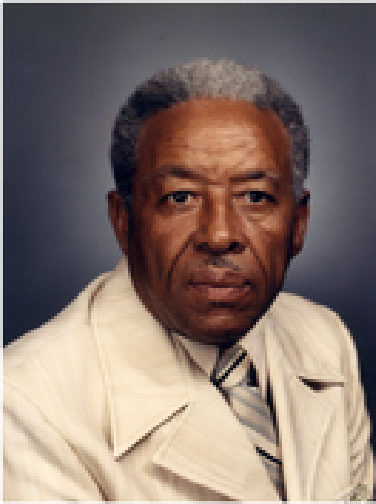


Obituary



Born: Friday, May 21, 1920

Died: Wednesday, July 13, 2011

Services: 11:00 a.m., Saturday, July 23, 2011 at Mt. Olive A.M.E. Church, 2754 Orange Street, Ft. Myers, Florida.

Richard Vaughn Stebbins was born on May 21, 1920 in Arcadia, Florida to the late Emmett and Lillar Stebbins. He was the youngest of four siblings who preceded him in death, David Stebbins, Charles Stebbins, Lillar Stebbins Johnson, and Emmett Stebbins. His father died when he was two years old and he often told many stories of how poor his family was but how much his mother valued education. The stories are endless of his mother's quest for her children to gain an education so that they could excel beyond her abilities. At a time that education was not available, especially to Negroes, he and all of his siblings graduated from High School and 3 of them graduated from college. At an early age he joined Elizabeth Baptist Church in Arcadia, Florida.

Service Summary

Visitation

6:00 PM to 8:00 PM, Fri Jul 22, 2011

Hickson Funeral Home

3308 Martin Luther King Blvd.
Ft. Myers, FL 33916

Funeral Service

11:00 AM Sat Jul 23, 2011

Location: - *Not available* -

In 1938, he graduated from Smith - Brown High School in Arcadia, Florida and attended several colleges to include Bethune -Cookman College, Edward Waters College, Johnson C. Smith and Morehouse College. After serving in the United States Navy during World War II, he returned to graduate from Florida A & M College (now Florida A & M University) with dual majors, Bachelors of Science Degrees in English and Mathematics.

He was proud of his siblings. After the death of their father in 1922, his brother, David had to come home from Savannah State College to take care of the family giving up his opportunity to graduate from college. His brother, David, worked hard and made his mother and his siblings his first priority until he had his own family.

His brother, Charles sued the State of Florida for equal pay for all teachers. Charles Stebbins was represented by Attorney Thurgood Marshall who later became a Supreme Court Justice. He won the suit with the stipulation that he could never teach again in the State of Florida. His Sister Lillar asked him the question, "Did you really win if you can't come home to work?"

His sister, Lillar was responsible to take care of the two younger children, Emmett and Richard. She took care of them to include nurturing and disciplining them. It was his sister Lillar, who encouraged him to go back to college to get his degree. She said to him, "you might be smart but how much are they paying you for your brains." With that encouragement, he went back to college and graduated. She also told him that he needed to be on a job with a contract

because of his outspoken personality.

His brother, Emmet Stebbins was one of the original blacks in the Air Force. He went to flight school but could not pass the eye exam. Emmett later told stories of discrimination that confirmed he should not be an Air Force pilot. After graduation from college his brother, Emmet, attempted to work at the Post Office in Arcadia but was told they did not have any open positions. Instead, they hired another person. He sued the Post Office and won the suit. The stipulation in the suit was that the Post Office could not hire another person for many years.

On August 2, 1942 Richard married Helen Elissa Harvin. They lived briefly in Arcadia, Florida with his mother, Lillar Stebbins, who Helen said taught her how to care for Lillar's baby, Richard. His wife preceded him in death on January 5, 2009 after 66 ½ years of marriage and lovingly caring for him.

He taught High School and finally Middle School in several Florida counties. His final employment was with the LeeCountySchool District where he retired as a Middle School math teacher at Lee Middle School. He was a member of American Legion Post 192 for over 25 years.

Richard had an excellent command of the English language and required the same of his daughter and grandchildren. Because of his very outgoing personality and choice of "big" words in his everyday conversation, he was affectionately called "Lord Stebbins" by his friends. He loved Sunday School and was known to challenge the accepted opinions. However, his challenge was only to encourage others to think about why they believed what they believed.

He leaves to cherish and remember his life, his loving and devoted daughter Greta Stebbins Campbell (Raymond); his son, Richard Vaughn Stebbins, Jr.; six grandchildren to include his loving, devoted and adorable granddaughter Cherie Campbell Williams (Daryl) and loving, devoted and dignified grandson, Cory Raymond Campbell (Tiffany); his precious active great-grandson Daryl L. Williams, Jr.; brother-in-law, Phillip Hall of Lancaster, Pennsylvania; sister-in-law, Mary Mitchell of Tampa, Florida; a host of loving and devoted nieces and nephews, cousins, former students and friends.