

Family Tributes

Dad,
The World will feel dimmer since you've gone. I will miss your stories about being a Bus-Driver with Coach USA. Listening to you play dominos with your friends. The love you share with me is invaluable. To hear your laughter as it echoes the air. The love you gave, so strong, so true. Will guide my steps in all I do. Though life has changed, and time moves fast. The memories I made with you will always last.

~Your loving son, June

Daddy,
I knew this day would come, but nothing could have prepared me for a life without my father. As your daughter, I have never wanted for anything. You gave all of us a good life and provided the love, guidance, and support we needed to grow into the adults we are today. I often think about how you cared for Momma until her very last day on this earth, never once complaining. You showed me the true meaning of unconditional love and devotion. I only hope I was able to give you even a small measure of the love and care that you so selflessly gave to Momma. Rest well with our ancestors, knowing that I will honor your legacy by living my life to the fullest, with purpose and without regrets.

~Love always, Your daughter Ms. Lynn

Grandpa, thank you for the love, laughter, wisdom, and memories you gave us. Whether you were teaching us how to play dominoes, making us laugh, or simply spending time with us, every moment was a gift. Your strength, kindness, and the love you shared with our family will remain in our hearts forever. Though we will miss you more than words can say, we find comfort in knowing your love and legacy will live on through each of us. No matter how much time passes, you will always be our Grandpa.

~With all our love, Your Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren

We little knew that morning God was going to call your name.

In life we loved you dearly In death we do the same.

It broke our hearts to lose you, You did not go alone.

For part of us went with you, The day God called you home.

You left us beautiful memories, Your love is still our guide,

And though we cannot see you, you are always by our side.

Our family chain is broken And nothing seems the same, But as God calls us one by one The chain will link again.

~ Your sister, Verga

A brother is a best friend that you get from God. Even now when I don't have him with me, my memories with my brother makes me smile every time

~Your brother-in-law, Charles

Pallbearers

James Earl Rivers Delroy A. Brown

James Malcolm Rivers Kerry Leon Jackson

Charles McBride Jr. David Harvey Jr.

Honorary Pallbearers

Leon Slaughter

John Smith

Acknowledgement

We, the family of the late James Will Rivers, wish to express our deepest gratitude for the overwhelming love, support, and sympathy shown to us during this time of sorrow. Your comforting words, prayers, visits, floral tributes, and kind gestures have been a great source of strength.

Though our hearts are heavy with grief, we find comfort in knowing how much James was loved and cherished by so many. Your presence and kindness remind us that we do not walk this path alone.

A special thank you to Hursen Funeral Home, family, friends, and all who helped make the service and arrangements meaningful and dignified.

Interment

GLEN OAK CEMETERY
4301 Roosevelt Rd
Hillside, IL 60162

Repast

HURSEN FUNERAL HOME
4001 Roosevelt Rd.
Hillside, IL 60162

CELEBRATING

The Life Of



James Will Rivers

SUNRISE - DECEMBER 20, 1939

SUNSET - JULY 14, 2026

Memorial Sevice
Hursen Funeral Home
4001 Roosevelt Rd.
Hillside, IL 60162

Forever in our hearts

Obituary

James Will "Jay" Rivers was born on December 20, 1939, in Lake Providence, Louisiana, to Willie Lee and Beatrice Rivers, who both preceded him in death. At a young age, he accepted Jesus Christ. He was also preceded in death by his beloved wife, Martha Rivers; his siblings Carrie Mae Wright (Eddie), Willie Rivers (Katherine), Leroy Rivers (Lois), Pearlie Mae Rivers; his children, Betty Jean Clay and Robert Lee Clay.

Affectionately known as "Jay," his love of driving began as a school bus driver in his hometown. On October 18, 1963, he joined the United States Army, serving his country with honor before building a career doing what he loved most.

After moving to Chicago in 1959, Jay met Martha Ratliff on the very day he arrived. That chance meeting became a love story that lasted more than 50 years. Martha was the love of his life, his best friend, and his greatest blessing. He affectionately called her his "antique, rare, and beautiful." Together they built a home filled with love and raised their children, James Earl Rivers and Coretta Lynn Rivers, while Jay proudly embraced Betty Jean and Robert Lee as his own.

Jay's passion for driving became his life's work. He served for more than 20 years as a Chicago Transit Authority bus operator before retiring and continuing to drive with Coach USA, transporting professional sports teams throughout the Chicago area. Behind the wheel was where he felt most at home.

While Jay loved driving, nothing brought him more joy than a good game of dominoes. Known as "Doc Big Jim," he was a master of the game and could spend hours around the table with family and friends. Every game was filled with laughter, friendly competition, spirited debates, and the colorful language that children definitely were not supposed to hear. Jay especially enjoyed teaching others to play, sharing the same clever strategies that made him legendary among his CTA buddies

More than anything, Jay loved his family. Nothing brought him greater joy than spending time with Martha, his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. His humor, generous heart, and the love he shared with those around him will never be forgotten.

Jay leaves to cherish his memory his loving children, James Earl Rivers and Coretta Lynn Rivers; six beloved grandchildren; five treasured great grandchildren; his brother, Charlie Rivers (Lillie); his sister, Vergie Mae McBride (Charles); and a host of nieces, nephews, extended family, and dear friends.

Jay's legacy is one of love, family, laughter, miles traveled, and countless domino games shared with the people he loved most. Though he will be deeply missed, his memory will continue to live on in the hearts of all who knew and loved him.

Order Of Service

Welcome

Daphne Brown

Opening Prayer

Aisha Robinson

Soloist

Shakita Watson

Reading of the Obituary

Joyce Dawkins

Words from Children

Coretta L. Rivers

James E. Rivers

Words from Grandchildren

Grandchildren

Remarks (3 mins)

Friends & Family

Soloist

Shakita Watson

Final Refelction & Prayer

Daphne Anderson

Final Viewing

James Will Rivers

A Life Well Driven

