



Joe Thomas Smilling

November 18, 1936 - April 1, 2018

Heaven's Gate opened on Sunday, April 1, 2018 at Sentara Norfolk General in Norfolk, VA and God stretched forth His arms and called our beloved husband and family patriarch into eternal rest. Joe Thomas Smilling (otherwise known as "Duke") by his family and friends. He was the oldest child of the late Lodie and Sadie (Davis) Smilling. He was born on November 18, 1936 in Dillon County. He believed strongly in the sense of family and was known for always saying "if you're a Smilling, you better look good". He loved hard and he loved well. Even now, we can still hear him jokingly say "I'm doing what old people do, looking out the window and eating cantaloupe."

Joe was educated in the Dillon County Public School System. After graduating from Gordon High, he entered the U.S. Navy where he served diligently and faithfully for 20 years. He traveled extensively throughout his military career. After retiring from the Navy, Joe went on to work for QED Pumps and IngleSoll in Portsmouth, VA until he retired again. He had a strong work ethic and received numerous medals and accommodations because of his ethics. On August 9, 1959, Joe married the love of his life Maxine Leach of North Carolina. They made Portsmouth, VA their home where they spent many years together of love happiness and togetherness. For fifty eight years, they were husband and wife.

Joe was preceded in death by his mother (Sadie), father (Lodie Joe), two brothers (James and Lodie C) and four sisters (Bessie, Eva, Lillie and Mary Ann).

He leaves to cherish his memories, his faithful and loving wife of 58 years Maxine (of the home), one brother Carnell (Betty) Smiling of Shelby, NC, an adopted son, Michael (Lorna) Taylor of Lexington Park, MD, a special sister-in-law Gloria J Smiling of Dillon SC, one special brother-in-law Hezekiah Ward, Jr. of Blenheim, SC. He also leaves a host of nieces, nephews, other family members and friends.

A husband, a brother, a patriarch, an uncle, a friend, a servant of our great country, Joe was all of these and so much more. He will be greatly missed.

Cemetery Details

Albert G Horton Jr. Veterans Memorial Cemetery

5310 Milner's Road
Suffolk, VA

Previous Events

Visitation

APR **10**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

J.T. Fisher Funeral Services
1248 N. George Washington Hwy.
Chesapeake, VA 23323
(757) 487-3700
info@jtfisherfuneralservices.com
<https://www.jtfisherfuneralservices.com>

Service

APR **11**. 12:30 PM (ET)

J. T. Fisher Funeral Services Chapel
1248 N. George Washington Hwy
Chesapeake, VA

Tribute Wall

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“ *I'm so sorry for your family's loss. Please take comfort in knowing God will take away the sting of death (Hosea 13:14).*

Angela Senegal - April 02, 2018 at 06:30 PM

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Fair winds and following seas shipmate. May God bless and keep you. It's been a pleasure serving with you in the military in the defense of our country. RIP!!

Elmer Long Jr SCPO USN-Ret - April 10, 2018 at 06:01 PM