized their loads. He insisted that every piece of wood be stacked flush with the others. He worked to ensure that the lumber was produced to customer specifications and in their correct lengths, cuts, widths, and finishes.

In the office, he negotiated prices with customers, suppliers, and timber brokers. Before shipments left the yard, the truck drivers stopped in front of the office so that Marshall could step out to inspect. Every day, he spoke in the language of yellow pine and oak, and of 2x4s, 2x8s, 2x10s, and 4x4s, treated and untreated, and of plywood, pulpwood, and pallets.

Lumber is a commodity, and like any commodity, its markets are susceptible to cycles of boom and bust. And for a few years in the early 80's, the company contracted in size to just three — Marshall, Gloria, and Mr. Eddie Geter, a loyal employee of the company for over 50 years. These were challenging and stressful times. But they persisted.

Applying his business acumen and foresight, Marshall adapted to new markets and to the realities of the big box retailers. He discontinued products and added others to his line. He increased payroll and hired new employees. In short, the company thrived once again with Marshall at the helm. In March of 2008, after being in business for 69 years, F.B. Schumpert Lumber Co. delivered its final shipment, and Marshall began twelve wonderful years of retirement with his wife, children, grandchildren, and friends by his side.

During his working life, Marshall never took a sick day. He rarely took a vacation beyond trips to the beach with his family over long weekends. But his life did not consist of just work. He continued to play tennis and started playing racquetball when it became popular. He took his children to S.C. State to watch Bulldog football games and their 101 Marching Band. He followed politics in the newspaper and on television as if it were competitive sport. And he was passionate about food.

As a kid, he learned to cook by watching his mother. While he was known for his ribs and soul food, he could prepare any meat, fish, vegetable, bean, or grain and bake cakes, cobblers, and pies. He experimented with many types of cuisine. Although he collected cookbooks, he believed in trial and error. He encouraged his wife and children, if they

showed an interest, but he discouraged overreliance on recipes. With his grandchildren, he showed infinite patience. During their summers in Columbia, he often gathered them around the butcher block to show them his latest techniques and recipes. When they baked, he stood by to offer advice.

He enjoyed the Food Network and kept up with the latest trends. And despite developing familiar tremors in his hands over the past few years, he continued to cook and bake. Every year for almost 30 years, he hosted a Super Bowl Party that featured his specialty: barbeque ribs with mustard sauce.

His kitchen and his food embodied the farm to table ethos. In retirement, he started a small vegetable garden that expanded in size to over a third of an acre. Given the garden's size and his year-round planting, he eventually needed help, so he hired his trusted employee and sidekick, Mr. James Freeman. Three to four days a week for 12 years, Marshall and James would plant, fertilize, water, and harvest, and he shared his bounty with his friends. They regularly composted. He and James built trellises suited to the requirements of particular vegetables, beans, or fruits. At one point, he experimented with a tiny vineyard with a trellis built for grapes. He grew tomatoes, beets, bell peppers, eggplant, watermelon, and cucumbers. And near the end of his life, Marshall planted collards, scallions, brussels sprouts, broccoli, and kale. They are growing in his garden to this day.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by an aunt, Carrie Marshall Barnett, an uncle, Robert Barnett, and a brother, William Douglas James.

Marshall Edward James is survived by his wife Gloria, his three children, Marshall Schumpert, Michael Frederick (Keisha Sutton-James), and Beth Michelle (Michael Davis) James-Davis; five grandchildren: Nola Aquina James, Michael Anthony Davis III, Shelby Sutton James, Michelle Naomi Davis, and Aaron Marshall Davis.

He is also survived by two sisters, Delores James Richardson, and Ruth Louise James; one niece, D'Jaris Michelle Richardson; three nephews, Odis Backmon Richardson, William Brown Whitney, and James Douglas Whitney; one great-nephew, George Douglas Whitney; and one great-niece, Olivia Grace Jeanine Whitney. Finally, he is survived by many loving and wonderful friends.

Events

FEB 14 **Public Viewing** 02:00PM - 08:00PM

Palmer Memorial Chapel - Columbia
1200 Fontaine Place, Columbia, SC, US, 29223

FEB 14 **Family Visitation** 06:00PM - 08:00PM

Palmer Memorial Chapel - Columbia
1200 Fontaine Place, Columbia, SC, US, 29223

FEB 15 **Public Viewing** 10:30AM - 11:30AM

Palmer Memorial Chapel - Columbia
1200 Fontaine Place, Columbia, SC, US, 29223

FEB 15 **Celebration of Life** 11:30AM

Palmer Memorial Chapel - Columbia
1200 Fontaine Place, Columbia, SC, US, 29223

Comments



“ So sorry to hear of Marshall’s passing. Sending Blessings and Love to your family.
Deloris Johnson Ward

Deloris J Ward - February 19, 2020 at 05:41 PM



“ Gloria and Family, please accept our deepest condolences on Marshall's passing.
Pat & Zina Hudson

Pat Hudson - February 16, 2020 at 03:55 PM



“ Sincere condolences to the James family. Praying for you, as God is ever present.

Willie F. Boyd - February 15, 2020 at 03:07 PM



“ Kenneth B. Hart lit a candle in memory of Marshall Edward James



Kenneth B. Hart - February 14, 2020 at 09:37 PM



“ Albert Gary lit a candle in memory of Marshall Edward James



Albert Gary - February 14, 2020 at 07:49 PM



“ James, Bill and James Family, sorry to hear of the loss of your loved one. May God bless and comfort you during this time of sorrow. Our deepest sympathies go out to you. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

Martha and Family - February 14, 2020 at 04:18 PM



“ We ;59ers will miss your input for our reunions. May the Lord continue to bless your family. Once a 59er always be a 59er.

James Kelly - February 14, 2020 at 12:32 PM



“ I knew him all my life. I will fondly remember his love for his family and his enormous sense of humor. Big Marshall will be missed. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to share in his wonderful life from visits to the lumber mill as a young boy, to sitting at his kitchen table eating his delicious food, or watching a football game on the couch. Rest well Big Mo'.

James P. Neal, III - February 14, 2020 at 10:41 AM



“ Cheryl Caution-Parker lit a candle in memory of Marshall Edward James



Cheryl Caution-Parker - February 13, 2020 at 11:18 AM



“ DONALD JENNINGS lit a candle in memory of Marshall Edward James



DONALD JENNINGS - February 13, 2020 at 03:37 AM



“ DONALD JENNINGS lit a candle in memory of Marshall Edward James



DONALD JENNINGS - February 13, 2020 at 03:34 AM



“ So sorry to hear of the passing of my friend, and namesake, Marshall James. I remember with fondness the many times our families gathered together when I was President of Benedict College. Our daughters—Kim, Michelle and Beth—grew up together. Marshall and I talked about creating a “chili cook off” to identify the best chili cook in Columbia. Unfortunately we never quite got that done. Gloria and family, you have my deepest sympathies.

Marshall Grigsby

Marshall Grigsby - February 12, 2020 at 09:14 PM



“ So sorry to hear about the passing of my friend, and namesake, Marshall James. I remember with great fondness the time our families spent together when I was President of Benedict College. My daughters—Kim and Michelle—had great times together during those developmental years. Also remember the times that Marshall and I talked about establishing the “great chili cook off” to identify the “best chili cook in Columbia” while I was there. Unfortunately, we never got to make that happen. Gloria and the rest of the James family, you have my condolence, love and support.

Marshall Grigsby

Marshall Grigsby - February 12, 2020 at 08:59 PM



“ Marshall and I attended kindergarten together at Fun Teen on Hampton St, and Howard Elementary school. We moved to Allen Benedict Court about the same time, but attended different high schools and colleges.

Marshall was always a gentle "giant of a guy," and we always enjoyed talking about our days as kids in our early years.

"Rest in Peace" my friend forevermore! You were a truly good individual!

Chuck Ruff - February 12, 2020 at 02:00 PM