



Mr. Harold Leon Watts

September 7, 1931 - July 16, 2024

Celebration of Life

Harold Leon Watts was born on September 7, 1931, in Bessimer Alabama to Stephen and Alice Watts. Affectionately known as “Watts, Wattie, or Hal passed away peaceful at Inova Alexandria Hospital on July 16, 2024, having endured several years of health challenges. Despite these health challenges, Harold fought to regain his strength in order to get back to the things he loved... his family, the Racetrack, Football (the Redskins) and music.

Harold started his spiritual journey at Central Street Baptist church at an early age in Beckley, West Virginia. As an adult, he became a member of Bethel Presbyterian Church in Alexandria, Va from 1958-1975. Harold later became a fulltime worshiper at St. Philip the Evangelist Episcopal Church where you could often hear him singing in his bass voice until he was unable to attend church due to his illness.

Harold obtained his primary education in Beckley, West Virginia and graduated from Stratton High School there. After graduation he attended West Virginia State University where he earned a bachelor’s degree in music. He later obtained post graduate credits from Peabody Music Conservatory, University of Maryland, Howard University and Trinity University.

Harold was a talented musician who started his career after college as a band

director in Clinton, SC at Bell Street High School. He loved teaching students the art of music and after moving to the Washington Metropolitan area he taught music and band at Pomonkey High School in Indian Head, MD, Thomas Stone High School in Waldorf, MD, Frances Scott Key Middle School in Fairfax, VA. His love of teaching music led to numerous awards in regional and state competitions.

Since Harold was born with an unusual deep bass voice, he was sought after to sing with many groups and churches. As a teenager, he sang with choirs in Beckley, West VA. He was in the West Virginia State choir and performed with various church choirs. He eventually brought his voice to the Washington Redskin choir where he was the 1st black Redskin singer from 1963-2002. He also provided his musical talents to numerous bands in the Washington Metropolitan area and became a band member with Roberta Flack.

When Harold retired from the various school districts, he could not keep still! He started working part time at the Newseum in Arlington, VA and Washington, DC. He also worked part time at Rose Croft Race Way, and he would often substitute in Prince Georges County Public Schools when he was bored.

While attending West Virginia State College, Harold met and fell in love with Ruby Worthy. He was so smitten with Ruby that they married 3 months after graduation. He was not letting her go! This union would last three weeks short of 70 years. Together this marriage produced three children, Harold "Renard", Adrienne and Avise. Harold was a family man who enjoyed watching sporting events with his family, taking them to the racetrack, taking them to concerts, teaching music and attending recitals as well as taking them on vacation. He later enjoyed these same things with his grandkids.

In addition to his parents Stephen and Alice, Harold is preceded in death by

his 2 sisters: Mildred L, Bernice S.

Harold leaves to cherish his memory his wife; Ruby, son; Harold "Renard", daughters; Adrienne (David), Avise (Derek), cousin; Willie (Gwen), Grandchildren; RaDeesha (Deonta), Darnika, Renard (Shauney), Derek, Delaney, Dean, brother-in-law; Drew Worthy, Goddaughter; Michelle, Nieces; Stephanie, Dreama, Jamila, Shani, Joyce, Terri, Janice Nephew; Melvin, 12 Great grandchildren, 3 Great-great grandchildren, several great Nieces and Nephews, race track buddies, church members, neighbors and extended family.

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 2. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

East Washington Heights Baptist Church
2220 Branch Ave. S.E.
Washington, DC 20020

Celebration of Life

AUG 2. 11:00 AM (ET)

East Washington Heights Baptist Church
2220 Branch Ave. S.E.
Washington, DC 20020

Live Streaming Service Link:

[https://youtube.com/@eastwashingtonheightsmedia?
si=J8bNTi2K6nzY1L36](https://youtube.com/@eastwashingtonheightsmedia?si=J8bNTi2K6nzY1L36)

AUG 2. 11:00 AM (ET)

East Washington Heights Baptist Church
2220 Branch Ave. S.E.
Washington, DC 20020

Tribute Wall



“ *Phillip Bell Sr. and Winona Morrissette-Johnson Funeral Service, P.A. created a Webcast in memory of Mr. Harold Leon Watts*



Phillip Bell Sr. and Winona Morrissette- - July 24, 2024 at 08:14 PM

LP

“ *Mr. Watts was my band director more than 50 years ago at Key Intermediate but I remember him well, will never forget him. He was a wonderful band director, musician, and an outstanding person. He looked out for me when I needed it, was like a father figure as I dealt with my parents' divorce. I will never forget him shuttling me out of regional band practice during the TC Williams West Springfield basketball game riot. He was so kind, caring. with that unforgettable laugh and bass voice. Condolences to all. May he rest in peace. 💜🙏*

Lisa McGrady Pellegrin - August 25, 2024 at 11:13 PM

ET

“ *Mrs. Watts,
Please accept my sincere condolences after hearing of the death of your husband.
Eugene Thompson*

Eugene Thompson - August 18, 2024 at 09:35 AM

MA

“ Some people cross your life for only a short time but have such a huge and long lasting impact. I hope it brings some consolation to Mr Watts' family to know that he was definitely one of those people. He was my band teacher at Key for only 2 years, almost 50 years ago, and yet I still thought of him often. In fact, I can still hear his voice and his laughter and feel his joyful spirit. He had nicknamed me "Hands" because he said I had hands made for playing the piano. He had a way of making each of us feel special that way and I think his love of music filled those band rooms. Deepest sympathies to his family. Know he will always be remembered fondly, and never forgotten.

Marisa - August 03, 2024 at 07:09 PM

LU

“ I had Mr. Watts for band at Key. What a great guy. Praying for the family. -Luann P.

Luann - August 02, 2024 at 07:29 AM

GF

“ Rest in peace Mr.Watts. I had Mr.Watts for band from '72-74 at Key Intermediate. He was an excellent conductor/teacher. He truly got the best out of each of us and in turn we wanted to perform well for him. He made me a better French Horn musician. We did very well in band competitions under his leadership. He was patient and a true mentor. Over the years I have commented to friends on how good he was as a teacher...he was one of those positive role models that help make us better people. I'm glad he was part of my life experience.

Glenn Frano - August 01, 2024 at 06:37 PM



“ 44 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Phillip Bell Sr. and Winona Morrissette- - July 28, 2024 at 11:46 AM