



CSM (Ret) James Hyatt Merritt, US Army

August 10, 1930 - July 28, 2019

CSM (Ret) James Hyatt Merritt, US Army beloved father, grandfather, brother and friend went to be with the Lord on July 28, 2019 at the age of 88 at home surrounded by his family. James was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas and Ruth Merritt Sr. and brother Thomas Merritt, Jr. He is survived by his loving wife, Dorothy Lee Merritt; his sons, Geoffrey and wife Susan, all of San Antonio; Dan and wife Anne of Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota; grandchildren Christopher Lee Merritt, James Manuel Merritt, Sabrina Marie Merritt and Maya Rose Merritt; and special family member, Jessica Villarreal along with extended family and friends.

James was also "Grandpa" to many of the extended family in San Antonio, including Jessalyn, Johnny, Jeven, Jaydelyn, Matthew and Angelina. He will be greatly missed by his sister in law and husband, Robert and Louise Harris.

James served in the Texas Army National Guard, Army Reserves and Army for over 31 years. Among many of his military duties, he served as an Operations Sergeant with the 36th Infantry Division, as the Command Sergeant Major for the 49th Division Artillery, and finally as Division Command Sergeant Major for the 49th Armored Division. His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (3rd Award) and the Texas Federal Service Medal (3rd Award). He was also a

member of the Order of Saint Barbara, a military honor society of the US Army for Field Artillery. James was active in the National Guard Association of Texas and served as the NGAT President from 1975 to 1976. During his tenure as NGAT President, he was the driving force in improving facilities and other personal services at North Fort Hood for Reserve and National Guard troops.

He was a Research Scientist at the US Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine for over 40 years. James did blood chemistry research on Apollo program astronauts in the 1960's. Later in his career, he was the author and co-author of numerous scientific publications. He also represented the School of Aerospace Medicine many times at scientific conferences overseas in Europe in the 1990's. As a researcher he was also a member of the American Chemical Society, The Aerospace Medical Association, and the Bioelectromagnetic Society.

James spent much of his time volunteering for Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) during the 1970's and 1980's. He spent many hours contributing to the success of sports programs by serving as commissioner and president at the parish and city level. He worked tireless hours in improving the conditions of playing fields and courts for youth sports participants.

He mentored several students at St. Gregory the Great Catholic School after his retirement. He also spent many hours volunteering at the school science lab where he shared his passion for science with many of the upper unit students of St. Gregory.

James was a faithful Catholic who, along with his wife, was an Associate Member of the Union of Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. They both were friends of many of the Presentation Sisters at the convent on Callaghan Road.

James was an intellect and avid reader, especially of history and historical biographies. Even in his final days, he was still working on his reading list. He once said his mother Ruth Merritt gave him his love for classical music which she played in their rural South Texas home in the 1930's. James particularly loved the work of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart including Don Giovanni, The Magic Flute and especially Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (A little Night Music).

The family wishes to thank the nurses and staff of Signal Hospice (Mabel, Janna, Tasha, Simone and Chaplain Clark) and Pride Personal Health Service (Ana, Angela, Becky and April) for their care and compassion in helping to take care of James prior to his passing.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that contributions may be made in his name to St. Gregory the Great Catholic School for the purchase of science lab equipment.

SERVICES

Visitation will begin at 6:30 P.M. followed by a Rosary at 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, August 7, 2019 at Mission Park Funeral Chapels North, 3401 Cherry Ridge. The Funeral Mass will begin at 9:30 A.M. on Thursday, August 8, 2019 at St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church, 600 Dewhurst. Interment with Full Military Honors will follow at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

Cemetery Details

Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery

1520 Harry Wurzbach
San Antonio, TX 78209

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 7. 6:30 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels Cherry Ridge
3401 Cherry Ridge Dr
San Antonio, TX 78230
(210) 349-1414
<https://www.missionparks.com/>

Rosary

AUG 7. 7:00 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels North Cherry Ridge
3401 Cherry Ridge Drive
San Antonio, TX 78230

Funeral Mass

AUG 8. 9:30 AM (CT)

St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church
700 Dewhurst
San Antonio, TX 78213
(210) 342-0281