



William Joseph Johnson

October 16, 1947 - April 3, 2021

William Joseph Johnson was born on 10/16/1947 in Chicago Ill, the son of Burton Johnson and Dorothy Dalton. Reassigned to Guard the Gates of Heaven on 04/03/2021 10:43pm until relieved by the next Marine.

He Enlisted in the United States Marine Corps to see Combat in Vietnam. He went to bootcamp 03-09-1966 in San Diego CA. Prior to arrival he said he “saw grown men cry for the first time at the military processing station” they had all the volunteers and draftees in a gym. A Sgt came out and lined all the draftees side by side, walked to the half way point and drew his arm down, “for all of you to the right of my arm “Welcome to the Marine Corps” and he said some just dropped to there knees crying. After bootcamp and his MOS training field artillery. He was selected to become a Scout Dog Handler and traveled off to Morocco where the USMC trained Scout Dogs “trained the handlers” before the handlers would go off to Vietnam. You first had to earn the respect and confidence of the dog and build a bond that is indescribable.

It was here he met his closest Marine Corps Friends. For an approximately a year this group of Marines bonded together. For the most part they had not seen combat yet. Battle fatigue was not yet in there blood, the grew close, trained hard and according to my father “the Morocco the Marines experienced a life like no other when they went out in town” and I will leave it at that for now. “We were all green, we all went out together, every race and

greed, there was no segregation and his pictures confirm. His closest friend. They would later serve in Vietnam together. After they had been in Vietnam for some time and had experience countless patrols in their area of operations, they received a new Lt. and the Lt. switched them on their regular areas that they patrolled. Both of their dogs new their zones what old smell cone zones were, terrain, ect. Between the two they decided to trade missions and take each other's spot. His friend was hit by a mine, and my father thought he was killed as he lost both legs. That decision tormented my father for life. It was 31 year of researching my father/records to find his old wounded friend and reunite the two. When I first read my fathers military records it answered so many of my own questions.

After Vietnam my father struggled with alcoholism, tried to raise a family Marrying Betty (Manson) Johnson having two sons James Johnson (US Navy Iraq Combat Veteran / OEF) and Joshua Johnson (USMC Persian Gulf / OEF) . William served in the Army / Army Reserve and National Guard. Later William and Betty Divorced and William went on to become a Police Officer and Chief of Police in Blanchardville Wis. retired, and then later worked 20 years from 1989-2009 with the State of Wisconsin Dept of Corrections. He later remarried always never giving up on life and love to Dana Kuehmichel and had a Daughter Riah Johnson (US Air Force Combat Veteran Afghanistan / OEF) and son Cade Johnson Purdue graduate and future Professional Baseball Player.

He was well known for famous pig roasts, remodeling , building remote controlled aircraft, fishing, reading hot rod magazines, and most of all his love for riding motorcycles, and being there if you needed someone and didn't ask for anyone. Many people found him standing by there side as they woke up from car accidents in the hospital

William was a 100% disabled Combat Veteran from his heart alone, not to

mention Diabetes from Agent Orange and many other conditions from Agent Orange. While being Chief of Police he was in the life-threatening car accident where he was dramatically flown to UW Madison on life flight.

As a young boy I remember going in to see him in the hospital all stitched up from head to toe, holding his hand, and many times after, and finally many years later for 21 days by his side he took his last breath.

He was there for me when I busted my knee in football getting me at the hospital, the first toughest time in my life, and many other times we were there for each other as the years passed. He wrote me countless letters in the Marine Corps and I found many I wrote him and letters he received from my commanding officer in his scrap book. He saved so many gold nuggets I never knew about.

Williams life was service to his unit, corps, god and country. He found god through his 12 step program. Being sober was one of his greatest accomplishments for over 35 years. He loved serving his country and his community as a police officer and probation officer. As a young child I often wondered where my dad was and why he didn't come around often. When I was that 31 year old man I found a lot of the answers in his Military Records. And as I received many calls, emails, messages on Facebook I learned why. He knew I was in good hand with my mom, and he was a the bed side of motorists in the hospital, patrolling the country side, keeping a watchful eyes on released offenders, conducting search warrants, testifying in court, writing reports, serving during two periods of war. And being a hero to anyone that needed it at any time of day.

One of his visitors during his last days was an old friend of Williams, another man named Bill. Bill wrote "R.I.P. William "Willie" Johnson... you fought many battles right up to the end. You held my hand and looked me in the eyes and

told me "I'm not afraid and we have seen worse my friend"..I know, I know Willie !! Your body and mind are clear of illnesses now.

"Your brothers and sisters are welcoming you to Valhalla. Rest easy my friend and enjoy your seat at the table. You have earned it." Bill Fitters

Thank you Aunt Doris Bass for being my pillar of support, supporting me in the hospital, supporting me at the VA, at the nursing homes who refused my father in his time of need, allowing me to cry on your shoulder night after night. helping me fight the good fight for my father.

Thank you so much Jason from Janesville Police Department for coming late in the evening before Easter to preform the last rights for my father. Your service will forever be remembered as I hope my fathers as well. Here is just alittle of what my father did in his life.

Lastly you got to hold the hand of a beautiful lady you never got to meet on the night you passed. Her name is Sarah and she helped me tuck you in one last time, we were with you and your final wish was answered.

US Marine Corps 03/09/1966 – 02/20/1970 Active Duty

Field Artilleryman MOS0811 07/19/1966

Weapon Qualified M-16, M-60, 30 Cal MG, 45 Cal, 50 Cal MG, and M-79

US Marine Corps Awards

Navy Commendation Medal (wCombat "V") , Combat Action Ribbon , Good Conduct Medal, Vietnam Service medal (x/2*) , Vietnam campaign medal Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Gross Unit Citation W/Palm National Defense Service Medal.

“for Meritorious service while serving in various capacities with the Third Military Police Battalion, Force Logistic Command in connection with combat operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam from 28 August 1968 to 18 September 1969. Throughout this period, Sergeant Johnson performed his duties in an exemplary and highly professional manner. Initially assigned as a Scout Dog Handler with Headquarters and Service Company, he skillfully accomplished all assigned tasks and constantly provided his command with reliable support. Working tirelessly and with meticulous attention to detail, he constantly trained his scout dog to seek out the enemy and, as a result of his determined efforts, numerous hostile bunkers, rice caches, and attempted ambushes were discovered. Reassigned as a Squad Leaders with Company B on 23 June 1969, he continued to distinguish himself by his excellent performance of duty. On 12 August 1969, the Battalion Cantonment came under hostile ground attack. Reacting instantly, he ably maneuvered his men into advantageous firing positions and directed accurate fire at the advancing enemy soldiers. Alertly observing two wounded Marines at a Machine Gun position, Sergeant Johnson, with complete disregard for his own safety, moved across the hazardous terrain to his injured companions and, manning the weapon, delivered accurate suppressive fire on the North Vietnamese Army Soldiers, repelling the enemy force. By his initiative, superb professionalism and loyal devotion to duty, Sergeant Johnson earned the respect of all who served with him and upheld the finest traditions of the Marine Corps and of the United States Naval Service.” Combat Distinguishing Device is authorized

Honorable Discharge USMC 02/23/1972

US Army 01/12/1975-03/03/1976 Active Duty for training Clinical Spec 91C20 ; 91B10 Med Spec

US Army 02/01/1991-04/25/1991 Active Duty MOS Practical Nurse 91C30

US Army Awards Rank SSG E-6

Honorable Discharge 03/16/1979 US Army

Honorable Discharge 10/10/1986 Army National Guard

Honorable Discharge 12/31/1996 US Army

Certificate of Achievement 03/20/1991 in support of the Brook Army Medical Center mission for Operation Desert Storm. Army Service Ribbon National Service Defense Medal (second award), Army Lapel Button, Activation for Operation Desert Shield Desert Storm, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal 1st oak leaf cluster, sharpshooter badge/ hand grenade.

Education

Received Certificate High School Equivalency 05/06/1971

Completed Basic Medical Specialist Course 03/13/1975

Emergency Medical Care Mass Casualties 02/27/76

State of Wisconsin Law Enforcement Board 02/17/1978

Prover status by the Texas Nurses Association 03/27/1991

La Salle University BA Criminal Justice Management with Honors Cum Laude

He was survived by his beautiful companion "Bella", his sons and daughter, grandchildren, great grandchildren, brother Larry, Doris Bass, Ken and Denise, Heather, Christy, Dan, Jeannette and Wayne. Preceded in death by his parents Dorothy and Burton, other relatives Jerry Bass, Al Fenne, Betty Johnson, sisters, Judy and Janet and brother, David.

This obituary was lovingly penned by William's son, Joshua.

Funeral service will be at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 11, 2021 at Rosman Funeral Home, Beloit, Wisconsin, with visitation starting at noon. Burial in

Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Union Grove Wednesday,
April 21, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.. To express online condolences, please visit: www.rosmanfuneralhome.com. 364-4477

Cemetery Details

Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery

Union Grove, WI

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 11. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Brian Mark and Rosman Funeral Homes
1125 Cranston Rd
Beloit, WI 53511
(608) 364-4477
jarod@williams-fs.com
<https://rosmanfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

APR 11. 1:00 PM (CT)

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Tribute Wall

CB

“ I was a former parolee of Bill's. He was tough, yet he stood up for me when he knew I was being falsely accused of something and he was treated unfairly by his superiors. He held his head high and took it with honor. He was then on earth, and now in the Creator's presence and HONORABLE MAN AND TRUE SOLDIER!!!!

Charles R. Black - March 11, 2023 at 10:57 PM

BB

“ I don't know Bill Johnson or he me. I was drafted January 27, 1966. I went to the Chicago Induction Center. They lined us up and asked for Marines, two years. A few stepped forward but not enough. They counted off, " one, two, you're a Marine". Every third person was drafted into the Marines.

I was also out of the Army before I could vote for a President.

Bill Brewer

Bill Brewer - April 11, 2021 at 07:37 PM



Wow !! Thanks Bill those were tough days !

Josh Johnson - April 14, 2021 at 04:53 AM

RH

“ I knew Bill for many years. First as a colleague police officer and then as probation agents together in Beloit. He was a loyal friend to me as well as anyone else he considered a friend. We did many things together from attending AA meetings to helping on political campaigns. He loved to cook meals on the grill at the Beloit P&P office many times. May you rest in peace my friend you've earned it.

Rick Harding

Rick Harding - April 11, 2021 at 12:02 PM

LY

“ My deepest sympathy to your family. I worked with your Dad with the DOC in Beloit and Janesville. He was a kind hearted human being who could always be relied upon to cheer you up. I took a trip with your Dad up north to transport someone to a facility in northern WI years ago. He introduced me to his brother and wife and it has been one of my fondest memories. It was my first trip to northern WI and your Dad definitely made the trip memorable. God bless to all of you.

Lisa (Kenyon) Yeates

Lisa Yeates - April 09, 2021 at 03:01 PM



Thank you so much , please pass the word to as many people as you can , thank you , from Joshua Johnson, Williams son

Josh Johnson - April 10, 2021 at 10:30 AM

LR

“ *May you all find comfort and strength in the warmth and caring of all of Bills many friends and family. I worked with Bill at Beloit Probation and Parole for many years. We all enjoyed his humor and his love of sobriety! We enjoyed his pig roasts and he enjoyed our southern cat fish dinners.*

Larry and JoAnn Reed - April 09, 2021 at 01:42 PM