



Sgt. Joe Louis Darden

December 13, 1935 - November 12, 2015

Joe Louis Darden, Sr. was born December 13, 1935 to the late Mr. and Mrs. John L. and Rossie Lee Darden of Jesup, Georgia. The second eldest of 11 children, he graduated from Wayne County High School in 1954. After graduation, he joined the Army to escape the racism of the Jim Crow South, a decision he never regretted. A good and faithful soldier, Joe adapted well to military life and soon found himself advancing in rank. He willingly served two tours in Vietnam, receiving the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart for Military Heroism and Wounds received in combat there.

While stationed in Texas, he met Ms. Rosa L. Fleming and the two were married in 1974. The happy couple and their young family traveled around the world, as the Darden family was stationed in locations from Fort Bragg, North Carolina to Germany. Eventually, they were relocated to Fort Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina where they would make their permanent home. Sgt. Darden retired from the military in 1985, a decorated war veteran with the rank of Sergeant Major E9, the highest rank achievable as an enlisted man.

Believing in the importance of education, he used his GI benefits to obtain an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice from Midlands Technical College in conjunction with Fort Jackson. He then embarked upon a second career as an officer for the South Carolina Department of Corrections, stationed at Central

Correctional Institution (CCI) in Columbia, where he served for sixteen years before taking his second retirement. Retirement afforded him the opportunity to indulge in other pursuits that were close to his heart. A founding member of Christian Faith Fellowship, he served with the Men's Ministry and Usher Board. Other pastimes included: playing golf, listening to jazz music, and watching sports, particularly boxing and football.

While Mr. Darden was proud of his professional accomplishments, he was even prouder of his lovely family. A dedicated husband and father, no sacrifice was too great to ensure that his children and grandchildren were well cared for and had every opportunity in life. His family and friends knew him as a gentle, soft-spoken, peace loving man, but one who knew how to get things done. He not only spoke of love and peace, he demonstrated it daily in the way he treated his fellow man. The true measure of a man's life lies in the testimony of those who knew him best. The significance of Joe Darden's life can be summed up in the simple description provided by his family – "Our Hero"

Mr. Darden passed from this life on November 12, 2015. Pre-deceased by his parents and five sisters Maola Barner, Margaret Jackson, Catherine Shaw, Ruth Garnet, and , he leaves a host of family and friends to cherish his memory, including: his wife of 41 years; three loving daughters Verna Darden Ryals of Georgia, and Marianne and Gabi Müller of Germany; a devoted son, Joe L. Darden, Jr. (Tyra) of Columbia, five brothers: Earl, Billy, Richard, John, and Eugene Darden and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Cemetery Details

Fort Jackson National Cemetery

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **18**. 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel - Columbia
1200 Fontaine Place
Columbia, SC 29223
(803) 786-6300
palmermemorialchapel@gmail.com
<https://www.palmermemorialchapel.com>

Funeral Service

NOV **19**. 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel - Columbia
1200 Fontaine Place
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Tribute Wall



“ *Sgt. Joe Louis Darden*

October 04, 2023 at 11:33 AM



“ *My deepest sympathy to the family. So sad to hear of 1SG Darden passing. He was a wonderful 1SG and mentor during my duty at Ft Jackson, SC 81-84.*



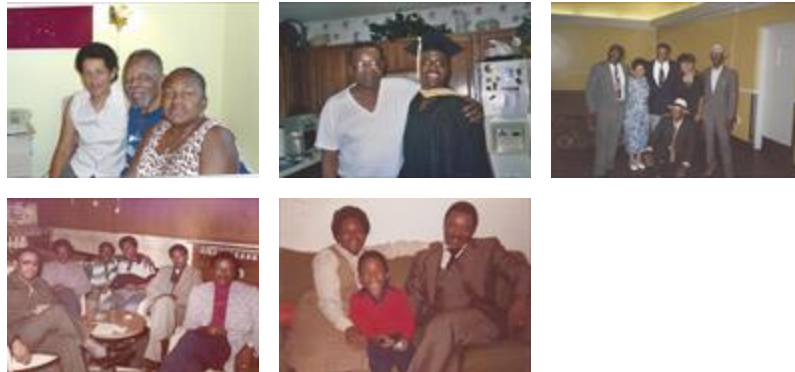
May GOD continue to Bless and strengthen the family.

RET SFC Dumas

SFC(RET) Thomas Dumas - February 25, 2016 at 11:50 AM



“ *10 files added to the album Memories Album*



Palmer Memorial Chapel - November 23, 2015 at 10:04 AM

DJ

“ Debra Jones and Family lit a candle for Mr Joe Darden. we are keeping your family prayer.



Debra Jones - November 19, 2015 at 11:59 PM

RF

Was Joe in the 10th division

Ralph freccia - February 09, 2021 at 05:00 PM

TR

Was Joe in D Troop 3/7Cav Germany 1973-76? He was well respected !! Tom Ryan

Thomas P Ryan - April 29, 2021 at 04:31 PM

DS

“ Dr. Juanita V. Smith lit a candle in memory of Sgt. Joe Louis Darden



Dr. Juanita V. Smith - November 19, 2015 at 09:07 PM

SF

“ To the Darden family you are all in my heart and prayers during your time of grief. I truly hate that I am unable to be there but send my love. - Samantha Fleming, Jacksonville Florida



Samantha Fleming - November 17, 2015 at 12:02 PM