



Warner Joseph Williams

September 25, 2022

Warner Joseph Williams went from labor to reward on September 25, 2022, at the age of 74. He born on June 6, 1948 to the late Thomas and Ida Mae Williams. He was a local musical artist, raised in uptown New Orleans who began his musical career at the mere age of 6, when he began playing the tenor saxophone. A year or so later while attending Blessed Sacrament Elementary School, he was selected as the 'mascot' for Xavier University Preparatory High School Band. Once he began attending Xavier Prep for high school, he was not only a band member, but was the section leader, a writer and arranger for the band. During his matriculation through high school, he also formed several bands of his own that performed throughout the city. He attended Xavier University on a full music scholarship, but soon chose to pursue a fulltime career in music. He formed a local band called the Louisiana Purchase and they performed all over the United States and Canada to include opening for the Temptations. The 'Louisiana Purchase' cut several albums with local chart toping hits such as "For The Moment" and "Baby's Love" and the remake of "Baby Come Back". After having a laryngectomy in 1994, Warner couldn't play the saxophone anymore, but refused to give up on music, so he taught himself how to play the piano. Along with playing the keyboard, Warner further pursued his musical talents through writing, arranging and directing. He was the musical director for the incomparable Irma Thomas, for almost 30 years and was often invited to play with local notable artists Marva Wright and Fats Domino. He was a sought after and

well-loved musician..... a true New Orleans legend.

He leaves to cherish his memory, his loving and devoted wife Carolyn Hall Williams; his daughters, Terri Mercadel-Luster (Brian) and Regina Mercadel of New Orleans, LA and Shannon Riddell of Oshawa, Canada; his grandchildren, Julius Gibbs (Kahlia) of Houston TX, Shelrick Bezue, Kieron Bezue and Tajh Mercadel of New Orleans, LA and Briana Riddell (Cory) of Oshawa, Canada; three great-grandsons, Kingsley Wilding and Gabriel Wilding of Oshawa, Canada and Kruze Gibbs of Houston, TX; his brothers Vincent Williams and Brennan Williams of New Orleans, LA and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, family, fellow musicians and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents Thomas Williams and Ida Mae Olivier Williams, his sister Idara Williams Elam and his brother Vaughn Williams. Family, friends and musicians are invited to attend a Mass of Christian burial that will be celebrated at St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church, 7300 Crowder Blvd., New Orleans, LA on Friday, October 14, 2022. Musical Prelude will begin at 9:30 a.m. and Mass at 10:30 a.m. Interment to follow at Southeast Louisiana Veterans Cemetery.

Professional services are entrusted to D. W. Rhodes Funeral Home 3933 Washington Ave. Please visit www.rhodesfuneral.com to sign the online guest book.

Cemetery Details

Southeast LA. Veterans Cemetery

34888 Grantham College Dr, Slidell, LA
70460
Slidell, LA 70460

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **14.** 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church
7300 Crowder Blvd
New Orleans, LA 70127

Memorial Service

OCT **14.** 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church
7300 Crowder Blvd
New Orleans, LA 70127

Tribute Wall

GG

“ I just saw this on the internet. Has truly saddened my day. Warner and I served in Korea together in the 8th Army Band. We formed a jazz rock group called Beginnings and were put on tour in Korea by the military. We have remained close friends since and got to spend a great week together on the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise when he was working with Irma. I will treasure his memory his kindness and his musical soul forever. And as he did, I will play from my heart until the end. Rest in peace my friend.

George T Gregory - November 02, 2022 at 12:15 PM

MM

“ My condolences to the William family. Warner will be truly missed by the musicians in the city of New Orleans. Rest In Peace brother.

*Parker Shy
Bass Player*

Maci Mouton - October 16, 2022 at 12:04 PM

SR

“ Sweet memories from high school of a kind, funny young man who loved music... heartfelt condolences.

Suzette Davis Reyes - October 15, 2022 at 11:48 AM

ST

“ I offer prayers, love and peace to the family. Warner was a wonderful person who shared his smile with everyone.

Shelia W. Thompson

Shelia Thompson - October 14, 2022 at 07:42 PM

DL

“ *Sending Condolences. Thank you Warner for the many great moments... Your wwoz Family.*

Dee Lindsey - October 14, 2022 at 10:48 AM

DE

“ *Mr. Warner you will never be forgotten Harmony Oaks Community Center.*



Debbie - October 13, 2022 at 09:19 PM

CO

“ *Mrs. Carolyn, Warner was such a talented loving man. Your happiness together was a true blessing. Time leaves the good memories. I miss you. When your ready Email me: XaiverGrad1971@yahoo.com*
-Connie Floyd Ferrier-Flint

Connie - October 13, 2022 at 06:14 PM

MB

“ *Knew Warner for the past 20 years. Always happy and friendly. He loved Mandina's. And his little sports betting. Rest In Peace. My friend. Mike B*

Mike B - October 13, 2022 at 04:24 PM

PH

“ My heart is truly heavy at this precious moment as I compose a dedication to my friend. I met Warner after auditioning for the Eighth United States Band located in Seoul S.Korea back in 1971... Warner introduced himself to me and welcomed me to one of the most prestigious bands in the Army... often, we would play duets together, laugh and talk about our families ... Warner contacted me once I was discharged from the Army and wanted to know did I want to play with the United Sound company and accompany the Temptations.. I moved to Detroit immediately and I was so excited ... Warner had perfect pitch and could write and arrange any song after listening to the song once .. he was an incredible musical talent and a good friend ... Warner, I will miss you terribly and may the Lord bless you to sit at the right hand of Fellowship with him ... Rest my Friend and peace be with you while living in the heavenly realms

Paul Hill - October 13, 2022 at 09:28 AM

LM

“ I remember the teenage love of Carolyn and Warner . What a beautiful love story that lead into decades of marriage. My heart aches for your loss. Keeping you and your family in my prayers.

Leslie Doublet Mitchell - October 12, 2022 at 11:28 AM

AM

“ I knew Warner way back when he was the mascot at Xavier Prep and followed his storied career over the years even though I lived out of state. Ran into him playing for Irma Thomas in Washington D.C. as well as in New Orleans when I would visit home. He was a great musician and an even greater human being. Rest In Peace my Brother. I know you will be playing music in Heaven.

Alfred Medley, - October 11, 2022 at 08:57 PM

KJ

“ *Eternal rest granted unto my Xavierite Music brother and may the perpetual light shine upon him. To the family you all are in my thoughts and prayers.*



Kevin Joseph - October 11, 2022 at 02:24 PM

GD

May Warner Rest In Peace. I remember him as XP Mascot. He will be missed by lots of Preppers. May God comfort his family and my prayers go up for them all. 🐝🐝🐝

Gaynell C Despinasse - October 14, 2022 at 12:10 AM