

Celebration of Life
RONALD R. WALKER

Sunrise:
January 19, 1950

Sunset:
May 4, 2022

Friday ~ June 10, 2022 | Service: 11am EST
Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church
Officiant Pastor Terry D. Streeter
215 Rhode Island Ave NW, Washington, DC 20001

~ OBITUARY ~

Ronald Ricardo Walker, loving son of William Roscoe Walker and Lillie Ruth Walker, passed away on May 4, 2022, after a year's hospitalization related to lung disease. He was 72.

Ronald, known as Ricky to family and friends, was born on Jan. 19, 1950. Very early in life, Ricky displayed a cheerful, loving disposition. He grew up with two siblings, a sister, Donnette Walker Lark, and a brother, Kenneth Walker. Ricky was always joyful and adventurous and had close relationships with a large, extended family surrounding his grandmother, "Big Mama" Laura Milam, to whom he was devoted.

Ricky loved being around family and friends who knew him for his quick wit, infectious smile, and kind and compassionate spirit. As a teen, Ricky developed a passion for roller skating, joining clubs and competitions at the National Roller Skating Rink, known as the Kalorama rink.

After graduating Eastern High School, Ricky was drafted into the United States Army during the Vietnam war, and people he met thereafter called him Ronald.

In the Army, Ronald was awarded the National Defense Service Medal and received an honorable discharge after 19 months of service. During his time in the military, Ronald discovered an amazing facility for languages and quickly learned how to speak Tagalog in the Philippines, Spanish, and some Mandarin.

After his service, Ronald settled in Oakland, California, where his parents and grandmother had relocated. He worked in various jobs, including the Federal Protective Service. Ronald found his true calling in fashion and the arts. He was an excellent sketch artist, photographer and often worked as a model in the fashion industry.

Ronald returned to his hometown of Washington, DC, after several years in California. He joined the Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church on April 18, 2009. Following his baptism there, Ronald became devoted to God and the church. He joined the Men's Chorus, the Men's Ministry and the Tutoring Ministry, and often "spread the word" by sending texts of scripture passages to family and friends.

Ronald's parents and elder sister, Donnette Regina Walker-Lark, predeceased him. He leaves to mourn his loss and treasure his memory a daughter, Leatrice; two sons, Jamar and Cortez; six grandchildren; two younger sisters Tabia Berry and Victoria Walker; his brother, Kenneth; and his devoted friend, Jarroda Laraina Kelsaw. Numerous other family and friends also mourn his passing.

~ A CELEBRATION OF LIFE ~



~ A BROTHER'S POEM ~

© By Kenneth Walker - 2022

You were always there.
A child like me,
but already walking and talking.
A model for me to follow,
or choose a different way.

You were always there.
A big brother wanting to look after me.
I thought my way was bolder then.
Too young to see the love and compassion
you lived and breathed each day.

You were there when I needed rescuing
from neighborhood thugs.
My heart would soar whenever I saw you coming,
legs and fists flying to join the fray.

You were always there,
with style, flair and a talent for music and fashion.
You were there when we formed R&B singing groups
to enter talent shows.

You were there trying to teach me roller rink skating.
It didn't matter that we didn't have much success.
I was filled with pride, as I marveled and
gazed with awe as you blazed around the rink,
always ahead of the pack, forward, backward,
sideways, leaping and flying, twirling and jumping.

You were there, a regular on the local televised
Black dance show called Teen-a-rama,
a local precursor to Soul Train.
Another Teen-a-rama regular was called
"Little Larry," and everybody but me
would swear we were twins.

One Sunday at the skating rink,
You met a real cutie-pie, but all she could talk about
was Little Larry on Teen-a-rama.

So, what did you tell her?
"Little Larry is my little brother."
Have Mercy! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory!
I'll always owe you for that.

Like many of your generation
you reported for the draft for the Vietnam war.
I could see on TV the troops were droppin' like flies.
And I was scared to death for you,
'Specially since I was only a year from the draft myself.

While I admired your bravery,
I wasn't goin' nowhere.
I took my cue from Cassius Clay just before
he became Muhammad Ali.
Ain't no Viet Cong never called me no nigger.
I lacked Ali's courage to stay, resist, and
go to jail, if it came to that.
I was gonna get the hell out of there if I had to.
Run - to Canada, or wherever the white boys went.

Perhaps it was in the military where you
found your talent for languages,
in which you impressed native speakers.
You were always there.

You returned from the military to teach me
that the bruthas in the military were just
fighting mad as the bruthas in the streets.

You regaled me with the tales of Black military resistance,
of how y'all often had to fight off white bigots, including
officers you had to frag.

And you taught me Black GI language, as well as
and that gloriously intricate, intimate
handshakin, huggin' and fist-bumpin' y'all used to
greet one another,
You called that the Dapp.

Back in the world, as the military bros used to say,
you found a space in fashion, and always looked sharp,
wherever you went.
You were there in the hot nightspots
where you'd introduce me to friends of the fine
sistahs you met.

I was so proud when you found your Lord,
after a brief stumble, and made a promise
to Big Mama you never broke.
I was so happy to sit with her here at Mt. Pleasant
and witness your Baptism.

Now you've gone to live in the realm of Spirit
that your heart has always known.
Leaving us treasured memories,
far more smiles than tears.
A model of love, compassion and joy for me to follow.
I've learned to choose your way.



I Think I'll Call It Morning

By Gil Scott-Heron



*I'm gonna take myself a piece of sunshine
and paint it all over my sky.
Be no rain. Be no rain.*

*I'm gonna take the song from every bird
and make them sing it just for me.
Birds got something to teach us all
about being free.
Be no rain. Be no rain.
And I think I'll call it morning from now on.*

*Why should I survive on sadness?
And tell myself I've got to be alone?*

*Why should I subscribe to this world's
madness
knowing that I've got to live on?*

I think I'll call it morning from now on.

*I'm gonna take myself a piece of sunshine
and paint it all over my sky.
Be no rain. Be no rain.*

*I'm gonna take the song from every bird
and make them sing it just for me.
'Cause why should I hang my head?*

*Why should I let tears fall from my eyes
when I've seen everything there is to see
and I know that there ain't no sense in crying!*

I know there ain't no sense in crying!

I think I'll call it morning from now on.