



John Sawyer

March 26, 1934 - August 25, 2016

John B. Sawyer (John the Baptist) affectionately known as John B. departed this life on August 25, 2016 after a short illness. John B. was born March 26, 1934 to the union of George Washington Sawyer and Maggie Brown-Sawyer in White Oak, Fairfield County, SC. John B. was the 14th child of 15 children. His siblings are Young, James W. "JW", George W., Jr. Babe, Maggie B. Samuel B., Chester Arthur, Mary Lougenia, Nathaniel (King David) "KD", Julia Mack, Sallie, Sally Bell, Celia D. and Martha Victoria.

John B. grew up in a Christian home where Bible Study, family prayer and regular church attendance was a strict requirement. At an early age, he joined Shady Grove AME Church in Winnsboro, SC and remained a lifelong member. Shady Grove was founded in 1823 by slaves. One of its founding members was John B's great-great uncle Thomas Sawyer. It was at Shady Grove that John B. learned to appreciate the singing and music of his ancestors. His father George was an accomplished singer, guitar and harmonica player.

John B. learned to appreciate hard work at an early age. In his teenage years he had to work the family farm. He received his education in the Fairfield County Public School System. After high school, he found work at the Greyhound Bus Station where he worked as a cook. Blacks could work as cooks or janitors, but could not sit down to eat at the restaurants. There were

unmistakable signs, which said to the black traveler "White Only".

John B. was a caring surrogate father to his sister Martha and nephews Jack, Charlie, Thomas and James Franklin before entering the United States Army in 1956. He later joined the US Air Force from 1958 thru 1962. During this time, he enjoyed performing in and going to the theatre. He also liked to sing.

In a 2016 interview regarding his military career, he said that his desire was to serve in each branch of the armed services. It was no surprise to hear, since his great-great grandfather Luke Sawyer was a soldier in the South Carolina Confederate Army during the civil war fighting for the "promise of freedom" from slavery. Two of his brothers, Sam and Nathaniel, served in WWII. Sam served in the U.S Navy and Nathaniel served in the U.S. Army. They fought for the end of the Jim Crow and Segregation. Nathaniel brought back a monkey from the Philippines name Jab-bo as a WWII trophy. Job-bo often terrified the family, but got along with John B.

Soon after John B. moved to Baltimore, he worked several years for Bethlehem Steel until an injury placed him on disability He was well read and a critical thinker. Seldom was there a topic he could not stand toe to toe with with the best. John B. was a master at playing bid whist and pinochle. He and family held card parties with lots of fun and good food. His favorite exercise was walking. Later in life, you could spot him just about anywhere with one crutch. He was a collector of "precious" metals.

Left to celebrate his life and legacy are sisters: Mary L. Jones, Sally Braxton-Thames and Celia D. Jackson. Nephews: Walter Holley, Willie James Green, Jr., Bobby Green, Joseph Green, Floyd Green, Robert Sawyer, George M. Sawyer, Deacon Jack Davis, Deacon Edward Jones, Howard Jones, Milton Jones, Isaac Jones, Arnello Jones, Bobby English, Thomas WM. Sawyer, James Franklin, Juan Woodard and Kevin Woodard. Nieces: Evangelist Mattie

Brandon, Joann Coleman, Sandra Coleman, Virginia Robinson, Elizabeth Davis, Rev. Juanita Watkins, Deacon Addie C. Ruffin (Penny), Maggie Lee Duncan, Arletta S. Holley, Virginia Jones, Vernice Jones, Denise Jones, Amelia "Mickey" Foster, Frances Denise Holden, Arnetta Boyd, Dorothy E. Mango, Wanda Braxton, Ellen Mae Anderson, Judy A. Jackson-Pringle, Min. Annetta Gorham, Deborah Jackson-Johnson, Catherine Woodard, Helen Hargrove and Charlene Woodard. He also leaves a host of great nephews and nieces, great-great nephews and nieces, great-great great nephews and nieces, cousins, neighbors and associates too numerous to name.

Cemetery Details

Garrison Forest Veterans

11501 Garrison Forest Road
Owings Mills, MD

Previous Events

Public Viewing

SEP 7. 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Homes - East Baltimore
1101 East North Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21202
(410) 727-3300
info@marchfh.com

Wake

SEP 8. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Sweet Prospect Baptist Church
901 E. Eager Street
Baltimore, MD 21205

Service

SEP 8. 10:30 AM (ET)

Sweet Prospect Baptist Church
901 E. Eager Street
Baltimore, MD 21205

Tribute Wall



“ *John Sawyer*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 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 - September 14, 2016 at 02:21 PM