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Thomas Andrew Corpening, Sr.

July 20, 1929 - Aug. 4, 2019

Mr. Thomas Andrew Corpening, Sr. was born July 20, 1929 in Morganton, North Carolina to Phifer and Ivory Cuthberson Corpening. Tom was Phifer and Ivory's first-born child and 4 years later, Tom's sister Laura was born. Both parents and his sister proceeded him in death.

Tom spent his early years in Burke County, North Carolina doing typical "country boy" things - swimming, fishing, hunting, doing chores and attending school (walking 10 miles, in the snow, uphill both ways as the story told by Tom goes). Tom attended elementary and secondary schools in Morganton, graduating

from Olive Hill High School in 1947. He joined Shiloh AME Church as a young boy and was a Sunday School teacher and also taught Bible studies. Tom was a very spiritual person and a student of the Bible.

In August of 1947, Tom enlisted in the US Army. After 6 years as a single solider, Tom was introduced to Vera Lightfoot, a beautiful young woman from Bradenton, Florida who had relocated to Boston, Massachusetts after graduating from high school. Even though Tom was transferred to Germany and then to Monterey, California, he remained committed to Vera, whom he frequently said was the one! Tom drove across the country to Boston, where he married Vera on June 9, 1956.

Immediately after the wedding, Tom took Vera to live with his parents in Morganton and he returned to Fort Ord. Months later, Vera joined Tom in California where the family of two became a family of 4. Two sons were born to the union, Thomas, Jr. and Brian Keith. The two boys adored their father and Tom wrestled, played with and spent as much time as possible with his sons. Most importantly, Tom and Vera

taught the boys to become responsible, caring loving people. Thomas, Jr. departed this life during the family's stay in Iran and although his life was short, it was full of joy and happiness which he shared freely.

Life's Reflections

Tom and his family traveled extensively during his tenure in the Army. After living at Fort Ord, Tom was stationed in Korea while his family remained stateside living in both Florida and North Carolina. After 14 months, the family was reunited and moved to Ft. Lee in Petersburg, Virginia followed by Germany. Tom's next tour of service took him to Vietnam and Vera and the boys to Salina, Kansas where they lived at the Shilling Manor Waiting Wives post. After Tom returned from Vietnam, he and his family were stationed at Ft. Hood in Killeen, Texas, back to Ft. Ord (where Tom enrolled at the Defense Language Institute becoming fluent in Farsi), Iran, and finally Hunter Army Air Field in Savannah, Georgia. After an illustrious 30-year career as a soldier, mentor, leader and friend, Tom retired from the US Army as Command Sgt. Major in 1977.

Tom and Vera retired to Titusville, Florida where Tom entered a new career at Walmart in logistical support. Tom was employed by Walmart for 12 years before finally getting the opportunity to spend his days at home with Vera. The loving couple continued to enjoy one another's company every day until God called Tom home on Sunday, August 4, 2019. Vera was not only a wonderful wife and mother; she was a consummate care giver to Tom during his extended illness.

Left to honor the memory of Thomas A. Corpening, Sr., are his wife, Vera, Titusville, Florida; son, Dr. Brian Corpening, Marina, California; grandson Thomas Corpening, Cleveland, Ohio; brother in-law James Lightfoot, Boston, Massachusetts; sister-in-law Agnes Kirkland, Sarasota, Florida; nieces: Jacqueline Scott and Robin Caldwell, Morganton, North Carolina; Dr. Joan Reede, Boston, Massachusetts; Gloria Edwards,

Palmetto, Florida; Cheryl Lightfoot, Randolph, Massachusetts; Caroline Lightfoot and Donise Jackson, Bradenton, Florida; nephews: Earnest Caldwell (Lisa) and Marvin Caldwell, Morganton, North Carolina; Morris Bell, Washington, D.C.; Lyndon Kirkland, Tampa, Florida; Dennis Lightfoot (Karen), James Lightfoot, and Ronald Reede, Boston, Massachusetts; and Jeffrey Reede, Hull, Massachusetts; Godson Michael

Sears; Tom and Vera's Titusville Family, Doug and Dulsie Edmonds; many great nieces and nephews; and countless other relatives and friends.

The family will receive friends from 1:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m., Wednesday, August 14, 2019 at Shiloh AME church. The funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m., in the church with the Rev. Wayne Johnson officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery. Military honors will be provided by the NC National Guard.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.