

Matthew Chapman Obituary

Matthew Chapman, Jr., MSGT RET. U.S. Army, a devoted husband, loving father, and dedicated community member, passed away peacefully on April 20, 2026, in Gloucester, VA, at the age of 89. Born on June 19, 1936, in Washington Wilkes County, GA, Matthew lived a life rich with purpose, service, and love.



A proud veteran, he served in combat in Vietnam with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry attached at various times to the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), the 4th Infantry Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Matthew retired as a Master Sergeant from the U.S. Army, where he demonstrated unwavering commitment to his country. His dedication did not end with his military service; he continued to impact lives through his work as a custodial manager at James City County Schools, Hampton General Hospital, and the Yorktown Coast Guard Station. His entrepreneurial spirit led him to establish and operate New Era

Environmental Services, LLC, where he applied his leadership and vision. He was a life member of the 50th Infantry Regimental Association.

Matthew's passions extended beyond his professional achievements. An avid fisherman and gardener, he found joy in the simple pleasures of nature. His skillful hands crafted beautiful furniture, and he was always willing to lend those hands to help others as a handyman. Matthew had a deep appreciation for genealogy, cherishing the stories and connections of his family tree.

A cofounder of the Denbigh Military Retirees Club (DMRC), Matthew cherished camaraderie and shared experiences with fellow veterans. His faith was a cornerstone of his life, and he was an active member of First Baptist Morrison Church in Newport News, as well as a participant in the DAV and American Legion Post 368.

Matthew was deeply committed to lifelong learning, earning a Master's Degree in Business Management from Saint Leo University. His thirst for knowledge and exploration fueled his love for travel, which he often shared with his beloved family.

Preceded in death by his parents, Matthew and Vinnie Chapman, and five brothers and three sisters, Matthew leaves behind a legacy of love and strength. He is survived by his devoted wife of 65 years, Willie Mae Chapman, and their sons: Lebron Jenkins, Mark Chapman (Betty), and Darryl Chapman. Matthew was a proud grandfather to Aracelis McAloon, Patricia Chapman, Darryl Chapman, Jr., Robert Jenkins, Amethyst Jenkins, and Duke Jenkins, and a cherished great-grandfather to six great-grandchildren. He is also remembered fondly by a host of dear friends and extended family.