



Mr. Elijah Thorne Sansom

October 11, 1947 - March 16, 2023

Elijah Thorne Sansom, 75, of Peoria Heights, IL, formerly of Detroit, MI, made his transition into eternal rest on March 16, 2023, with his faithful canine companion, Josephine, by his side.

Elijah was born to Elijah Sansom, of Laurel, Mississippi, and Carrie Ethel (Scales) Sansom, of Clarksdale, Mississippi, on October 11, 1947, in Detroit, MI. He married Diane Gantt in 1974. After they raised their three children, Jessonya, Natasha and Elija “Kamal”, sadly, their union ended in 1993.

Elijah attended Chadsey High School in Detroit, MI, excelling in reading, science, football and track and field propelling him to the University of Michigan. In 1966, he boldly made the University of Michigan football team as a walk-on. He earned the nickname “Hammer” for his hard-hitting abilities. While at Michigan, he pledged the Sigma Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi, Fraternity, Inc. In 1970, he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering. He dedicated 35 years of service to Caterpillar Inc. as a Senior Research Engineer and then retired as a distinguished Six Sigma Black Belt.

Elijah had a unique eye for art and a love for photography. He was an entrepreneur, the owner of Film by E.T.S. Elijah was extremely generous with his time, skills, knowledge and resources volunteering and contributing to Peoria and the surrounding communities in many different capacities. His

skills ranged from managing theater sound and lighting at the Peoria Players Theatre to fixing radios and pencil sharpeners. He selflessly donated funds to numerous non-profit organizations; however, his favorite was the Peoria County Animal Protection Services (PCAPS), formerly known as (PAWS). He was active with an endless list of organizations, including, but not limited to the following: Traveler Weekly (webmaster), Global Village (newsletter editor), The Heritage Ensemble, Peoria Art Guild, Illinois Art League, Peoria Tri-County Urban League, The Peoria Branch of the NAACP, The African American Hall of Fame Museum, Peoria County Animal Control and Protection Services, Lincoln Grade School (mentor), and Peoria Pathfinders ski club. He was also a Charter member of the Peoria Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi, Fraternity, Inc., established November 17, 1973.

Elijah participated in over 30 community theater productions, primarily in the area of light design and sound. He displayed his artwork and photography at various art exhibits and won numerous awards. He loved the game of tennis and played throughout his adult life. He also competed in the Senior Olympics and won medals, including for the high jump. Some of the many other activities Elijah enjoyed were pickleball, golf, gardening, knitting, walking, and being a handyman.

Elijah leaves to cherish his memory two daughters, Jessonya Ravelle (Anthony) Fitzpatrick, and Natasha Anée Sansom; and his son, Elija Kamal (Shanna) Sansom; 10 grandchildren, Jazmyn, DeVonte', Jocelyn, Jayla, Tavon, Jelena, Jessica, Elias, Elliott and Elianna; 4 great grandchildren, Jonathan, Jaya, Jayde and Jayceon; siblings, Sandra Harrison, Pamela Brown, Lorna Whitfield and Linda Rice; many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. He also leaves his loyal canine companion, Josephine. He was preceded in death by his father, Elijah "Rock" Sansom; his mother Carrie Ethel Sansom; and his beloved Weimaraner, Jacob Marley.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Peoria County Animal Control Protection Services/PAWS (2600 NE Perry Avenue, Peoria, IL 61603) and the Tri-County Peoria Urban League - www.tcpul.com (317 N. MacArthur Hwy, Peoria, IL 61605).

A memorial service will be held at 2 pm, Saturday, March 25, 2023 at Bethel United Methodist Church, 210 N. Richard Pryor Place, Peoria, IL 61605. A visitation will begin at 1:30 pm. Pastor Tyson T. Parks, III. will officiate.

Simons Mortuary has been entrusted with arrangements. Online condolences may be made at SimonsMortuary.com.

The service will be live streamed on Simons Mortuary's Website or Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Simons-Mortuary-232095303487150> promptly AT THE TIME OF THE SERVICE (Central Time).

Due to Covid-19, social distancing is encouraged to be consistent with recommendations from the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA), funeral home directors have been instructed and should follow CDC guidelines on gatherings, including those directly related to funerals, visitations, or graveside services.

*In an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, we ask that everyone in attendance: wear a face mask and refrain from hugging, kissing and shaking hands (as hard as it is to see someone you care about and not touch them).

*It is our responsibility as Funeral Directors, to do everything we can to advise families in order to honor our beloved Families and to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Thanks in advance for your cooperation!

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR **25**. 1:30 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Bethel United Methodist Church

210 N. Richard Pryor Pl.

Peoria, IL 61605

http://www.peoriabethelumc.org/index.php?page=About_Us&ion=welcome

Memorial Service

MAR **25**. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Bethel United Methodist Church

210 N. Richard Pryor Pl.

Peoria, IL 61605

http://www.peoriabethelumc.org/index.php?page=About_Us&ion=welcome

Tribute Wall



“ *Simons Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Elijah Thorne Sansom*



Simons Mortuary - March 30, 2023 at 12:25 PM

BU

“ *You all have my deepest sympathy in your loss of Elijah. I first became acquainted with him through stage performances and the audio effects he assisted with at Roosevelt Magnet School in 2005-06. After that I interacted with him through the IL Art League. He will be missed.*

Barbara Unes

Barbara Unes - March 30, 2023 at 07:57 PM



“ 6 files added to the album Funeral Program



Simons Mortuary - March 30, 2023 at 12:25 PM

PM

“ We the House of Worship Church located 1321 West Lincoln ave. Peoria Illinois we were sad to hear of our dear brother Elijah's passing. Brother Elijah came to us in 1989 after reading an article in the Peoria Journal Star about a children's church. He love working with the youth and helped us in many ways, fixing things around the church that needed to be done helping sharing his knowledge with the children. He was a very caring and helpful person who shared his talents not just our church but as I see many other organizations and that was wonderful. He had that Spirit about him helping in any way he could. He took lots of fun trips with the church and the children and he really seemed to enjoyed himself he stayed with us about 5 years and we were so happy and blessed that he was with us. Hear a few pictures of our brother Elijah that I took because he was always behind the camera most of the times. May the Lord rest his soul, we loved him dearly. 🌹



Pastor Ronald Mables Sr.&Denise Mables - March 25, 2023 at 02:55 PM

JS

“ Only knew Elijah slightly from contact at CAC. I know he was a fine photographer, and always recall his kindness and warm smile. So sorry he is gone too soon.

Judith Koren Shanahan - March 25, 2023 at 11:11 AM

KB

“ We met Elijah and Diane on the tennis court, playing against them in mixed doubles in the early 80's. Since then it seemed he was always present at social events, concerts, and fundraisers for various organizations. He was a quiet and valued contributor to many worthwhile causes in the Peoria area. May he rest in peace
Keith and Cheryll Boswell

Keith Boswell - March 25, 2023 at 10:57 AM

LM

“ Dear Kamal and family. Our prayers have been and will continue to be with you during the days of adjustment following your father's heavenly homegoing. We are in the Quad cities today and not able to be in town for the funeral. Know that we care and follow your every post on FB. Your parents are so proud of their children and your children. God bless you all as you move forward with wonderful memories of a very good man. Blessings to all. So sad to miss connecting with you ❤️🙏❤️

Linda Maricle - March 25, 2023 at 10:06 AM

DH

“ I am honored to share the highlights of my friendship with Elijah Sansom.

Elijah and I grew up just a few blocks from each other on the West Side of

Detroit Michigan. He was a scholar and a very strong and focused athlete.

We were football teammates at Chadsey High School in Detroit, Michigan, and at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Just as we lived only a few blocks from each other in Detroit, we did the same in Ann Arbor and walked nearly a mile from home to class in both high school and college, rain, snow, or sunshine.

Elijah was super intense as a teammate both on the football field and as a scholar in the classroom as a Chadsey High School Explorer and in college as a Michigan Wolverine. Elijah was intense and he hit as hard on the football field as he hit the books in the classroom.

We both also became members of the Sigma Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity as University of Michigan college students. It was a special honor to be a sponsor for Elijah and to congratulate him later on his graduation from the University of Michigan. Among other blessings, he will be remembered as a brilliantly focused student-athlete and "elevated spirit."

Go Blue Elijah...Go Blue Nupes!

Derrick Humphries - March 24, 2023 at 04:34 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Elijah Thorne Sansom.



March 24, 2023 at 04:26 PM



“ I would like to extend my condolences to Elijah’s family at this sad time. I started at Caterpillar about the same time as Elijah....although most of us in the Gas Turbine Group called him Eli. We both had degrees in Aerospace Engineering and thus had many conversations about how we both ended up at an earthmoving company. It is interesting that Eli and I spent our entire careers at Cat. Eli was so well roundedplayed football at Michigan, obtained an engineering degree, and could visualize and interpret the world around him through photography. I am glad to have known Eli.

Greg Harness - March 24, 2023 at 04:05 PM



“ Elijah worked the Jazz and Art Fest with me down at Peoria’s Riverfront. He and Josephine visited my artist booth every year at the Peoria Art Guild Fine Art Fair and he supported my artwork. My sincerest condolences to his family. Natalie Jackson

Natalie Jackson - March 22, 2023 at 10:27 PM



Thank you, Natalie.

Elija Kamal - March 24, 2023 at 12:09 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. Elijah Thorne Sansom.*



March 22, 2023 at 02:40 PM



“ *I wish to express my condolences to the Sansom family. I worked with Eli when we both worked in Engine Research at Caterpillar. I learned a lot from Eli in my time with him. He always had weird stuff on his desk for which I'd tease him unmercifully. I remember a small tree branch he had for a long time, he said it caught his eye. I guess Eli could see things that the rest of us miss or turn a blind eye to. Oh so many memories, all good.*

Anthony Sloan - March 22, 2023 at 02:36 PM



I remember Elijah from elementary and high school in Detroit, Michigan. I didn't know what happened to him after high school but I remember him as a very nice friend. He gave me an eighth grade picture and one from high school, both of which I still have. I was also friends with his sister, Sandra who, also, gave me her high school picture. From reading the obituary, he seemed active and committed during life which is why I'm saddened to hear of his passing. It's hard to understand why people like Elijah leave this life so early...I'm sure God has a special place for him. I'm praying for his family.

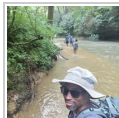
Jacqueline A Carter (Hunt) - March 22, 2023 at 05:57 PM



Thank you, Jacqueline Anita. As his son, I appreciate hearing his story from a different len. You were the Senior class secretary. He noted you in his prom book with a dash next to your name as someone he either knew or was friends with (I guess was). I just discovered that book a few days ago in the attic.

Thank you for being his childhood/teen friend. God wants us that remain to serve Him until it is our turn to made that transition.

Eliza Kamal - March 24, 2023 at 12:32 AM



Anthony Sloan, I just realized that 2 people shared their thoughts on the same post. Anyway, Anthony, thank you for sharing your memories of my father. It is interested to think about times he came home from work in my childhood, and retrospectively, understanding he may have just been interacting with you on some of those days.

Eliza Kamal - March 24, 2023 at 07:18 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Elijah Thorne Sansom.*



March 22, 2023 at 09:24 AM



“ *Our thoughts and prayers for the family of Elijah Sansom. RIP Sir*

Roscoe & Geraldine Mccall - March 21, 2023 at 11:28 PM



Thank you

Eliza Sansom - December 04, 2023 at 05:34 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Elijah Thorne Sansom.*



March 21, 2023 at 10:10 PM



“ *I have very fond memories of Eli. Sometimes we had heated conversations but we always remained friends. R.I.P. friend.*

Ruth Rogan - March 21, 2023 at 08:44 PM



He was always up for a challenge. □

Elija Kamal - March 24, 2023 at 12:34 AM