



# Ms. Marilyn Wilder Thorne

DEC 4, 1942 - NOV 23, 2024



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**J.B. RHODES**  
Funeral Home & Cremations Inc

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# **Ms. Marilyn Wilder Thorne**

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**G**oldsboro - Ms. Marilyn W. Thorne, 81, completed her earthly journey and transitioned to her heavenly home on Saturday, November 23, 2024 in her home that she shared with her sister Madge Wilder. The celebration of her life will be held on Saturday, November 30, 2024 at 4:00pm with a viewing from 3:30pm to 4:00pm at J.B. Rhodes Funeral Home and Cremations, 1701 Wayne Memorial Drive, Goldsboro, NC. She will be laid to rest at the Lincoln Memorial Cemetery, Suitland, MD at a later date.

Marilyn was born December 4, 1942, in rural Wayne County, North Carolina. She was the 8th of 10 children born to Mack and Hilda (Millage) Wilder. Marilyn started school at age 5 at Friendship School in Fremont, NC where she played basketball. She was an excellent student and skipped one grade. She was a member of the 1st graduating class from Norwayne School (1959) where she graduated valedictorian at age 16.

While in school, Marilyn participated in many extracurricular activities including drama club and 4-H. As a high school student, she attended the national 4-H conference in Washington DC, where she met Vice President Nixon. Her photograph with Nixon appeared in Jet magazine. She attended several 4-H summer camps at North Carolina A&T State University (A&T) which led her to apply and eventually enrolled at the university. Marilyn excelled in both math and science and majored in nursing.

A high school teacher encouraged Marilyn to participate in the Miss Cinderella Pageant sponsored by Epsilon Phi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (AKA). She was selected as Miss Cinderella and received a scholarship for university. As a first-year student, Marilyn joined Alpha Phi Chapter of AKA in the spring of 1960 where she served as chapter president. Eventually, her sister Madge, three daughters and eldest granddaughter would follow her as members of the oldest historical Black sorority. A long-time member of Omicron Chi Omega Chapter of AKA, Marilyn was affiliated with Epsilon Phi Omega Chapter in Goldsboro at the time of her passing.



## Obituary

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Marilyn was a member of the ROTC as an undergraduate. Following graduation, she was a member of the U.S. Army Nurse Corp, stationed at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington DC. Marilyn, an officer honorably discharged in 1964. She practiced and taught nursing for 15 years. Her husband Elijah founded Greyhound Trash Removal Inc. on April 1, 1968. The two of them owned and operated the company for over five decades. In 1994, Marilyn assumed the duties of CEO of Greyhound and served in this role until 2022.

Marilyn was an active member of the A&T Alumni Association in Washington D.C. In addition to serving on the Board of Visitors at A&T, she Co-chaired the February One Monument Campaign along with her husband Elijah and James F. Garrett '63. The 15-foot bronze statue commemorates the February 1, 1960, lunch counter sit-in at F.W. Woolworth store by her classmates—the Greensboro Four—which led to the integration of lunch counters throughout the southern United States. Marilyn and Elijah believed that the vision and courage of the Greensboro Four changed the face of the civil rights movement and paved the way for their future success as business owners. Marilyn found working on this project and seeing it through to completion to have been both “humbling and rewarding.” In 2004, Marilyn and Elijah, along with three others, gave the largest outright cash gifts to A&T in school history by a living alum.

Marilyn married Elijah Wendell Thorne from Rocky Mount N.C. on December 22nd, 1963, in Washington D.C. They resided in the Camp Springs Maryland for most of their marriage, having relocated to Goldsboro, NC in 2024. Marilyn and Elijah met on the campus of North Carolina A&T. Their relationship blossomed after Marilyn fell and broke her leg. Because of difficulty navigating on crutches, Elijah would bring her a meal tray in the cafeteria. Through these conversations and a summer pen pal relationship while Marilyn was on her nursing practicum in Black Mountain, a romance that lasted a lifetime emerged.

Marilyn was active in many organizations including the American Business Women’s Association (ABWA), Oxon Hill Charter Chapter (35+ years); Alpha Kappa Alpha (74 years); St Philip the Apostle Church (45+ years), and The National Council of Negro Women. Through her professional life, she received several recognitions and awards from state and local government and other organizations. The ones she was most proud of include being named Outstanding Alumni of the Washington DC A&T Alumni Chapter (2012), Volunteer of the Year—St. Philip the Apostle Church, twice named Woman of the Year by the Oxon Hill Charter Chapter of ABWA and A Top 10 Business Women of the year of ABWA (2005). Civic engagement, especially voting were priorities for Marilyn. She participated in and supported both local and federal campaigns. She



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cast her vote for the 2024 presidential election on October 17th, the first day of early voting in North Carolina.

As a 1st generation college student, Marilyn was a strong advocate of education and a believer that to whom much is given, much is expected in return. Each of her four children attended college as have/are all her grandchildren who are of age. Marilyn demonstrated her commitment to education by establishing two scholarships. One to support nursing students at A&T and another to support members of Alpha Phi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha at A&T through the Educational Advancement Foundation of Alpha Kappa Alpha. She and Elijah also established an Emergency Fund to assist students at A&T who were experiencing financial hardship. Her belief in the power of education to change the lives of young people will endure through her endowed scholarships and her progeny.

Remaining to cherish Marilyn's memory are her three daughters; Adriene , Eva, Nicole Thorne Jenkins (Toby); grandchildren Dorrian E.S. Thorne (Evon), Zoë Danielle Jenkins, Toby Elijah 'Ari' Jenkins, Petal Grace Callaway St. Rose; Siblings Naomi (Wilder) Harris, Bill, and Madge; dear friends Daisy Mae & Walter Faribault, Rohan Crawley, Ray Wallace Casey, Sharonda Jones and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

Preceding Marilyn in death are her husband of over 60 years Elijah, her son Wendelle Jerome; parents Mack and Hilda and siblings John Mack, Annie Francis (Wilder) Henderson, Rufus, Ruth, Jerome, Oprie Lee (Wilder) Applewhite.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to one of the following:

- Marilyn W. Thorne Endowed Scholarship in Nursing - North Carolina A&T State University
- Hilda Wilder Scholarship Fund at the Education Advancement Foundation for Alpha Kappa Alpha (named for Marilyn's Mother)



# Events


**Ms. Marilyn Wilder Thorne**

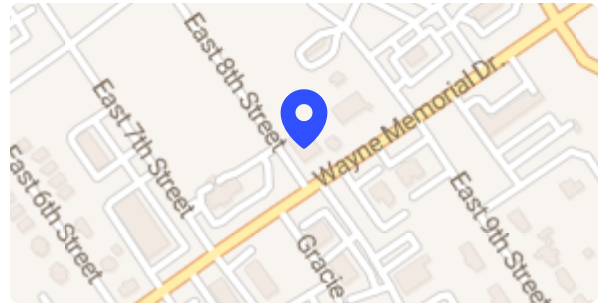
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## Chapel Viewing

 **Saturday**, November 30, 2024


 3:30 PM - 4:00 PM ET


 **J.B. Rhodes Funeral Home and Cremations, Inc.**  
1701 Wayne Memorial Dr., Goldsboro NC 27534

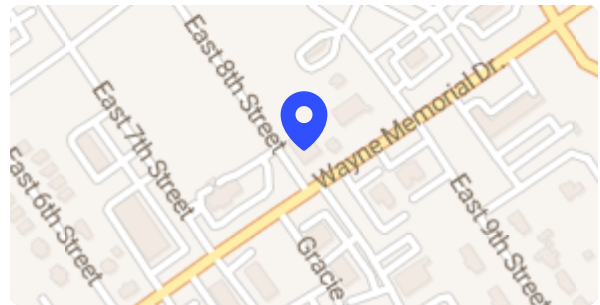


## Celebration of Life

 **Saturday**, November 30, 2024

 4:00 PM ET

 **J.B. Rhodes Funeral Home and Cremations, Inc.**  
1701 Wayne Memorial Dr., Goldsboro NC 27534





# Tribute Wall

**Ms. Marilyn Wilder Thorne**

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**Craig Pope** posted:

Craig Pope and Family. Unfortunately I just heard the unfortunate news about Ms. Thorne's passing. The Pope Family was always closely connected being my family was the original builders of your family's home on Darel Street in Suitland Maryland, I've got great memories from swimming in the pool in the back yard, to my family and your Dad, and Mom and my grandparents, along with myself just having hours long conversations. Mr. and Ms. Thorne always inspired me and I'm glad I got to have so many personal conversations with them. My number is 301 751 3002 Email Cpope80@gmail.com.com

March 28 at 11:08 PM



**Sylvia Dean Stanback** posted:

Sorry to hear of the passing of our dear classmate. Marilyn will be greatly missed and her family will be in our hearts and prayers. Sylvia Dean Stanback, President NC A&T Classes 1963/64.

December 4 at 12:01 PM



**Lila Millard-Mchenry** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.



December 3 at 6:06 PM



**Phenie D Golatt** December 4 at 12:55 PM

Sorry to hear about Marilyn's passing . She will be greatly be missed. Rest in peace my dear classmate. Phenie Dye Golatt



**Lila Millard-Mchenry** December 3 at 6:14 PM

Was 12th grade classmates with Marilyn when Friendship and PTS united. She was an exceptional student and young lady. Last saw her at Norwayne Alumni celebration Labor Day weekend. RIP Marilyn. She will be missed by everyone who knew her. Thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends.



**Yvonne L. Rousseau** posted:

What an extraordinary women. I have happy memories of seeing this wonderful Aggie couple on campus caring for one another. You knew they were ment to be together. Congratulations on a life so well loved. May your family carry on with the Thorne legacy.

December 1 at 11:12 AM



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**Tifonda Wilder** posted:

My Aunt Marilyn will truly be missed and I know that she is in a better place now. I have so many memories to cherish with her from working at Grayhound for a little period time to gathering with her and family members for our Annual Family Reunions, and family gatherings throughout the years with my cousins, aunts, and Uncles during so many years. My deepest prayers and condolences to the entire family and extended friends of my Aunt. She will truly be missed and I loved her so dearly!!!!Your niece,Tifonda ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ 🙏 🙏 ❤️ ❤️ 🙏 🙏

November 30 at 12:01 PM



**Cynthia Yelverton** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.



November 30 at 11:24 AM



**Cynthia Yelverton** November 30 at 11:26 AM

With deeper sympathy and condolences for the Wilder Thorne my prayers are with you and may God comfort you



**Shirley D Arnold** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.



November 28 at 1:55 PM



**Shirley D Arnold** November 28 at 1:56 PM

PRAYING FOR THE FAMILY



**Melvin Artis, "Jr."** posted:

I offer my sincere condolences to the Wilder family. My God comfort you during your time of grievance.

November 28 at 7:11 AM



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SF

**Shirley Suggs-Fields** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.

November 27 at 5:07 PM



NJ

**Nicole Jenkins** shared 7 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

I am so glad that you and Aunt Madge were able to attend Zoe's AKA initiation in '23. I love seeing her wear your sorority sweater from Alpha Phi '60, the one I wore '93. I will miss so many things about you and will always remember and cherish our many connections, especially our Alpha Kappa Alpha legacy.

November 23 at 12:36 PM



EH

**Eula Holden** posted:

Eula Teen and James Holden Condolences to the family

November 26 at 5:24 PM

RR

**Roy Reid** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.

November 26 at 3:27 PM



BS

**Betty Smith** sent a virtual gift in honor of Marilyn.

November 26 at 6:28 AM



WD

**With Love, University Of Virginia Deans** sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the Thorne family.

November 26 at 4:19 AM





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WD

**With Love, University Of Virginia Deans** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Marilyn.

November 26 at 4:19 AM



MW

**Matilda Ward** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.

November 25 at 8:13 PM



DH

**Delorice Hines** sent a virtual gift in honor of Marilyn.

I will miss your smile and laugh 😊

November 25 at 4:29 AM



PB

**Peggy Beeler** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.

November 25 at 2:17 AM



SF

**Shirley Suggs-Fields** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.

November 24 at 7:10 PM



MA

**Mabel McNair-Adams** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.

November 24 at 11:34 AM





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**Sylvia** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.

November 24 at 10:11 AM



**Patricia Warren** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.

November 24 at 5:45 AM



**Classic Monument Co.Llc Terry Wynn** lit a candle in honor of Marilyn.

November 23 at 12:36 PM



**DS Doreatha Sutton** November 27 at 8:58 AM  
With Deepest sympathy in the lost of your sister may God bless and keep you in his care

**DS Doreatha Sutton** November 24 at 6:54 PM  
Sorry to hear about the death of Marilyn you have my deepest sympathy may God keep you in his care



## Media

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**Nicole Jenkins** shared 7 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

November 27 at 8:22 AM





**Media**

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# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Marilyn by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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