

The Life, Legacy and Love of

Bernard Everett Thompson Sr.

Bernard Everett Thompson Sr., was born August 10, 1945, in Chicago, Illinois to Wilbur and Jessie Nolan Thompson. He was the third of their four children.

He attended Chicago public schools and graduated from DuSable High School. With the Cold War and the draft inescapable facts of life in 1962, Bernard joined the U.S. Army. He served for twenty one years, with four tours of combat in Viet Nam, as that war raged. He was assigned to stations in Europe, Asia, and across the USA. His duties were varied: paratrooper, helicopter crew chief, military policeman, medical lab technician, paralegal/court reporter and on attachment to the US Embassy security detail. Bernard was awarded various medals for efficiency, diligence, leadership, and valor in combat. He took college courses and earned enough credits for a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering.

Bernard parlayed his years of service in the JAG office into a civilian career as a paralegal at a K Street law firm in Washington DC in 1983. An opportunity to make some extra money at Christmas time started Bernard down a new career path. Instead of taking and making calls as a paralegal, Bernard became a tile and marble setter. He enjoyed the precision and the permanence of enduring construction made to exacting standards. He honed his craft at various tile companies and then worked as an independent contractor until retirement.

He was united in holy matrimony to Beverly Rankin, and from this union, they were blessed with two sons, Bernard Jr. and Ara.

Bernard was a hard worker but he had other interests, too. He was an avid reader, he loved fishing, action-packed movies, classic TV Westerns, and soul music. He followed professional boxing and the Chicago Bulls. He took an interest in cooking, and was proud of his secret recipes for rice pudding, barbecued ribs and meatloaf.

He leaves to cherish his memory, his wife of 45 years, Beverly Thompson; sons, Bernard Jr. and Ara "Dante" Thompson; daughter-in-law LaTrese Thompson; granddaughter Tiara Beard; sister Joyce Robinson, of Enid, OK; brother Gerald Thompson, of Los Angeles, CA; sister-in-law Rita J. Thompson; goddaughter Leanna Rankin; and a host of nieces, nephews, in-laws and other relatives and friends.

Bernard was preceded in death by his oldest sister, Barbara Holmes and parents Wilbur and Jessie Nolan Thompson.