



Mrs. Darlene Smith Sears

April 14, 1955 - March 30, 2024

Darlene Smith-Sears was born April 14, 1955, to Alberta Louise Shears Smith and the late Fred Lee Smith Sr. of Marianna, AR. Darlene met and married the love of her life Raymond Sears of Magnolia, AR.

Darlene attended Anna Strong Moton and Lee Senior High School as a little girl. During the 1970s, she worked with the students and community leaders to help integrate the high school in Marianna. She knocked on doors to get people involved in their efforts. She endured the pain of water hoses being sprayed on her and dogs attacking her, but she was determined that integration was going to happen under the education system.

After high school, she attended the former (AM&N) Agricultural Mechanical Normal College, now known as the University of Arkansas of Pine Bluff (UAPB), where she graduated at the top of her class Magna Cum Lada.

Darlene began her career as a Walker Public School District school teacher. She was well known as an excellent teacher, teaching over 1000 students in grades 5-12 during her teaching career that spanned over 40 years. Her most memorable and loving years were taught at Hays Elementary School, where she taught 3rd-grade students. Darlene shared several teaching strategies in reading and math with her sister Linda. Darlene was one of those dedicated teachers who made it to school before the custodians arrived and was there to help the custodians lock the building up at night. She was respected and

loved by her students and co-workers.

Darlene accepted Christ as her personal Savior early and joined Peter's Rock AME Church under the leadership of Rev. James T. Hart of Marianna, AR. After moving to South Bend, IN, she joined the Bethlehem M.B. Church, where her pastor is the Rev. Keith Witherspoon. She faithfully served as a Sunday School Teacher, a loyal member of Bible Study, Vacation Bible School, Pastor's Aid Committee, and on the Kitchen Committee until her health began to decline.

Darlene departed this life on March 30, 2024.

She leaves to cherish her memory, husband Raymond Sears, mother Alberta Louise Shears Smith Tucker and three children: sons Marvin Smith of South Bend, Indiana, Datron Sears of Columbus, Ohio, and daughter Kenya ReShay Smith of Marlow, OK. She also leaves three sisters and four brothers: Doris (Leonard) Jones of Chicago, IL; Maxine Smith-Blue Island, IL, and Linda (Bruce) Morgan of Forrest City, AR; Albert (Carolyn) Shears of Hazel Crest, IL, Roger Smith of Harvey, IL, Fred (Maria) Smith of Orland Park, IL, and Wayne (Cindy) Smith of Grayslake, IL, four grandchildren: Iris, D'Khari, Jabari and Brooklyn, whom she loved dearly, and one aunt, Mrs. Lela Jones of Desoto, TX. Darlene also leaves a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Cemetery Details

Peter's Rock Cemetery

Marianna , AR

Previous Events

Service

APR 6. 1:00 PM (CT)

Paradise M.B. Church
22 Hill Street
Marianna , AR 72360

Tribute Wall

KK

“ My 12 year old daughter was sitting next to me softly singing and doing the dance to the macarena. She sparked a memory in me. I told her I had this really awesome teacher in elementary school that taught me and a few other girls in my class how to do the dance for our school talent show that year. It was one of those experiences that really pit a mark on you. As a small child I was over weight, awkward, and socially shy. We ended up winning one of the prizes that year. I got on stage and talked my fear because of the love she put into us after school when we practiced.

So I look up her name hoping to find her on social media and show my daughter this great teacher I was so very blessed to have. I found her. It saddened my heart instantly. The obituary mentions Hays in South Bend, IN. That was my school, that was my class., and yes we loved her. I know its been some time sense she passed, however I still felt the urge to share this story with whoever finds it. . thank you for everything Mrs. SEARS. <3 <3

Kahri Kruk - October 07, 2025 at 07:26 PM

SF

“ Darlene and I shared many good times traveling together to meetings and working in the Walker School District. My condolences and prayers to the family.... 🙏💕

Sharon Ford - June 02, 2024 at 10:21 AM

DG

“ To Raymond and the family, may God bless you and heal your wounded heart during this time of grief. Dezetta Eason Graves

Dezetta Graves - April 12, 2024 at 08:54 PM

SF

“ *Sending condolences and prayers to the family.
Sharon and Bobby Ford (former co-workers)*



Sharon Ford - April 09, 2024 at 01:07 AM

NH

“ *Nikole Thompson Hardwell lit a candle in
memory of Mrs. Darlene Smith Sears*



Nikole Thompson Hardwell - April 08, 2024 at 02:36 PM

TJ

“ *Darlene and I taught together at Walker
School. We made a lot of special memories.
My prayers go out to her family and friends.*



Tami Thompson Jones - April 08, 2024 at 01:56 PM

LT

“ *Lora Thomas sent a virtual gift in memory of
Mrs. Darlene Smith Sears*



Lora Thomas - April 08, 2024 at 01:37 PM

TF

“ Teresa Fulton lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Darlene Smith Sears



Teresa Fulton - April 08, 2024 at 08:41 AM

BE

“ One of the many things that always stood out about Dot was her sense of humor and her laugh. She had a love of making others laugh. She often said she would have loved to be a stand up comedian.



Bethany - April 05, 2024 at 06:20 PM

KW

“ I would like to send a prayer out for the family and to say that sister Sears will not be forgotten she always told me you will know when I don't like you and She always brought me some chocolate to church she always had something smart to say to me but I loved her and she will be missed

Karen Walker - April 05, 2024 at 03:09 PM

CE

My sincere condolences to the Smith and Sears family. May God comfort and strengthen you during your time of bereavement.

Carolyn Westbrook El-Jihad - April 06, 2024 at 10:57 PM

KK

“ To the Sears family..so sorry for the lost of such a wonderful and sassy lady! I am so honored that my daughters and I had the opportunity to spend some time with Sis. Sears! She will be missed! Thank you for sharing her!
Kim Kilgore and daughters 💕💕

KimBerly K Kilgore - April 05, 2024 at 02:31 PM

LH

“ Lillian Holt lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Darlene Smith Sears



Lillian Holt - April 05, 2024 at 01:46 PM

LT

“ To Raymond and the family of Darlene Sears. Darlene touched so many lives in the very best ways. Sending love, thoughts, and prayers to you and your family. May her memory bring you peace.



Lonnie and Charlotte Taylor - April 05, 2024 at 01:33 PM

HH

“ Darlene I will always remember your friendly smile and wittiness. Also sending condolences to the family from the Tinzie and Hibbler family.



Helen Hibbler - April 04, 2024 at 08:39 PM

GB

“ I remember Darlene and her family as neighbors and family friends. Praying for her children, siblings, and her Mom during this time.

Glenda Bolden Blake - April 03, 2024 at 11:14 AM

LH

Sending my deepest condolence's to Raymond Sears and the entire Family. May God wrap you all in his loving arms for love and comfort.. Love Sis. Lillian Holt and Family.

Lillian Holt - April 05, 2024 at 01:42 PM

ST

“ Shirley W. Thorn sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Darlene Smith Sears



Shirley W. Thorn - April 02, 2024 at 04:49 PM