



SMSgt. (Ret) James Rea Harris

June 8, 1938 - September 10, 2016

Senior Master Sergeant United States Air Force (Ret.) James Rea Harris transitioned from this earthly life on Saturday, September 10, 2016, at his residence in Dalzell, South Carolina. Born on June 8, 1938, in Memphis Tennessee, he was the seventh of ten children born to the late Curlee and Willie Lee McGuirk Harris.

He received his formal education from the public schools of Shelby County in Memphis, Tennessee, where he graduated from Booker T. Washington High School. He furthered his education at Chaminade University in Honolulu, Oahu Island, Hawaii, where he received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management, and earned a Master of Arts in Human Relations and Management from Webster University, St. Louis, Missouri.

After graduating from high school, he enlisted in the United States Air Force on March 26, 1956. During his military career, he was stationed in the Philippines, New Jersey, Vietnam, Texas, Ohio, Mississippi, New York, Hawaii, Alabama, California and retired from active military duty at Myrtle Beach, AFB in South Carolina. During his 27 years of military service, he earned numerous awards including Bronze Star Medal, The Meritorious Service Medal, The National Defense Service Medal, The Vietnam Service Medal, The Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross, and The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

After retirement from the United States Air Force, he was employed as a Graphics Illustrator at Shaw Air Force Base, Sumter. In 1996, after 13 years, he retired from Civilian Service.

At a young age, James joined and worshiped with his family at Mt. Moriah East Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. After retiring from the U.S. Air Force, he joined High Hills Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of Reverend Doctor Ellie W. Palmer where he sang on the Male Chorus, Choir #2, Pastor's Aide Ministry, and was a former member of the Trustee Board. After a special dance with Marie Lewis, a romantic, lifelong partnership and journey began with Staff Sergeant Harris which culminated in the union of two kindred spirits on March 19, 1966, at his bride's residence in Rembert, South Carolina. From this loving union, two children were born: Christopher LaRon Harris and Tonian Nichole Harris. As a military family, they traveled and were exposed to diverse cultures. In their spare time, he and his wife were avid football fans and enjoyed attending church and shopping together. He really enjoyed attending high school football games and would travel with the Hillcrest High School football team. He also enjoyed Quartet singing. In addition to his parents and five siblings, he was also preceded in death by his sister, Minnie Green, and brother, Curtis Harris.

James leaves to cherish precious memories: his beloved wife of 50 years, Marie Lewis Harris; two children, Christopher (Tameka) Harris of Lugoff, SC and Tonian (Frederick) Davis of Columbia, SC; one granddaughter, Krista Elizabeth Harris; two sisters, Laurell Isom and Maxine Robinson of Memphis, TN; In-laws; Deacon and Deaconess David and Thelma Scott, Deacon and Deaconess William and Daphine Taylor, Albertha Davis, Johnnie Mae Lewis, and John Smith; and special family friends, Deacon John Stafford and Mrs. Adeline Robinson; and a host of nieces and nephews; other relatives and special friends.

Previous Events

Public Viewing

SEP **16.** 2:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Palmer Memorial Chapel - Sumter
304 South Main Street
Sumter, SC 29150
(803) 773-3381
palmermemorialchapel@sc.rr.com
<https://www.palmermemorialchapel.com>

Funeral Service

SEP **17.** 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

High Hills Missionary Baptist Church
6750 Meeting House Rd
Dazell, SC

Tribute Wall



“ *SMSgt. (Ret) James Rea Harris*

October 04, 2023 at 11:33 AM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of SMSgt. (Ret) James Rea Harris.*



September 14, 2016 at 02:19 PM



“ *Jackie Pendergrass and Napoleon Tolbert purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of SMSgt. (Ret) James Rea Harris.*



Jackie Pendergrass and Napoleon Tolbert - September 14, 2016 at 01:29 PM