



## John Walker Chambers

August 20, 1941 - October 20, 2022

John “Val” Walker Chambers passed away on October 20, 2022, at the age of 81, after a long battle with Alzheimer’s/dementia and congestive heart failure. John was born in Chester, PA on August 20, 1941, to Essie Mae (Newkirk) Chambers and John Henry Chambers. He was the baby of the family, and adored his older siblings Henry, Idas (Freddy), Howard, and Josephine. He was a proud mama’s boy.

John’s early life was defined by his dedication to the Civil Rights Movement, where he met his future wife, Molly (Pratt) Chambers. He was the President of the NAACP at Cheney State College and an active member of the Committee for Freedom Now in Chester, PA. He attended protests and sit-ins, led voter registration drives, and ran for County Committee along with Molly, in Chester.

In the first half of his career John was an educator. He was the Head Teacher of English at Northfield Mount Herman School in their Upward Bound Program. He taught Sociology at Westfield State College, Greenfield Community College, Holyoke Community College, Vermont Community College, the University of Massachusetts, Marlboro College, and the College of the Virgin Islands. In the second half of his career, he devoted himself to social work. For nearly ten years, he was a case worker for the Department of Social Services in Northampton, MA, and was a counselor in St. Petersburg FL, amongst other positions. He was beloved by his students and the youth in

his care.

In his heart, he was a student, first and always, who never stopped wanting to learn. John received his bachelor's degree from Cheney State College, where he was also a guard and linebacker on the football team. He earned a Master of Arts degree in Secondary Education/Social Science from Antioch-Putney College/Antioch University, and a MA in Sociology from the University of Massachusetts. He took graduate level courses at the University of Ghana in Accra, Ghana, and pursued a Doctorate in Sociology at Howard University. He ultimately completed all coursework toward his doctorate at The University of Massachusetts.

The house John and Molly raised their children in was bursting with books; John's thirst for knowledge was legendary and inspiring to everyone in his family. He could often be found reading the dictionary and encyclopedias in his spare time. He studied and wrote extensively on black history, sociology and philosophy.

John was honored to be a Mason, 33rd degree, and was the first Black Mason in Vermont.

John's kindness was at superpower level—he could melt the iciest of hearts; he knew how to touch broken people, and always led with compliments and concern. Everyone loved him.

He was a dreamer and an optimist. He lit that same belly-fire in his children, nieces and nephews. He was hilarious and loved to laugh. He said, "Well hot dog!" when something made him happy. He loved romance movies, gardening, reading the newspaper, listening to jazz and old soul music. He was an incredible dancer. He wore the heck out of a suit and his trademark fedoras. He was easy to please; everything you cooked was the best thing

he'd ever tasted, everything you gave him was the best gift he'd ever received. He was a protector, a warrior for his family. He will be deeply missed by all.

John was predeceased by his parents, John and Essie (Newkirk) Chambers; his daughter, Christine Jean Chambers; his sister, Josephine (Chambers) Monroe; brothers Henry, Idas, and Howard Chambers; nephews Howard and Frederick Chambers, and niece, Tina Monroe. He is survived by former wife, Molly Pratt Chambers of Greenfield, MA; daughter, Essie Jane Chambers of Brooklyn, NY; son, John Richardson Chambers of Washington, D.C.; daughter, Chandra Jackson of Los Angeles, CA; granddaughter, Ava Maya Chambers; niece, Gail Seaton, who was like a daughter to him; nieces Liz (Chambers) Laws and Essie (Chambers) Spencer, nephews Conrad and Eric Chambers, and many great-grand nieces and nephews.

The family will hold a small private ceremony in Chester, PA on November 5, 2022.

# Cemetery Details

**PRIVATE**

## Previous Events

### Visitation

NOV 5. 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Earl I. Foster Funeral Home  
1100 Kerlin Street  
Chester, PA 19013  
(610) 874-2877  
fosterfh1@comcast.net

### Service

NOV 5. 11:30 AM (ET)

Earl I. Foster Funeral Home  
1100 Kerlin Street  
Chester, PA 19013  
(610) 874-2877  
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# Tribute Wall



“ *John Walker Chambers*

October 07, 2023 at 11:34 AM



“ *John Walker Chambers*

October 04, 2023 at 12:55 PM



“ *Totally at peace not in pieces* ❤️

**Sharon Jackson** - November 05, 2022 at 12:21 PM



“ *Totally at piece with memorial to Val with family at the ocean. His favorite flower photos and his song he loved. Flowers let go in the ocean with a cloud above in shape of a heart Travel on our love Love* ❤️

**Sharon Jackson** - November 05, 2022 at 12:19 PM



“ *<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdD2AN2sFak>*

**Sharon Jackson** - November 04, 2022 at 08:15 PM

SJ

“ Dear Val

*I want to thank you for sharing your strengths , vulnerability, fear, confusion, sadness, tears, the protective warrior , magnificent albeit complicated man that loved all his children without question.*

*Your tenacity, determination, resiliency, and ability to navigate “in the dark” to rise is memorable and unmatched. I want to thank you for you and our beautiful Daughter Chandra.*

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**Sharon Jackson** - November 04, 2022 at 03:39 PM

SJ

“ I wrote this earlier this year, after one of our last phone calls:

### "COSMIC CONNECTION

*Tall, dark, and handsome, a laugh that would make me laugh, a mood that could make me cry, and anger that would silence me but not become submissive.*

*Time out and separations would cool us off.*

*His voice on my phone would melt ice cream, let alone my heart. Toes to toes, knees to knees. pelvis to pelvis, abdomen to abdomen, heart to heart, and dark green eyes to dark brown eyes, our crown chakras lit up under the full moon and indigo sky.*

*His large hands and arms envelope me gently, strong thighs and buttocks, smooth and large and so comforting. Heart beats are in sync. There are moments now, as I try to sleep that I imagine he is holding my hand so I can fall asleep.*

*Years together or apart, from Vermont to Florida, and in between, from short visits to lengthy stays in NYC. By car, plane, bus or train we would meet up again and again.*

*He is now in his 80's and has had a double bypass, a stroke, Covid twice, dementia set in, and he is cared for at an assisted living home.*

*I need to hear his voice and I call him and he laughs and says, "Are you still around?" and I reply, "Are you?" and we both laugh. He says with commitment but somewhat feebly, "Come pick me up and let's drive to Vermont." I always agree with him.*

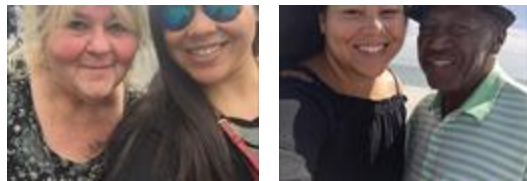
*I tell him next lifetime we meet, it will be in third grade and we won't let go. And he says, "It will be in the first grade." He sounds like he means it. This always makes me happy.*

*Some connections cannot be explained or totally understood. This one, I know, our love is real.*

*So real there was a time when being close to him physically was not enough. I wanted to live inside him and he knew the feeling.*

*The power of Love.*

*With love,  
Sharon*



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**Sharon J.** - November 04, 2022 at 03:24 PM