



# Ernest H. Collier

APR 1, 1922 - FEB 17, 2013



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**E**rnest Herman Collier was born on April 1, 1922 at Fort Stotsenberg in the Philippine Islands to William and Feliza DeLeon Santos Collier. The family moved to San Diego in 1929, and Ernest was the oldest of ten siblings. His mother, father, two sisters Rachel Collier Tucker and Ophelia Collier and brother Simeon DeLeon Collier preceded him in death. He attended Stockton Elementary, Memorial Junior High, and San Diego High School where he played football, ran track and was Co-Captain of the Track Team. During his time there he was active in the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) as an Officer. After graduating from San Diego High he attended Santa Ana Junior College and became a distance runner on the track team; he won many awards and trophies. Ernest was an Assistant Starter at the U.S. Olympic track team beginning in early 1979. He was on the Training Committee for San Diego Otay Mesa Olympic Training and the Official Starter for the California State track Meet. Ernest, affectionately known as *Sarge*, was a member of *St. Ritas Catholic Church in San Diego, California*. *He was the first altar boy at Christ the King Catholic Church at an early age. Sarge participated in many church functions, especially the Friday night Bingo games at St. Ritas*, and was an active member of the Knights of Peter Claver. Ernest enlisted in the United States Army, where he was assigned to the 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments, known as the Buffalo Soldiers in 1942, and then trained at Fort Riley, Kansas and Fort Clark, Texas for moderate combat duty. His medals and memberships earned over the years have been very impressive. He holds the following medals: American Defense Service Medal, European African Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, and the Korean Victory Medal. He was seriously injured for the third time in the battle of Puson, Korea; he was sent to the Letterman Army Hospital in San Francisco, California where he was awarded the Purple Heart by General Mark Clark. He received an Honorable Discharge in 1954. He is a life member of the order of Purple Heart (MOPH) #49 and Disabled Veterans Chapter 2,



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member of the American Legion, The Veterans of Foreign Wars, San Diego, the 9th and 10th Cavalry Association of San Diego and also of Los Angeles, the 1402 Army Engineers Association, the Infantry Association and a life member of the Marine Memorial Association. Sarge was a character member of San Diego Friends of Allensworth Chapter #12, where he served as an Advisor. He was honored to have one of the original Buffalo Soldiers as part of the Governing body. As a volunteer at the Neighborhood House in Logan Heights, he taught sports and English language to non-English speaking children. He had a giving spirit, always willing to help the less fortunate. Sarge has given many donations to help the needy, or feed the hungry, or whatever the need may be. Each year he donated turkeys to his church to make sure others had a blessed Thanksgiving. His donations were endless. He had outstanding work ethics, never believed in wasting time when there was work to be done. After 22 years of service with the United States Federal Government Civil Service, Sarge retired from North Island, San Diego, California. On February 17, 2013 Ernest (Sarge) Herman Collier departed from this life around 4:45 a.m. at the Veterans Hospital in La Jolla, CA. He leaves his family to cherish his memory. His wife Juanita, nearly 60 years of marriage; daughters Michelle Hearn (Rodney) of Colorado Springs, CO, Evaughn Collier of Richmond, CA; son Michael Dean Collier of \_\_\_\_\_; adopted son Troy Walker of San Diego, CA; sisters Birdie Baldwin of Los Angeles, CA, Tomasa Cline Olidera Collier of San Diego, CA, Feliza DeLeon Collier, Nettie Collier, Mary Agnes Jackson, Adeline Alexander and brother William Collier all of Los Angeles, CA; a thanks to niece Julia Collier Veasey who went consistently to the hospital to see Sarge; two caregivers Josie Criollo and Jennifer Henry, who took excellent care of Sarge and Juanita; five grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren; a host of nieces and nephews, church family and a host of friends. Sarge will be greatly missed and forever in our hearts.



# Memories only last if you share them

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