



Clemeal Harry

August 21, 1927 - November 27, 2020

Clemeal Harry – “I’m holding on.”

Loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage – U. S. Army Core Values

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.” John 14:1-4 (ESV)

Two hours past the midnight hour, November 27, 2020, during a peaceful slumber, Clemeal Harry transitioned to the new Jerusalem. His final days were spent at Hospice House where loving family members and friends visited him frequently. Clemeal, known for his deep thundering bass voice, was granted the favor of God, spending 93 earthly years among humanity as a devoted servant of God, husband, father, grandfather, godfather, brother, brother-in-law, uncle, teacher, professor, mentor, counselor, student, and more.

Born in the small rural village of Angie, LA, August 21, 1927, he was the eldest son of eight children born to the late Louis and Rebecca Peters Harry. Clemeal was fueled by creativity, inquisitiveness, and intellectual stimulation. He attended and graduated Wesley Ray School (1946) as Valedictorian of a small graduating class. Inspired by his high school agriculture teacher, he entered college at Southern University and A & M College, obtaining a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences. Immediately after graduating from Southern University, he was selected to matriculate Louisiana State University, during the Jim Crow era, persevering and enduring discrimination and oppression, to obtain a Master of Science degree. He continued his educational pursuits by obtaining a Master of Education in Administration and Supervision from Southern University and A & M College and the plus 30 beyond the Master’s degree from Southeastern Louisiana University.

While focusing on the college experience as a young student, Clemeal was unexpectedly drafted to serve in the Korean Conflict. A decorated veteran who fought in The Battle of Heartbreak Ridge, as a Combat Medic with the 25th Division, 14th Regiment, Company C, Clemeal was awarded the Purple Heart, two Bronze Stars, the Korean Service Medal and the Medical Badge. Clemeal proudly embraced his military experience by stating, “I am proud and honored to have defended and served my country” and exemplified the U. S. Army’s Core Values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage. Clemeal returned home in 1953, and always described himself as “a different person after being in a war.” Although he returned to college with an experience most would never have and one that he did not want anyone to experience, he persevered and achieved his goal of obtaining his college degree.

While attending Southern University, Clemeal met Rosie Lee Cannon Harry, who tragically and suddenly died in 1990, rendering him a widower after 37 years of marriage. Clemeal and Rosie proudly raised two daughters: Dr. Sonja Valechia Harry and Sharolyn Vanetta Harry. Eventually discovering love again, Clemeal married Geneva Bradford Bates (Harry), October 4, 1997, and embarked on a new matrimonial journey. Colette Bates Kennedy, the daughter of Geneva, lovingly and endearingly became a bonus daughter to Clemeal.

Clemeal secured employment in the small town of Jennings, LA working for the Department of Parks and Recreation and as an Orderly (Nurses Assistant) in a nursing home. His desire was to teach and so he remained steadfast in his pursuit of employment in the field of education and in 1966 he and his family moved to Covington, LA where he would become principal of an all-Black segregated school in Sun, LA located in the St. Tammany Parish Public School System. A few years later, schools would become integrated and Clemeal transferred to a school in Folsom, LA where he began a long and illustrious 30-year career as a teacher and Principal Emeritus of Folsom Jr. High School. Clemeal, wholeheartedly dedicated to his craft of teaching and administration, was known for his straight forward approach, stern manner of speaking, and strict manner of discipline, along with the love, care, and concern he showed for all students. He was well loved and embraced in a family-like manner by the Folsom, LA community. Beginning in childhood, he developed a fastidious and meticulous attitude toward dressing, which continued into adulthood, presenting himself as always well-dressed, usually in a shirt, tie, and suit coat. As a mentor, he demanded respect and superb performance from students, whom he endearingly referred to as “knuckleheads” as well as teachers. Clemeal was often described as and called “Dr. Joe Clark,” who was depicted in the auto biographical film “Lean On Me” where he was portrayed as a strict but caring disciplinarian.

Christianity provided the foundation for his upbringing and during his adult life. Clemeal was baptized as an infant and completed Catechism at Wesley Ray United Methodist Church, Angie, LA. His parents instilled in him a love for God and a desire to be a very supportive and devoted servant of God by serving in church. Upon moving to Covington, he joined Doughty Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church and later joined Starlight Baptist Church, where his late wife was a member. He returned with his family, to Doughty Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church where he served for many years until he began experiencing failing health and could no longer participate and serve. As a dedicated servant, Clemeal served in both churches as: Lay Speaker, Superintendent of Sunday School, Sunday School Teacher, Deacon, and many other roles.

Clemeal loved meeting people and enjoyed conversing with others and easily commanded a room. He was known for having a green thumb and taught gardening and plant care to community members. He also was a lover of animals and served for several years as the advisor for Future Farmers of America (FFA) and the 4-H Club at Folsom Jr. High, teaching and mentoring youth in preparation for local and state livestock shows. He enjoyed engaging in social activities and was a member of several organizations. A proud alumnus of Southern University, Clemeal was instrumental in founding the Greater North Shore Chapter of the Southern University Alumni Federation and instituted and coordinated an annual College Visitation & Tour of Southern University and A & M College for high school students living in the Greater Covington, LA Area. His organizational membership included: Robert H. Burns American Legion Post 16, Covington, LA, Greater Northshore, Southern University Alumni Association, Southern University True Blue Foundation, St. Tammany Parish Foundation, Ochsner Foundation, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), American Red Cross, and Louisiana Association of Principals and Executives. The many honors and recognitions bestowed upon Clemeal Harry, spanning agricultural, educational, military, church, and community services, are beyond enumerating but speak to his spirit of dedicated and committed service to others.

Family members who received their wings and transitioned before Clemeal include his loving and devoted parents, Louis and Rebecca Peters Harry; his precious two-year old angel, Sharon Glynetta Harry, four adoring sisters, Victoria Lett, Elizabeth Moses, Nercile Holmes, and Arnice Harry Pittman; and his former late wife Rosie Lee Cannon Harry.

To carry on his legacy, Clemeal is survived by his darling wife, Geneva Harry; daughters Dr. Sonja Valechia Harry, USN, LCDR (ret.) (Jeff McGill), Odessa, FL and Sharolyn Vanetta Harry, Winston Salem, NC; bonus daughter Colette Bates Kennedy (Reginald), Garland, TX; beloved grandchildren LT Jonathan Louis Clark, USN (Jessica) and Jalyn-

Rose Lea Clark; devoted and loving brothers Robert L. Harry (Roberta), Moss Point, MS, Julius Harry (Rosalind), Lancaster, CA; adoring mother-in-law Iola C. Bradford, Wilson, LA; brothers-in-law Wilford Bradford, Ted Holmes, Raymond Cannon, Michael Cannon; sister-in-law Esther LaVonne May, in addition to several god-children and loving nieces, nephews, cousins, great nieces, great nephews and a close friend Joe Andrus.

Heartfelt gratitude goes to the staff at Hospice House, Slidell, LA who cared for Clemeal as though he was a member of their very own family. We are grateful for the care and concern they showered on Clemeal as well as on family and friends who visited. Clemeal touched the lives of many – family, friends, colleagues, church members, students, community members, neighbors, associates, and strangers, as well as those who knew of him through others.

The funeral services will be held on Thursday, December 3, 2020 at First Baptist Church on 16333 LA 1085, Covington, LA officiated by Reverend Kerry James. Visitation will begin at 9:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M., until services begin. Interment will follow services at Pinecrest Memorial Gardens, 2260 W. 21st Avenue, Covington, LA. Relatives, friends, and the Doughty Chapel AME Church family are invited to attend.

As mandated by the state of Louisiana due to COVID-19 pandemic, attendance is limited to 250 individuals. Everyone is required to adhere to all restrictions, including wearing a face mask and practicing social distancing at all times.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be mailed to the Hospice House at P.O. Box 5806, Slidell, LA 70469 or made via Paypal to MirandaParker@TheHospiceHouse.org. Website: <https://thehospicehouse.org>.

Arrangements entrusted to E. J. Fielding Funeral Home, 2260 W. 21st Avenue, Covington, LA. Please visit www.ejfieldingfh.com to sign the online guestbook to share memories and condolences for the family.

My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Psalm 73:26. (NKJV)

Cemetery

Pinecrest Memorial Gardens & Crematory

2280 W 21st Ave
Covington, LA, 70433

Events

DEC 3 **Funeral Service** 12:00PM - 01:30PM

First Baptist Church Covington
16333 Louisiana Hwy 1085, Covington, LA,
US, 70433

Comments



“ I was extremely saddened to learn of Mr Harry's death. Actually, I had inquired about him from one of his peers shortly prior. I did not know him but had seen him at meetings, etc and was told of his many professional achievements when I joined the STPSB in '94. He was described as a community and professional leader, mentor and a distinguished gentleman always willing and ready to offer assistance to others. His was a 'Life well lived' in so many areas. May your faith and memories provide strength and peace of mind to you and the family. With sincere condolences.

Angela Leverett - January 11 at 04:45 PM



“ Mrs. Geneva Harry; I learned today of the lost of your loved one. Heartfelt condolences to you and the family! He was an outstanding educator and mentor to many people! I was happy he crossed my path during life! May God surround you with peace and comfort in the hours of GREAT sorrow! Praying God will grant you brighter days ahead! Always hold him dear to your heart!
PRAYERFULLY with a SYMPATHETIC HEART!
FLOREL HARRISON
Slidell, LA

Florel Harrison - December 26, 2020 at 06:41 PM



“ Taylor Cannon
I saw the post and I remember the times I spent with him and he gave me my first nickname chief. I loved the red blazer.

Taylor Cannon - December 13, 2020 at 03:11 PM



“ So very sorry for your Loss.

Nancy Byrd - December 09, 2020 at 11:28 AM



“ Knowing Mr Harry is a blessing. My family loved him dearly. He used to visit with dad and they would talk about a little of everything. He taught my children and younger siblings at Folsom Jr High. I will always cherish these memories. RIP MR Harry. To the family my sincere condolences

Joann Brown Batiste - December 05, 2020 at 01:00 AM



“ I want to express my condolences to the Harry Famiy. I was an Agriculture teacher at Covington High and Lee Road jr and spent much time with Cleamile at livestock shows ,contests and leadership conferences. He taught me about life and how to deal with everyday problems. I enjoyed my time with him highly thought of him. I will miss him as one of the good men I have known. Rest In Peace cleameal.

Emile Chic Danna - December 03, 2020 at 07:52 PM



“ I do not know where to start. Mr. Harry is one of the greatest men I ever knew. Having been blessed to be mentored by him was one of the biggest blessings in my childhood. Being called a knucklehead by Mr. Harry was both a blessing and a curse. We always knew he was right but we also knew the love and encouragement that came with that term of endearment.

Mr. Harry's love for this country and for fellow man was undeniable. He was firm, fair, honest, and of extremely high moral character. This man made a monumental impact on my brothers and I and he was deeply respected by our entire family.

There was never a man better dressed than Mr. Harry!! His experiences in life are remarkable and his service to our country and the education system are second to none. The influence and impact Mr. Harry had on my brothers and I is without question a determining factor in all three of us becoming high school administrators and leading with the passion we do. He was a great man and will always be remembered, with great regard and reverence, in the Stein/Pennison households.



Belinda Stein Pennison - December 02, 2020 at 11:20 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Clemeal Harry.



December 02, 2020 at 01:42 PM



“ Where to start? Mr. Harry left an indelible and profound mark on my two brothers and I. Not a week goes by that we don't speak of Mr. Harry related to our school memories with him at Folsom, related to the moral standards that he shared and insisted upon us, very funny occasions that we had with him in class, and of course, the life lessons and life skills that he lay upon us that will stay with us forever. We have the gift of having known Mr. Harry for many, many years and can take those life skills, those morals, the standards, those ways of life, and pass it on to our friends and family forever. This is a man that can no possible way be compared to any other that I've ever met. I am an educator and have obtained a PhD degree in large part, because of him. It cannot be put into words, The positive affect he had on my brothers and myself. looking back on our junior high days with Mr. Harry, we realize fully, that he treated us all with love, with dignity, with respect, and demanded the same. He is the one and only person that taught me that you can be a true friend to a student and his teacher- both at the same time. A task that very, very few educators take on. Most teachers take the highroad and refrain from being friends with the student as well as their teacher; mr. Harry, however, showed me daily that it could be done. It is one of the single most important things that helps me to be not only a successful educating professional but a very happy educator. My mom, my dad, and the three of us, spent a lot of hours with Mr. Harry at our house, at school, around town, as he was a person that we held in the highest regard. He was a gentleman of all gentleman, a man of all men, no possible way is there more than one Clemeal Harry. On behalf of my brother Charles Cannizzaro, my brother Sal Cannizzaro, and myself (Peter Cannizzaro) we send our heartfelt condolences to the family. We feel so blessed to have known and loved Mr. Harry. I'm proud to say that I visited with him in town just a year or two ago. We periodically kept up with Mr. Harry for over 40 years. Rest easy my friend. The Cannizzaro triplets. In the picture from right to left are my teaching partner, Bryant Laird, Mr. Harry, and myself. Taken at sams club not long ago



Peter Cannizzaro - December 02, 2020 at 01:08 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Clemeal Harry.



December 02, 2020 at 12:01 PM



“ My condolences for the loss of cousin Clemeal. May God give you all peace and may His love and the love of family and friends help you all through this difficult time.

Ron Harry
Austin, Texas

RONALD HARRY - December 02, 2020 at 01:00 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Clemeal Harry.



December 01, 2020 at 11:28 PM



“ With Distinction was purchased for the family of Clemeal Harry.



December 01, 2020 at 07:55 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Clemeal Harry.



December 01, 2020 at 07:48 PM



“ Mr. Harry was a total inspiration to many and such an AWESOME man. Fervent prayers to such a great family!

~James "Skip" and Joyce H. Jackson~

Joyce H. Jackson - December 01, 2020 at 05:51 PM



“ Sonja and Jeff, and family:

Our hearts are saddened by your great loss. Please know you are surrounded by people who wish you strength, compassion, comfort, and peace. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

Andi, Stephanie, Joyce, Victoria, Jessica, Alec, Rowan, Marieanne, Laurie, Liz, Kristi, and Stephanie L.

Andi Figart - December 01, 2020 at 05:03 PM



“ There are very few people who you can point to and say they have impacted your life. Mr. Harry is definitely one of those people in my life. Any of the essential character traits that you would want to have in yourself or your children, he had and shared. His life lessons and example that he set will forever be an impact on me and my family. To this day, I still call my kids knuckleheads. I got to share the story of Mr. Harry calling us knuckleheads with my kids just recently as they wondered where it came from. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the inspiration and example that you were to me. The world needs more people like Mr. Harry and I know his impact will live on for generations.

Blake Stein - December 01, 2020 at 10:47 AM



“ Mr. Harry is and will always be a mentor to me. His leadership inspired me in many ways and has guided me in my career. As a lead principal in a large high school in Mississippi, I refer back to Mr. Harry's leadership style and how he truly inspired students to do the right thing. He had a true love for God and Country and loved when we would take him some deer meat. He will be greatly missed but will never be forgotten. God Bless - Ben Stein

Ben Stein - December 01, 2020 at 10:43 AM



“ One of the most influential people in my life. I am thankful to have been his student at Folsom Junior High. May God Bless your family as they mourn -- Brad Thompson

Brad Thompson - December 01, 2020 at 09:58 AM



“ It was such a blessing and honor to have known Mr Harry. Thank you for your life, loving spirit that touch so many lives at Folsom Jr High. Prayers to the family

Pariss Brown-Pierce - December 01, 2020 at 08:59 AM



“ Many years ago, Mr. Harry was a teacher and mentor to my two sons, Blake and Benjamin Stein and daughter, Belinda Stein Pennison. He made such an impression on them and us that stories about his morals, his fair, yet strict discipline, and his unwavering love for God and country were woven into our family memories and conversations over the years. He was always such a loyal patriot during the school programs and assemblies. He taught values to our FJH students that have remained with them throughout their education and careers. I hope that Mr. Harry knew how much he was loved and respected by this family and by everyone who was lucky enough to have known him. Rest In Peace, Mr. Harry. 2 Timothy 4:7. “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” Bruce and Billie Stein

Billie Stein - November 30, 2020 at 11:01 PM



“ Mr. Harry was a dedicated educator and leader in the STPSB community. He will be missed by many.

Mary Barnes - November 30, 2020 at 10:57 PM



“ Family of Jerry Moses -Fuller,Fowlkes,Toples,White purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Clemeal Harry.



Family of Jerry Moses -Fuller,Fowlkes,Toples,White - November 30, 2020 at 09:41 PM



“ To the family of Clemeal Harry, Our deepest sympathy in the loss of your loved one. God's word tells us that He has prepared a place for us where we will find joy and a peace that is everlasting. May your loved one know that peace and may the memories that you hold in your heart comfort you during this difficult time. Agape' - The Family of Jerry Moses (Fuller, Fowlkes, Toples, White).

Vera Toples - November 30, 2020 at 09:28 PM



“ Mr. Harry always shared a beautiful smile and wisdom. May God be with you ALWAYS!!
Lisa Williams

Lisa Williams - November 30, 2020 at 08:26 PM