



## Verlena Wilson

January 28, 1951 - January 22, 2023

Verlena Thomas Wilson was born January 28, 1951 in Opelika, Alabama to parents, Joe Henry Thomas and Vera Lee Thomas. At a young age, the family relocated to Apopka, Florida. She attended Phyllis Wheatley High School and graduated in the class of 1969.

Verlena was an absolute “go-getter” and ambitious in every aspect of life. It was her quest for more and a better life, that resulted in her moving to Chicago at the age of 18, with friends. Later, in 1978, she enlisted to serve in the United States Army. Her military career spanned over 30 years, which allowed her to travel all over the world. She proudly served during Operation Desert Storm in Iraq and many other countries abroad. She furthered her education by earning a Master’s Degree in Accounting.

Verlena also worked in foodservice while in the military and became a pastry chef. She would always win first place in baking contests with her delicious desserts. Her heart for service was often on display as she mentored and helped fellow soldiers on and off of the field in many ways. In 2005, she retired from the military after climbing through the ranks as Sergeant Major. Even after retirement she continued in Civil Service for another 10 years working in the Pentagon and so forth.

In 2014, Verlena moved back to Florida to be near her family. To her family,

she wore many hats. She was a loving and devoted daughter to her parents, awesome and protective big sister to her brother, a dependable, loving, caring, great influence and a stern mother to her daughters. She was blessed to enjoy her family and grandchildren until God called her home.

She was preceded in death by her Father, Joe H. Thomas, Sr.; Mother, Vera Lee Thomas; Great Grand-father, Cody Collier; Great Grandmother, Gussie Collier; and Brother, Joe H. Thomas, Sr.

She leaves to cherish precious memories to her loving Daughters, Corey Fisher and Carla Massey (Carl), all of Apopka, Florida; Sister-in-law, Essie Mae Thomas of Apopka, Florida; 10 Grandchildren: Marquise, Marcus, Elisha, Tonio, Jaylen, Caleb, Crystal, Amber, Toni, and Vessica, all of Apopka, Florida; 7 Great Grandchildren: Alex, Ayla, Jordan, Jaydon, Cody, MJ, and Alasiah, all of Apopka, Florida; a host of aunts, uncles, cousins, other loving relatives and friends.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB 3. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Zanders Memorial Chapel  
232 W. Michael Gladden Blvd.  
Apopka, FL 32703  
(407) 886-3388

## Service

FEB 4. 3:00 PM (ET)

New Hope Missionary Baptist Church  
927 South Central Avenue  
Apopka, FL 32703

# Tribute Wall



“ *Verlena Wilson*

October 22, 2023 at 05:49 PM



“ *(SGMR) Verena will always be remembered as a great Soldier and friend and will greatly be missed. God bless. Always Dave Staples (SGMR)*

**David Staples** - March 13, 2023 at 08:27 AM



“ *Linda and Robert Ridgeway purchased the Laven der Reflections Spray for the family of Verlena Wilson.*



**Linda and Robert Ridgeway** - February 01, 2023 at 04:38 PM



“ *My Dear Verlena, you will be missed. We owe our Love to you, after all these years, we will always remember. May you rest in Peace my friend. All our Love Robert and Linda Ridgeway*

**Linda Ridgeway** - February 01, 2023 at 04:31 PM

BL

“ 2 files added to the album *Back in the day...Germany 1987*



**Birgit Lewis** - January 28, 2023 at 03:02 PM

BL

“ *I met Verlena in my Hometown, Bad Kreuznach/ Germany in 1987. I loved her straight up ,no nonsense kind of personality. She was always there when you needed her. My thoughts and prayers are with her family. Rest in peace my Sisiter <3*

**Birgit Lewis** - January 28, 2023 at 02:56 PM

SP

“ *I loved Verlena. She was a dear friend and a mentor. We served in the Army together. She had a passion for soldiers. She loved to teach. I will miss her. I pray God will comfort her family in this difficult time.*

**Sabrina Paige** - January 26, 2023 at 09:06 PM

CC

“ *Wow, hard to believe. I meet Verlena or better known as Master Sergeant Wilson in Germany and yes, she wore those stripes. I loved her boldness and confidence she displayed. Rest in peace my sister, rest in peace!*

**Cassandra Crawford** - January 26, 2023 at 07:32 PM