



# Derrel Fortner

DEC 20, 1948 - MAY 19, 2019



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### **D**errel Fortner Obituary

Services to honor and celebrate the life of Johnnie "Derrel" Fortner will be 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 23, 2019 at South Tulsa Baptist Church. Family will receive friends for visitation from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 22, 2019 in the RiverCrest Chapel, Bixby. Derrel passed away on Sunday, May 19, 2019 in Tulsa. He was 70. Born December 20, 1948 near Heavener, Oklahoma, Derrel was the son of Arnold and Lorene (Moody) Fortner. He was the eighth of ten children, who were all expected to do their part to help the family accomplish the various required tasks and chores at hand. One of those 'means of survival' was to learn how to hunt and fish. This skill was taught to Derrel by his elder brothers and would be something he continued to try and perfect throughout his lifetime. Receiving his early education in a two-room schoolhouse, Derrel would later attend and graduate from Heavener High School where he was honored as the Senior class "Student of the Year". Following high school, Derrel furthered his education by attending Central State College in Edmond. There, he worked himself through school by washing dishes in a local diner. It was also there that he belonged to the Tau Kappa Epsilon or "Teke" fraternity where their motto was, "If you can't go Greek, go Teke!". Once he completed his business degree, Derrel made a move to Houston where he began working in the commercial wallpaper business. While in Houston, he attended the First Baptist Church where he was introduced to a beautiful, young lady named Kathy Notley. The two had an Oklahoma connection and quickly fell in love with one another. And in just three short weeks of their meeting, the two became engaged. Within several months the couple said, "I do" in a 1972 Tulsa, Oklahoma wedding ceremony. (Not too many men can say that the first time they spoke to their perspective bride's father was to ask for their daughter's hand in marriage, however, that was the case when Derrel first telephoned Kathy's dad. Ironically, the first time he spoke to his



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son-in-law was when Jeremy asked Derrel if he could marry Rebecca.) Living in Houston, Oklahoma City, Kansas City, and Tulsa, Derrel decided to start his own wallcovering company, Fortner & Company, in 1980. As the years passed, the business grew and thrived. Derrel was known all across Tulsa as an honest and dependable business owner. After 35 years in the wallcovering business, Derrel retired but continued with many of the business relationships he made throughout the years. Derrel loved the outdoors and spent many weekends and holidays hunting and fishing with family and friends all over Oklahoma. He loved taking his family to the lake and spending time at the yearly deer camp with his brothers and cousins. He loved spending time at his "ranch" just outside of Tulsa - it was a place of serenity and peace for him. A wonderful husband, father, grandfather, and friend, Derrel certainly had the heart of a servant. He was a long-time contributor to the work of the Lord and was one who knew how to shower others with compassion and love. Through the years, Derrel has driven church busses, served as a deacon and elder, and most recently served on the board and was a volunteer for the Little Light House - an organization that is near and dear to Derrel's heart. Other organizations that he gave his time to included: Fellowship of Christian Athlete's, Focal Point and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Derrel was a long-time member of South Tulsa Baptist Church and for the past 20 years, the Anthem Church, Tulsa. A man who has been described as: goofy, selfless, caring, and a bit of a prankster, Derrel was one who did not know a stranger. There is no doubt that the world will be a little less fun with the absence of his prank calls and his standard list of questions that he might ask a waitress, such as: "Do you know the elevation here?", "What about the population?", and "How much do you weigh?" Derrel was a social creature who loved people, loved hats, and also loved to whistle (which drove Kathy a little bit crazy). Sadly, Savoy's will need to cut back in their cinnamon roll production now, due to Derrel's passing, where he proudly held the record as the single, largest purchaser of those delicious treats. It is with great sadness that the family announces the loss of Derrel, but it is with great joy that they celebrate his life and impact. Derrel went home to be with his Lord on Sunday, May 19, 2019. He leaves to carry his legacy a host of family members including: his loving wife of 47 years, Kathy (Notley) Fortner; children: son,



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David Fortner and wife, Renee of Asheville, NC; son, Jason Fortner and wife, Halina of Fort Collins, CO and daughter, Rebecca Slater and husband, Jeremy of Flagstaff, AZ; grandchildren: Asa, Sam, Henry, Natasza, Alex and Lena; siblings: Henry Fortner of Heavener, OK; Leon Fortner of OKC; Gracie Shelton and Marlene Andrews both of Garland, TX; Gary Fortner of Heavener, OK and Betty Jennings of OKC. He is also survived by numerous other family members and friends. He was preceded in death by: his parents: Arnold and Lorene Fortner; brothers: Wally and Earl Fortner and a sister, Jolene Fortner. In lieu of flowers, family suggests donations in memory of Derrel be directed to: The Little Light House; 5120 E. 36th Street, Tulsa, OK 74135. Visitation RiverCrest Chapel 13329 S. Memorial Dr. Bixby, Oklahoma 74008 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Service South Tulsa Baptist Church 10310 S. Sheridan Road Tulsa, Oklahoma 74133 1:00 PM

To send flowers  
to the family or plant a tree  
in memory of Derrel Fortner, please visit our floral store.

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## Tribute Wall

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**Bixby Funeral Service** shared a **Video**.

April 22 at 7:47 AM





**Media**

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# Memories only last if you share them

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