



Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.

March 19, 1945 - October 25, 2024

Earl Joseph Hunter, Jr..

A Historical Legacy of Life and Love

“I, Earl Joseph Hunter, Jr. was born on March 19, 1945. I grew up just as a small farm boy with a strong Christian family background at First Union Baptist Church, Ellerson/Mechanicsville, VA. My first seven years of attending elementary schools occurred at Pole Green and Pleasant Grove Schools. My high school, John M. Gandy High School, was located in Ashland, VA.

Virginia State College, in Petersburg, VA, was my only choice of colleges, as my counselor and mentor, Mr. John R. Fleming, Sr., attended there and encouraged me to do so as well. My interest in Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) led me to be a part of the Rifle Team and also, the Drill Team, the Pershing Rifles (named after Gen. John Joseph Pershing who commanded an All-Black Unit in World War I). The Drill Team, Pershing Rifles and Advanced ROTC also included: John Fleming, Maurice Hilliard, Franklin Matthews, Freddie McLaughin, Ashley Ricks, and Posey Young. In 1968, I was a member of the baseball team that was brought back to Virginia State College. In 1969, I graduated from Virginia State College in Petersburg, with a Bachelor of Science, Vocational Industrial Education (with a concentration in Electronics).

Commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant to Active Duty in 1969, I entered the U.S. Army and attended Infantry Officer School in Fort Benning, Georgia. My Squad Leader, who was a pilot and had two tours of duty in Vietnam encouraged me to apply for Flight School and I earned my wings as an Aviator/ Helicopter Pilot. Once finishing Officer School, my first permanent duty station was Fort Ord, California. During my four months there, I transferred to the Signal Corps Division and received my orders for Flight School to Fort Walters, Texas. The first 4 1/2 months of Flight School was at Fort Walters, Texas, and then 4 1/2 months in Fort Rucker, Alabama. Vietnam was inevitable after Flight Helicopter School; I logged in six hundred (600) plus flight hours in less than seven months as a Rotary Wing Helicopter Pilot in Vietnam. I was assigned to 6 /14 AHC (Assault Helicopter Company). My Unit, stationed in Can Tao, Vietnam in the Delta, supported the South Vietnamese Army and we conducted combat assaults, re- supply of supplies, and medical evacuations. I earned numerous Army Accommodations and Awards and during the Combat Assaults, earned the Bronze Star Medal for evacuating our downed Aircraft and rescuing the Gun Ship Platoon Leader and his Gunship Crew who were shot down on a Combat Assault Mission. Returning home from Vietnam after tour duty, I was stationed at Ft. Lee in Petersburg, VA. I traveled to the District of Columbia, requesting a long-term assignment, with thoughts of making the military a long-term commitment at that time. Assigned to Germany as a Communications Officer to a Field Artillery Unit, I was the only pilot in the whole Artillery Battalion, and I was required to maintain 80 hours of Flight time a year, which I accomplished each year in Germany.

My next extended military assignment was in serving as a Signal Corp Officer in an Artillery Unit and Aviator/Pilot in Germany. After being stationed in Germany, I returned to the United States and home and then entered the Virginia Army National Guard. While in Germany, my Branch, the Signal Corps cut out 2100 of the 2700 Signal Corps Officers. It was then, that I spoke with

my buddy, Recruiter Frazier Brooks, and he explained to me about the National Guard and the US Army Reserves located in Richmond, VA. I chose the VA Army National Guard Unit, at Byrd Airport, which stationed the same helicopters that I was qualified in and flew in Vietnam and Germany (OH58's and Hueys). I was required to meet and maintain qualification criteria in the "check ride." The "check ride" required you to fly with an Instructor Pilot who required you have mastery in flying instruments, the "nap of the earth", as well as emergency flying procedures, such as engine failure, transmission failure, caution lights and night flying. Some of my flying duties required pilots to pick up military officers and transport them to the Pentagon, in Washington D.C. for meetings. Being a part of the National Guard, offered me an opportunity to land on my Father's property in Hanover County to re-fasten a few aircraft panels. My total Military Flight Time over five years as a Helicopter Pilot amounted to 1,046 flight hours." My heart fills with strong emotions to know that all of my children and a grandson have honorably served our country with valor and courage in the military as well.

From my marriage to Shanor Tanner Holt, we had one daughter, Tamie Tanya and three sons Mark Douglas, Brian Earl, and Eric Joseph. I have been united in holy matrimony to Francine Aytes Hunter for twenty-five years, for whom I deeply prayed to come into my life and who will eternally remain the love of my life.

I entered corporate America in 1975 and retired from Altria / Philip Morris, Inc. In 1976, I found myself becoming involved with my children's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Some might share that I followed I historical footsteps and journey of my Grandfather Lucian Hunter, who persistently went before the Hanover County School Board on countless occasions advocating for public bus transportation for African American children as early as 1935. After that, how could I not do my due diligence in advocating for the needs of all

Hanover County students? After continuing an active role in the PTO for sixteen years, I was then appointed to represent the Henry District of the Hanover County School Board in Hanover, Virginia. During my tenure, I also served as a School Board member at the state level with the Virginia School Boards Association serving School Boards throughout the state of Virginia. I was elected I President of the Virginia School Boards Association, in 2002, and continued my pursuit in advocating for education for all students. I additionally served as an Advisory Board Member for the Memorial Regional Medical Center Community 1996-2004; Hanover Parks and Recreation, 1997-2010; National Federal Relations Committee, Board of Directors – Virginia School Board Association, 1997-1999; Virginia State Board of Education Special Committee to “No Child Left Behind”; and served on the Special Education Advisory Panel – Hanover County School Board, 2002-2010. From 2013-2015, I was the representative to the Hanover Education Foundation.

My Grandfather Lucian Hunter received a Certificate of Recognition and a Proclamation from the Virginia General Assembly and Governor James Gilmore and I received a Proclamation from Hanover County Board of Supervisors, upon my retirement from the Hanover County School Board, after serving twenty-four years.

Over the years during my life’s experiences (in serving my county, state, and country), and traveling abroad, my journey has exposed me to a number of diverse cultures and religions. I felt that there was more teaching and living that each of us should be responsible for knowing the fullness of the Gospel and it has been like a new birth.

I am a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and am featured in the book, “My Lord, He Calls Me - Stories of Faith By Black American Latter-Day Saints”, Alice Faulkner Burch, General Editor. I am also featured in the book, “The 600 m.o.I. Black Helicopter Pilots in Vietnam,

Second Edition -Tuskegee Glory” written by Dr. Joe Ponds.

I have always enjoyed athletics, golfing, fishing, football, the Washington Commanders, gardening, traveling, fresh country air and family activities. I am thankful for the continued Hunter legacy of our grandchildren and great-grandchildren and attending their activities. I am a member of the American Legion, Post#175, Mechanicsville, Virginia; Lifetime Member of the Vietnam Helicopters Pilots Association; Lifetime Member of the Hanover Chapter - NAACP; Charter Member of the Vassar W. Hurt III Memorial Military Scholarship, Organization - Virginia State University ROTC; and the Board of Directors Member - Hanover Tavern Foundation.

Those who have gone on to glory before me include: my parents, Earl, Sr. & Pearl; my sister, Yvonne; our granddaughter, Shauna Williamson; extended grandson, Brandon Snead, other ancestors and loved ones. To cherish my memories, I entrust to you my beloved wife Francine Aytes Hunter; daughter Tamie (Gui) Williams, and sons: Mark (Jodi) Hunter; Brian and Eric (Erika) Hunter; extended daughters: Yvette (Ashaki) George, Faye Pryor, and Melody (Bruce) Minor; grandchildren: Michael Williamson, Jasmine Williams, Jasmyn Williamson, Cameron Davis, Jordan Williams, Sydney Williamson, Justin Williams, Jaci Hunter, Brandon Hunter, Cristian Hunter; and Zoe Hunter; extended grandchildren: Shaun Snead, Stephanie Snead, and Brittani Parham; great-grandchildren: Aryana Williamson, Matteo Williamson-Lanier, Mylah Williamson, Ava Williamson, and Dakota Sykes; extended great-granddaughter SaMya Snead-Cole; Sisters: Stella (James) Henderson; Janet (Julian) Shelton, Sr. and Wendy Hunter Hill; nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives, special friends and brothers and sisters for life.

Cemetery Details

First Union Baptist Church Cemetery

Mechanicsville, VA 23116

Previous Events

Public Viewing

NOV 1. 9:30 AM - 6:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Home -Laburnum Chapel
2110 E. Laburnum Ave.
Richmond, VA 23222

Family Hour

NOV 1. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Home -Laburnum Chapel
2110 E. Laburnum Ave.
Richmond, VA 23222

Celebration of Life

NOV 2. 12:00 PM (ET)

Hanover High School
10307 Chamberlayne Road
Mechanicsville, VA 23116

Tribute Wall

ME

“ To Dear "Queen" Miss Francine and all of Mr. Earl's loved ones: Our hearts are with you in this time of loss and adjustment. May the beautiful memories each of you share with him bring comfort and joy as time goes on. With our love and hugs, "Lady" Mary and "Lady" Emily

Mary & Emily - November 07, 2024 at 04:21 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..

November 07, 2024 at 01:18 PM

KA

“ I worked in the front office of RPES and Mr. Hunter always made a point of coming into the office to speak to those of us behind the scenes of the school during his time with the School Board. He was a such a gentleman, always smiling. Prayers of comfort and peace for his family.

Kathy Richardson

Kathy - November 06, 2024 at 05:02 PM

LJ

I attended church with brother Hunter for many years, until I left for college. After that I would occasionally see him when I came down to visit my parents. I knew that he had been on the school for many years but I did not know much about his background. He never bragged about himself. Perhaps he should have.

Lyston Barker, Jr - March 08 at 08:01 PM

JS

“ Wendy, Janet, Stella and family. Deepest sympathy for the loss of your beloved brother. He was really a exceptional person. His kindness was always evident and smile contagious. I pray that u'll continue to feel the bright light he left u all in your hearts. Keeping u all in prayer. ♡♡

Joybelle Smith - November 04, 2024 at 05:18 PM

CP

“ Francine,
Patty and I were so sorry to hear of Earl's passing. I am so grateful to have had the chance to work with Earl when he was on the School Board and I on the Board of Supervisors. While you will be missing him most of all, all of us who had the opportunity to know him will be missing him too. May God bless you, your family and give you comfort.



Canova and Pat Peterson

Canova Peterson - November 03, 2024 at 11:27 AM



“ Almon Hall lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.



Almon Hall - November 02, 2024 at 12:52 PM



“ *Francine and Family, we are certainly saddened to hear of the passing of your loved one, Earl, Jr. We both have very fond memories of growing up with him. We pray that God will continue to shower you with His peace and comfort.*
Reverend Earl & Almon Hall



Almon Hall - November 02, 2024 at 12:52 PM

JG

“ *Earl was a special person and I will treasure our days on the School Board and the times spent after. Whenever we met up there was always a smile and warm hugs. He truly made a difference. Continued prayers to the family and comfort in beautiful memories.*

John and Vivian Gordon - November 02, 2024 at 07:18 AM

DB

“ *Doris Dungee (Dee Bee) lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.*



Doris Dungee (Dee Bee) - November 01, 2024 at 07:20 PM

RI

“ *Rhonda and JD Shelton III purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..*



Rhonda and JD Shelton III - November 01, 2024 at 06:30 PM

JB

“ *May fond memories of Earl comfort you at this time. I remember Earl at VSU. He and Ashley were always together. Those "Pershing Rifles" set the stage for honor, dedication and sovereignty. So sorry for your loss.*

Jean Turner Barber, VSU class of '66



Jean T Barber - November 01, 2024 at 06:25 PM

BC

To Mark and Family
May God comfort you during this trying time. Cling to the precious memories and give God the praise for the years that we're well spent with your family and what he gave to family and community.
Much love♥♥
Brenda Jones Cotman
Charles City VA

Brenda A Jones Cotman - November 02, 2024 at 01:43 PM

PS

“ *Phyllis Savage lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.*



Phyllis Savage - November 01, 2024 at 06:24 PM

DT

“ *My Deepest Sympathy. May you get through this difficult time, through prayers and the comfort of family and friends.*

Deborah Tinsley - November 01, 2024 at 06:20 PM

CG

“ Carolyn Gordon lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.



Carolyn Gordon - November 01, 2024 at 06:12 PM

DA

“ DERRICK ALFORD lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.



DERRICK ALFORD - November 01, 2024 at 06:01 PM

DA

To The Extended Family of Brother Hunter,

We sincerely extend condolences and prayers for peace and comfort!

Respectfully,

DERRICK ALFORD & FISCAL FITNESS, INC. FAMILY & STAFF

DERRICK ALFORD - November 01, 2024 at 06:04 PM

AP

“ To the Family,
Sending my deepest sympathies as you
tenderly remember
Mr. Hunter.



Arlene Purcell

Arlene Purcell - November 01, 2024 at 02:33 PM

JW

“ Jerry Wiley lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.



Jerry Wiley - November 01, 2024 at 01:27 PM

JG

“ John And Vivian Gordon lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.



John and Vivian Gordon - November 01, 2024 at 01:07 PM

SS

“ Sandra And Earl Smith lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.



Sandra and Earl Smith - November 01, 2024 at 12:44 PM

SS

So very sorry for your loss. Sandra and Earl Smith

Sandra and Earl Smith - November 01, 2024 at 12:45 PM

JR

“ *Francine, please accept our deepest condolences. Ashley and I are so sorry for your loss. Earl and Ashley were friends for life. He will be sorely missed. We are praying for moments of peace and comfort as you all remember Earl. Ashley and Joyce Ricks, Ashland*



Joyce Ricks - November 01, 2024 at 10:38 AM

RR

My condolences to the entire family

Richard Robinson - November 01, 2024 at 12:54 PM

JL

“ *Earl Hunter was a dedicated school board member when I served in school administration. He was a well-informed leader who encouraged constituents' participation in helping Hanover County Public Schools thrive in delivering a high quality learning environment and challenging curriculum to meet the needs of all students. He was a professional who showed respect in all of his endeavors. Truly one of the best school board members with whom I ever worked.*
Deepest condolences to his family and dearest friends. Peace!
Judy M. Little

Judy M. Little - November 01, 2024 at 09:29 AM

CD

“ To Francine and the Hunter family, my condolences. Mr. Earl was a sweet and kind man. He will be missed. May the Lord give you comfort and peace during your time of grief.
Cassandra Demouchet



Cassandra Demouchet - November 01, 2024 at 07:58 AM

RC

“ Roslyn De Cordova lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.



Roslyn de Cordova - November 01, 2024 at 07:43 AM

TR

“ My sincere condolences to Stella, Janet, Wendy, and the entire Hunter family on such a tremendous loss. I pray and am confident that God will comfort and strengthen you. I cherish the fond memories of a lovely family.
Anthony (Tony) Robinson

Tony Robinson - October 31, 2024 at 01:56 PM

TR

“ The Daltons, DeAtleys & Richardsons purchased the Sweet Tenderness for the family of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..



The Daltons, DeAtleys & Richardsons - October 31, 2024 at 12:13 PM

BA

“ To the Hunter- Shelton Family we the Classmates of John M. Gandy High School Class of 1969 send our Deepest Condolences for Janet H. Shelton. Praying for you and the Family. ❤️



Bernice Anderson - October 31, 2024 at 12:11 PM

LY

“ Lawanda Young lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.



Lawanda Young - October 31, 2024 at 07:34 AM

PB

“ Phyllis Brooks lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.



Phyllis Brooks - October 31, 2024 at 12:52 AM

DE

“ My sincere condolences on your loss. Earl was a very special man. I am glad I was fortunate enough to know him.

Diana Englehart - October 30, 2024 at 07:31 PM

VF

“ Vickie Jones & Family purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..



Vickie Jones & Family - October 30, 2024 at 06:22 PM

WB

“ Sincere condolences to the entire family and friend. Did some work for Earl not long ago and it was so good to unite with a work brother. So sad to lose such a likable man. He will be a huge loss to everyone. Bless all his loved ones and may he rest in peace in Heaven. Willy Brossart



willy brossart - October 30, 2024 at 06:20 PM

MA

“ Mabel lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.



Mabel - October 30, 2024 at 05:07 PM

PB

“ May memories give you comfort at this time. He was a mentor and friend to me at work for years. God bless you all

pam Barden - October 30, 2024 at 02:55 PM

RN

“ Our sincere prayers and condolences to the family of Earl Hunter. Richard and Theresa (Stimpson) Nichols.

Richard and Theresa Stimpson Nichols - October 30, 2024 at 02:13 PM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..



October 30, 2024 at 11:52 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..

October 30, 2024 at 11:52 AM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..



October 30, 2024 at 11:15 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..

October 30, 2024 at 11:15 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..*



October 30, 2024 at 08:47 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..

October 30, 2024 at 08:47 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr..*



October 30, 2024 at 05:09 AM



“ *Bettie Lee lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.*



Bettie Lee - October 29, 2024 at 09:28 PM

EC

“ *Ed And Jessie Crewe lit a candle in memory of Earl Joseph Hunter Jr.*



Ed and Jessie Crewe - October 29, 2024 at 11:07 AM



“ *We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.*

March Funeral Homes - October 29, 2024 at 10:58 AM

JS

Wendy, Janet, Stella and family. What an amazing brother, father, husband etc. Praying for family. His bright light will continue to live in your hearts. Stay strong. 💕💕

Joybelle Smith - November 04, 2024 at 04:09 PM