

## Donald John Obituary

DONALD LAVERNA JOHN Funeral services for Ret Msgt Donald Laverne John USAF are scheduled for Friday, February 3rd at 2:00 p.m. at the Craddock Memorial Chapel with Dr. Alton Fannin officiating. Interment will follow at Provence Cemetery with military honors. Visitation will be Thursday evening from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Craddock Funeral Home. Donald L. John a full blood Choctaw was born June 29, 1929 to Minnie Rasha John and George John in the Mary Niblack Community of Ardmore, OK. He passed from this life peacefully at home on January 27, 2023. Don was a charter member of Mary Niblack Baptist Church and in his later years loved attending the early service at First Baptist Ardmore, he was well known for his prayers and singing hymns in his first language, Choctaw Don attended Mary Niblack school and then graduated from Dickson High School in the class of 1947. On April 30, 1949 he married Opal Harris in Gainesville, TX. From this union they had 5 children, Larry, Donna, Cathy, Laura and Timothy. Upon H.S. graduation Don Joined the Oklahoma National Guard and was honorably discharge when he enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1948. Don served for 26yrs through the Korean and Vietnam wars in the communication and security service groups at

numerous bases in Okinawa, Germany, France, Alaska, Wyoming, Illinois, Tinker and Ardmore in Oklahoma. Kelley and Lackland in Texas, as well as a Tech(drill) Sgt at Lackland AFB, San Antonio, Tx. After being Honorably discharged Don enrolled at East Central University where he received his bachelors of elementary education with a minor in Psychology(school counseling), a Masters of Education and later returned to get his Masters in High School Administration. He did his student teaching at Springdale Elementary in Ardmore and Lone Grove high School, his first teaching job was at Berwyn(Gene Autry) as a teacher and coach. He then moved into Administration as the High school Principal at Springer, Wilson and Boswell schools before being asked by a friend to come to the small community of Wynona in northern Oklahoma as THE school Principal, he finished his school career there retiring in 1992. Don was and avid athlete and sportsman, at Dickson H.S he participated in Basketball and Boxing winning two Oklahoma State Championships as a welterweight, his boxing resulted in him getting a scholarship to Murray State college and winning championships in the Golden Gloves, the All Indian Nation championships, the US Military all services champion all of them at welterweight(135lbs). He won a Baseball All services championship. He loved playing golf and

won numerous tournaments instilling the love of the game in his Son in law Joe, his son Tim and Grandson Tymon. Don was a MLB certified umpire calling minor league games in Texas and was also a certified ASA softball umpire working south Texas and all over Oklahoma. He refereed basketball starting in Germany for the Military and was very well known in high schools all over southern Oklahoma as a fair but tough ref. Don and Opal loved RV camping and were members of the Mobile villa camping club as well as spending every 1st Monday at Canton, Tx with the other "Canton Fleas" making numerous lifelong friends! AND THAT'S JUST THE HALF OF IT! Don was preceded in death by his parents George and Minnie John; brother Edmond John; sisters Louzella John and Georgia Faye Antuna; and son Larry Keith John. He is survived by his wife Opal John, daughters Donna Pritchard and her husband Douglas, Cathey Popkess and her husband Joe, Laura Holbrook and her husband Hubert Doyle, son Timothy John and his wife Tracy. sister Lillian Vaughn. Grandchildren Isaiah Pritchard, Lauren Prichard and Dakota Pritchard, Mikeal Popkess (Monica), Jonna Popkess, Tamara Holbrook, Christopher Holbrook(Stacie), Teata Bob(Lawyer) Elijah Holbrook, Tyler Holbrook(Toni), Tymon John and 13 great grandchildren, 10 great great grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews Tymon John,

Mikeal Popkess, Elijah Holbrook, Christopher Holbrook, Isaiah Pritchard, Dakota Pritchard, and Tyler Holbrook will serve as pallbearers. Honorary bearers are Joe Popkess, Douglas Pritchard, and Hubert Doyle Holbrook. Online condolences can be made at [www.craddockfuneralhome.com](http://www.craddockfuneralhome.com)

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