



Richard Watson

JUN 21, 1951 - AUG 2, 2013



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Richard Alton Watson transitioned from this life to be with the Lord on August 2, 2013. Richard was born on June 21, 1951, in Goldsboro, North Carolina. He was the eldest son of seven children. He was born to the union of Esther Watson Anderson and Richard Giles Watson, both of whom preceded him in death. Family and friends fondly referred to Richard as "Bokey."

Richard attended public schools in Goldsboro, NC from elementary to high school. Richard enjoyed a happy childhood in the Little Washington section of Goldsboro. He delighted in fixing the neighborhood children's bicycles. He regularly attended the E.A. House Boys' Club where he discovered a natural talent for singing and playing the piano at age 11. He loved music throughout his life, forming his first band at the Boys' Club. After the death of his beloved grandfather Lewis Smith, Richard moved from Goldsboro, NC to Philadelphia, PA with his sister Queen Esther Harper. He graduated from Olney High School, Philadelphia, PA. Although he graduated from Olney, he always considered himself a Dillard High School Alumnus and attended their reunions. After high school, he joined a band where he performed locally.

A few years after high school, Richard joined the Air Force. While stationed at Kirkland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico, he met and married Shirley Smoot in March 1974. In 1975, they moved to Carson, California. Richard and Shirley lived in Inglewood, CA, for 38 years. Amber Nicole Watson was born to this union on September 3, 1992, their gift from God. Richard was a very devoted husband and father. Both parents attended all of Amber's school events and expressed great pride in her accomplishments.

Richard loved God and maintained strong spiritual beliefs throughout his life. God was first in Richard's life and he shared his love of God with his family. When people asked Richard how he was doing, he replied, "By the Grace of God, I am holding on."



Over the years, Richard enjoyed visiting First African Methodist Episcopal Church, Los Angeles with his wife and daughter. One of his fondest memories was Amber's Christening at First AME. For the past few years, Richard attended Fairview Heights Baptist Church with his daughter.

Richard loved his siblings and remained in close contact in spite of the distance away from them. He would often call each of his siblings just to say, "I love you." One of the things he looked forward to was his daily call with his younger brother James. He truly loved his family.

Throughout his life, music was his passion. His stage name was "Ricky D." He was a self-taught pianist and played many tunes by ear. He was a vocalist in Philly and LA. He was an artist who composed, arranged and copyrighted his own music. Over a year ago, he became interested in playing the guitar. During the last months of his life, he continued to learn how to play new songs on his guitar.

Richard was a fun-loving person. He was often designated as the life of the party due to his outgoing personality. Richard loved to dance, dress sharply, and tell a good joke. He was an excellent cook. He inherited his cooking talent from his grandfather. His specialty was chicken wings and he called them "Ricky D's Famous Wings."

Richard's working career included 4 years in the US Air Force, 10 years with Frito Lay Inc., 20 years in Property Management and in Home Health Care.

He was a joy to all who knew him, and he will be truly missed.

Surviving to cherish his memory are his wife, Shirley Watson, Inglewood, CA; daughter Amber, Inglewood, CA; sisters Lennie Jean Portis (Lewis), Philadelphia, PA; Queen Esther Harper (Roosevelt), Philadelphia, PA; Catherine W. LeBlanc, Fayetteville, NC; Jessina Gray Jim), Madison, AL; brother, James C. Arrington (Ruby), Goldsboro, NC.; mother-in-law Annie Marie Smoot, Albuquerque, New Mexico; sisters-in-law Georgetta Robinson, Phoenix, AL; Carol Boles, (Hayes), Jacksonville, FL; Pamela Clark (Daniel), Houston, TX; Hattie Long, Dallas, TX; number of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends, including special friends William Irving, Michael Graves, Frank Peace, Daryl Thomas and Rigo Moore.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Richard by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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