



NOT, HOW DID HE DIE, BUT HOW DID HE LIVE?

Not, how did he die, but how did he live?
Not, what did he gain, but what did he give?
These are the units to measure the worth
Of a man as a man, regardless of his birth.
Nor what was his church, nor what was his creed?
But had he befriended those really in need?
Was he ever ready, with words of good cheer,
To bring back a smile, to banish a tear?
Not what did the sketch in the newspaper say,
But how many were sorry when he passed away?

Acknowledgements

Words of thanks seem so inadequate for all the kindness and love shown to our family. We thank you for the comforting calls, encouraging visits, lovely cards and sincere words of solace. We are finding strength in knowing earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal. May God bless you richly for blessing us.

The Family of Robert J. Crayton, Jr.

Repast for Family

118 North Olive Street • Fayetteville, NC 28305



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PEOPLES

Funeral Home of Whiteville

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Sunrise: March 29, 1977

Sunset: January 7, 2023

A MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR

Robert Jeffrey Crayton, Jr

Monday, January 30, 2023 • 11 a.m.

**Peoples Funeral Home of Whiteville
707 Vinson Blvd. • Whiteville, NC 28472**

Obituary

Robert J. Crayton Jr. (Smiley) was born on Tuesday, March 29, 1977, in Brooklyn, New York to Sandra D. Smith (Crayton) and Robert J. Crayton, Sr. Robert departed this life on Saturday, January 7, 2023.

Robert grew up a very happy child with a bright future, unafraid to take on challenges. He was given the nickname “Smiley” by his grandmother, Kikie, because he always had the biggest smile. He was a jokester who loved playing video games and going to the park with his dad to play basketball, which he grew to love and passed on to his first born, Robert J. Crayton, III (Poppa). Poppa began reading at 2 ½ years of age spelling the name of Allen Iverson of the Philadelphia 76ers.

The traumatic and early passing of Rob Jr’s father, a Vietnam War Veteran, profoundly impacted Rob at the young age of eight years old. He often spoke about that loss countless times this past year as he struggled with mental and physical illnesses.

Rob was educated in parochial school, private school and preparatory school. Shortly after graduation from high school he joined the Army where he met and married Athalia Athena (Ferron) Crayton; loving wife (who preceded him in death) and mother to his four beloved children (three of whom, who also preceded him in death.)

During his two year tour in the Army, from June 1997 – October 2000, Rob entertained and performed stand up comedy for the officers at dinner (which he enjoyed), in addition to his duties as a chemical operations specialist. Performing came natural for Rob having started at the early age of seven as “Mr. Bojangles” at the YM/YWCA after school center. Rob stood out in whatever he chose to do. He excelled in sports earning the “Roberta Clemente Award”; participated in the youth community choir that competed in the McDonald’s Gospelfest featuring Bishop Hezekiah Walker and the Williams Brothers.

Upon leaving the Army Rob received an honorable discharge and began life with Athalia. Poppa was born one year later. Rob continued to pursue his dreams as his family grew; and while working at a youth center. He entered a Rap Challenge on BETs 106 & Park, winning the first round of the competition which helped to catapult his acting career. He’s been in TV commercials; played “Tank” in Southern Fried Stings (2010); “Let the Church Say Amen”, directed by Regina King (2010); the Charlotte Black Film Festival (Nominee–2014) “Life of a Struggling Actor”; Peachy in Marvel’s Ant-Man movie; football star Warren Sapp on NBC’s “Young Rock”. Rob performed in numerous films and TV series, including the role of Nick Kovack in HBOs “Ballers”; “The Inspectors”; “Staircase”; “Wu -Tang Clan”; Disney’s “Safety” and many others.

He has been an inspiration to all who knew and loved him. He not only pursued his career; he was a loving husband, father, son, brother, uncle, nephew, cousin and friend. He coached his son’s YMCA basketball team, took his children to and from school and activities, assisted with homework on a daily basis and performed in a father and son Rap Session on Father’s Day in 2021.

December 2021 – January 2022, began a cascade of events, starting with COVID-19 that impacted the family, and Rob more severely due to underlying conditions. His physical and mental health declined drastically ending in the loss of those we loved so dear. Rob leaves to cherish his memory: Robert III (Poppa) of NC, a loving mother and sister, Pastor Sandra D. Smith and Shamaya M. Taylor, of PA; a host of in-laws; aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Order of Service

OFFICIATING Pastor Anthony Rowell
New Mount Zion Church, Whiteville, NC

SELECTION..... The Reverend Alonzo Braggs

SCRIPTURE

Old Testament (Psalm 23)..... Minister Gloria Parker-Riddick
New Mount Zion Church, Whiteville, NC

New Testament (1 Corinthians 15:52-57) Reverend Rhonda Coleman-Brissett
Bethlehem of Judea Church, Hempstead, NY

PRAYER OF COMFORT..... Minister Joyce Graves

CHURCH RESOLUTIONS:

Bethlehem of Judea Church, Hempstead, NY Reverend Rhonda Coleman-Brissett
New Mount Zion Church, Whiteville, NC Dr. Selena Rowell

REFLECTIONS (2 minute limit, please)

New Mount Zion Church..... Deaconess Sallie Threadgill
Family..... Deirdre Wilkerson
Bethlehem of Judea Church, Hempstead, NY..... Reverend Eva Carolyn Hinton
Angry Troll Productions Joshua Stephens

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS Loris McClellon, Family

SOLO

EULOGY Pastor Anthony Rowell
New Mount Zion Church, Whiteville, NC

RECESSIONAL

INTERMENT
Sandhills State Veterans Cemetery
8220 Bragg Blvd
Spring Lake, NC 28390