



## Leonard Rucker, Sr.

May 1, 1923 - February 19, 2021

### Obituary

The world received a gift on May 1st, 1923 when Leonard Deltone Rucker was born to the union of Clarence Elmer Rucker and Lula Mae (Fewell) Rucker in Knob Noster, Missouri. He was 2nd of 9 children. Young Leonard grew up in the Warrensburg, Missouri area and attended Center view schools.

Leonard Rucker married the love of his life Mary Alice Rucker on February 6th, 1948. They have been married for 73 years and were blessed with 7 children.

Leonard Rucker enlisted in the Army where he finished his education. He completed several courses and qualifications including NCO Combat Intelligence, M47 Tank Commander, and TK Gunnery Instructor. He was a veteran of World War II and the Korean Conflict. He was a member of the 758th Tank Battalion and the 761st Tank Battalion. With their slogan "Come Out Fighting", the 761st were known as the Black Panthers. In 1944, the 761st Black Panther Tank Battalion became the 1st black armored unit to enter combat. The 761st came out fighting and continued to battle for 183 consecutive days during World War II. During this time the 761st was credited with 130,000 enemy casualties, the capturing, destroying or liberation of 30 major towns, 4 airfields, and 3 ammunition supply dumps and a bevy of other courageous actions. The 761st participated in major engagements in France,

Holland, Germany and Luxembourg. The most significant fight was the Battle of the Bulge, which is regarded as the turning point to the Allied Forces victory. Master Sergeant Rucker (E8) amassed several awards and commendations including 5 bronze stars. In 1978 after decades of delay, the 761st Tank Battalion was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. In 1963, MSgt. Rucker retired from the Army as a Master Sergeant (E8) after 21 illustrious years of service.

After Army retirement, Mr. Rucker settled into civilian life with his wife and family in Kansas City, Missouri. He held positions at JE Dunn and DiCarlo construction companies. He embarked on a long career at the General Motors Fairfax plant in March 1964. He worked in various departments including the body shop and trim shop. In April 1988, he became the first to retire from the stamping plant at General Motors after 24 meritorious years of service.

Mr. Rucker built 2 homes from the ground up, one in Warrensburg, MO for his parents and one in Kansas City, MO for his family. He loved yard work and used his yard work time to visit with neighbors and anyone he could find to chat with, as he never met a stranger. He was affectionately referred to as "Sarge", "Uncle Buster", "Uncle Leonard" and "Easy Money" by some family and friends. He took pride in providing for and guiding his family. He spearheaded countless family reunions, family gatherings and Sunday dinners. He dedicated his life to helping others, would go out of his way to assist and was always a true friend. His numerous fantastic tales, life lessons, words of wisdom and timely advice will forever be cherished and remembered.

Leonard Rucker held all faith in God. He was a member of Allen Chapel AME Church. He served on the steward and trustee board of the church. He happily performed church groundskeeping and other maintenance as needed. He videotaped church services so those that were shut-in could watch the

sermons. He remained an active contributor and member even after his health prevented him from attending in person.

On February 19, 2021 when the trumpet sounded, Master Sergeant (E8) Leonard D. Rucker responded accordingly to receive his heavenly reward for a service well done on this earth.

He is preceded in death by his son, Dennis Leroy Rucker; his sisters, Verna Brown and Margaret Davis, and his brothers Charles, Lawrence, Hubert, George, James and Donnie.

His memory lives on through his beloved wife, Mary Alice Rucker; daughter, Gloria Casey; sons, Leonard Jr., Joseph, Arthur, Ronald, Roland, numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Funeral services will be held at 11:00 a.m., Friday, February 26, 2021, at Watkins Heritage Chapel 4000 Emanuel Cleaver II Blvd.. Visitation 09:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Interment Memorial Gardens Cemetery, SW, 228 MO-13, Warrensburg, MO 64093. Due to COVID-19, please respect social distancing, face covering guidelines. Temperature checks will be enforced for all guests. Services provided by Lawrence A Jones & Sons Funeral Chapels.

To send flowers  
to the family or plant a tree  
in memory of Leonard Rucker, Sr., please visit our floral store.

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# Tribute Wall

DF

“ *Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Leonard Rucker, Sr. by Dennis W Forbush. Send Flowers Rest in peace Uncle Leonard. You set an example for all of us to follow and you will forever be in our hearts...Dennis W Forbush*

Dennis W Forbush - May 25, 2023 at 01:43 PM



“ *Beautiful in blue was purchased for the family of Leonard Rucker, Sr.. Send Flowers Just a small token for an amazing man. Our deepest condolences to the Rucker family for your sad loss. The Parks family.*

May 25, 2023 at 01:43 PM

ES

“ *Sentimental thoughts was purchased for the family of Leonard Rucker, Sr.. Send Flowers*

Expression of Sympathy - May 25, 2023 at 01:43 PM

VP

“ *Feathery palm plant was purchased for the family of Leonard Rucker, Sr. by Vivian Pulley. Send Flowers From Donnie D Rucker II, Jake Brucell & Vivian Pulley. Our thoughts and Prayers are with the Rucker Family . Vivian Pulley*

Vivian Pulley - May 25, 2023 at 01:43 PM

DR

“ *Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Leonard Rucker, Sr. by Dale, Pam, Shelia, Sharon, Shaletha and Dion Rucker . Send Flowers

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Dale, Pam, Shelia, Sharon, Shaletha and Dion Rucker - May 25, 2023 at 01:43 PM

LS

“ *A Memorial tree was ordered in memory of Leonard Rucker, Sr. by Love, Shonte, Phire, Tyiece, Dale II, Dion and Shaletha. Plant a TreeWe lost the last of one of the great ones and heaven gained an angel.Love, Shonte, Phire, Tyiece, Dale II, Dion and Shaletha*

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Love, Shonte, Phire, Tyiece, Dale II, Dion and Shaletha - May 25, 2023 at 01:43 PM

LJ

“ *If your husband and father was the same Leonard Rucker, and I believe he was, that worked for my father at Joseph's Furniture at 42nd & Troost in the 60's and maybe early 70's I've thought about him over the years. He was retired military, and I remember that he went to the commissary regularly—he would kindly get me lower priced cigarettes there. I was in high school and college then and worked there over the summer. He definitely made an impression on me—that was a long time ago! He was such a nice man, everyone liked him, and my dad thought highly of him as well. I'm so sorry for your loss.*

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Lynn Joseph - February 27, 2021 at 01:28 PM

LG

“ *Joe and Gloria - condolences on the loss of your father.*

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Lee A Goergen - February 26, 2021 at 04:26 PM

LM

“ Mr. Rucker was a great man that loved God, family and community. He was a role model to us young guns growing up. I emulate his love for family and work ethic to this day. To a great patriot; The Combat Arm of Decision.”. RIP

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**Larry Myers** - February 26, 2021 at 12:38 PM

ER

“ I am very honored to have known this grandeous African American gentleman who left his profound mark on our world made possible through my 50+ years, long friendship with his daughter (Gloria). Wow! What a phenomenal legacy to leave for his beautiful wife, family, friends, church and the whole Kansas City community as we salute his long life of service. I extend my heart & prayers to the Rucker family as you cherish the memories of your beloved patriarch.

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**Elinora Reynolds** - February 26, 2021 at 10:47 AM

DC

“ praying for here in colorado GOD will take care of you much love to the cous.Mary and family Deacon K Leroy Childs

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**Deacon K Leroy Childs** - February 25, 2021 at 02:11 PM