



Kenyon Robert Parker Sr.

MAR 8, 1925 - DEC 17, 2019



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Obituary

Kenyon Robert Parker, Sr. was born on March 8, 1925, in Lewes, Delaware, to Lewis B. and Helena Bailey Stewart. He was the eldest of eight children. Kenyon took great pride in his hometown, and enjoyed telling others about its rich historic heritage.

Kenyon was a teacher both in the classroom and in life. With his signature style and a love for life that embraced all people, he always had an interesting story to tell. Sharing wise counsel from his many life experiences and helping others were gifts he bestowed upon everyone he knew. Kenyon was unquestionably a people person, with a warm smile that could light up a room.

A proud military veteran, Kenyon served in two wars: World War II and the Korean War. His service in WWII began at age 18 when he was drafted into the Army to an all-black regiment. The “farm boy” from Lewes was assigned to drive a DUKW, a two-and-a-half ton six-wheeled amphibious truck used to ferry supplies from ships docked offshore to the fighting units on the beach. His unit was part of “Operation Overlord”, also known as the D-Day Normandy Invasion, a conflict that helped to free Nazi-occupied France, signaling the start of the end of the war in Europe.

Following his military service, where he achieved the rank of Sergeant, Kenyon returned to school, earning a bachelor’s degree from Delaware State College in Dover, Del., becoming the first college graduate in his family. He majored in Chemistry and minored in Vocational Arts Education. He later received a master’s degree in Vocational Supervision from New York University.

Kenyon taught over 40 years in the public school system. In the early 1950s, he taught Chemistry in Manassas, VA, then moved to Frederick, Maryland in 1954, where he remained for the rest of his career. In the 1970s and 80s, Kenyon worked part time as a coordinator for the Manpower and Migrant Workers programs in Frederick County. At Manpower, a workforce development



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initiative, Kenyon taught applicable skills to men preparing to enter or re-enter the workplace. At the Migrant Workers Program, established by the Jenkins Motor Company of Frederick, Kenyon was the coordinator hired to execute the program partnered with the school system to educate the children of the migrant workers who arrived each year from the south to partake in seasonal work. He spent five years at the Jefferson School in Jefferson, MD, creating a shop program. He also worked with adult disabled clients in Washington DC's Adams-Morgan neighborhood.

Kenyon was a member of the Elks Lodge (Mt. City Lodge #382) where he served as a trustee for many years and remained a lifelong member. He was also one of four individuals who integrated the Frederick VFW.

An avid reader, one of Kenyon's favorite quotes was from George Washington Carver, "It is as important to educate one's hands as one's head."

Kenyon's wartime record of service to his fellow soldiers and his country was captured in the Veterans History Project, part of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress (www.loc.gov/vets). The Kenyon Robert Parker, Sr. Collection is part of the library's permanent archives.

At age 94, while in hospice care, Kenyon received long overdue military honors that he earned as a young soldier in WWII, recognition that he was denied due to the color of his skin and the Jim Crow segregation of the times: the Good Conduct Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, the European Theater Campaign Medal, and the Asian Pacific Theater Campaign Medal.

Kenyon resided in Frederick, MD with his wife of 33 years, Norvis Long-Parker. He departed this life on December 14, 2019, at age 94. He was blessed to live a long and fruitful life, leaving a positive impact on the lives of many others. He was preceded in death by his eldest daughter, Gwendolyn Rusher.

He leaves behind to cherish his memory: his loving wife, Norvis Long-Parker of Frederick, MD; sister, Antoinette Handy of Lewes DE; mother-in-law, Greta Long, and sisters-in-law Kimberly Long and Laurie Long-Jones of Petersburg, VA; sister in law Clintonia Long-Connors (and husband Marcus) of Charlotte, NC; sister-in-law Patricia Stewart of DE; three children from his marriage to Berta Cummings Parker: daughter Beverly Parker of Pittsburgh, PA, son Kenyon Jr. (and wife Marilyn) Parker of Frederick, MD, and daughter Tamara Twitty (and husband Craig) of



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Germantown, MD; three grandchildren: Dr. Dana Tate (and husband David), Trey Rusher, and Erica Jenkins (and husband William); three great-grandchildren: twins Elizabeth and Elaina and a newborn, Zuri; a special cousin, Kitty Perry, beloved nieces and nephews, and a host of other cousins and extended family members.

Visitation will take place from 1:00-2:00 pm on Saturday December 28th at Resthaven Funeral Home, 9501 Catocin Mountain Highway, Frederick, MD, where a funeral service will begin at 2:00pm on Saturday. Internment with military honors will follow in the Veterans Garden of Honor II at Resthaven Memorial Gardens.

To send flowers to the family, please visit our floral store.



Tribute Wall

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Dana Ta shared an album called **Kenyon and Daughter Gwendolyn.**



July 28 at 2:42 PM



Jayden Freeman posted:

Rest in paradise hero

November 16 at 5:33 PM



Beverly Bowens posted:

Norvis, You are in my thoughts and prayers.

December 27 at 6:02 PM



Phil Stevens posted:

Very sorry to hear about Ken. All though I only knew Ken for a short period during his employment at The Jefferson School. I always thought highly of Ken or Mr. Parker as we knew him. My deepest sympathy to the family for their loss.

December 26 at 2:51 PM



Rose Chaney posted:

I offer my deepest condolences to the family. May you find comfort from God's love during this time.

December 26 at 9:02 AM



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TB

Tony Brust posted:

I had the opportunity and pleasure to work along side Mr Parker in my early teaching years at the Jefferson School. He definitely helped me thru my early career and will always remember his advice thru the years that I was fortunate to receive from a man of his experiences. I will remember our times spent at the little Chinese Buffet out past the fairgrounds and his down to earth personality and teaching skills. One of the , if not the greatest man I've ever met... Mr Parker will be missed dearly, but I know that the many lives he impacted in such positive ways will help his memory live on! God bless Mr Parker and thanks for taking me under your wing early in my career.... I'm definitely better off for having had the opportunity to work beside you! Rest easy my friend!

December 24 at 3:03 PM

BH

Barbara Heffner posted:

So sorry for loss of Mr. Parker my school teacher now your in God's hands rip me Parker.

December 24 at 5:24 AM

MS

Margie & Norman Stonesifer posted:

Ken was our neighbor for 33 years. He was a very kind and loving person. We enjoyed listening to his stories about being in the service and teaching. If you came home sometimes from work and thought you had a bad day, he would soon let you know that it was not as bad as you thought. He was very proud of his accomplishments in life. He was also proud of the fact the he put his children through college and made sure they got a good job. Our neighbors and us enjoyed sitting on the porch and talking and laughing about anything and life. We were proud to have Ken as our neighbor, he would do anything for you if he could. He gave to others and sometimes they did not appreciate it and took advantage, but Ken felt he was doing right and trying to help others in need. He would always tell us to sit down and "chill out". We will miss him very much, but will always remember the good times and all the laughs we had together. We love you Ken!

December 24 at 5:16 AM

GF

George Fredericks posted:

A candle was lit in remembrance

December 23 at 7:15 PM



Media

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Dana Ta shared a photo to the **Kenyon and Daughter Gwendolyn** album.

July 28 at 2:42 PM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Kenyon by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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