



Oscar Lorenzo Purnell

March 15, 1955 - August 5, 2025

Obituary

On March 15, 1955, Oscar Purnell was born to the late Ruth Carey and the late Roland Purnell in Salisbury, MD. He departed this life unexpectedly at his residence in Perryville, MD on August 5, 2025, leaving a legacy of love and laughter.

Oscar, also known affectionately as “Plookie”, spent his early childhood years on a farm in Newark, MD raised during that time by his beloved and dearly departed Aunt Luvenia “Venie” and the late Uncle Henry Spence, whom he lovingly regarded as a mother and father figure who showered him with kindness and unconditional love. He loved to share his happy childhood memories of life on that farm.

Oscar received his education in the Wicomico County Public School system, graduating from James M. Bennet Sr. High School in Salisbury, MD, where he was a member of the football team. Shortly after the completion of high school, Oscar enlisted in the United States Air Force where he served as a Senior Airman. He received the AF Training Ribbon, AF Overseas Ribbon, and AF Good Conduct Medal. Oscar’s proudest military accomplishment was graduating 2nd in the Munitions Systems Specialist Course where he managed and maintained non-nuclear bombs, missiles, and small arms to

ensure their reliability and readiness while ensuring that quality standards were met. Oscar proudly served his country for 4 years, with 2 of those years spent in Japan before being honorably discharged.

After returning to civilian life, he married Phyllis Diana Gaines and although their marriage ended some years later, their love, bond, and friendship endured until the very end.

Oscar was a gifted carpenter, and overall handyman. He helped many family members and friends with home repairs and took tremendous pride in his work. He loved working outdoors and working with his hands. In 2022, he retired from IKEA as a warehouse forklift operator.

Oscar was a kind and sincere man who was rarely seen without a smile, a joke, or a kind word. He loved his music, grilling, sports (Go Cowboys and Orioles!!!), and above all, spending time enjoying his family. It took very little to please him, and he focused on the simple pleasures that life offered. He took nothing for granted and considered each new day a blessed gift from God. A very spiritual man, Oscar could often be heard in a voice barely above a whisper repeating the phrase "Thank You" at any time, during any occasion, several times a day. He was thanking the Lord for allowing him to be present to experience the moment.

Life was not always kind, easy, or fair, but his desire to live a happy and fulfilling life on his terms strengthened his resolve to achieve that outcome. Oscar did just that. The final years of his life were spent in his "happy place." He loved being in his home in Perryville, where he was content and enjoyed the peace and serenity that he fought so hard for. Oscar ran his race, and all who love him can and should rejoice and find comfort in the fact that he now rests in the arms of our Heavenly Father.

Oscar is survived by his daughters Teau Purnell (Marc Sr.) of Princess Anne, MD; Tracy Roberts, Baltimore, MD; and Shawn Barnes (Dwayne Sr.) of Reisterstown, MD: Grandchildren Adrian McGinnis, Tres Mills, Avante Roberts, Marc Jones, Jr, Jemir Jones, Ajhourea Roberts, AJourdan Roberts, Dwayne Barnes, Jr., and Nia Barnes; Great Grandchildren Adrian McGinnis, Jr., Anshai McGinnis, Caden McGinnis, McKinley Jones, Kordae Mills, Mulan Roberts, and Asher Jones; Siblings, Carol Wilson (Lawrence) of Ranson, WV, Selina Dickerson of Owings Mills, MD, Connie Harmon (Gerald) of Fruitland, MD, Brenda Moore (Cliff) of Bowie, MD, Carlton Mills of Downingtown, PA, and Leroy Gaines, Jr. of Newport News, VA; Sister in law, Dionne Purnell of Salisbury, MD; Aunts, Elsie Purnell of Berlin, MD and Marion Jeannette Johnson (Wesley) of New Rochelle, NY; Best Friends, Phyllis Gaines and Vannie Coles. He also leaves behind a special friend Rena "Peanut" Holbrook and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

In addition to his parents, Oscar was preceded in death by his brothers Orlando, Lester, Roland "Reggie," and Lawrence Purnell.

We will forever cherish the memory of our beloved Oscar.

Previous Events

Funeral Service

AUG **16**. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Mary's Missionary Baptist Cemetery
12255 Pete's Hill Road
Princess Anne, MD 21853

Tribute Wall

WS

“ *Wanda Stanford lit a candle in memory of Oscar Lorenzo Purnell*



Wanda Stanford - August 16, 2025 at 10:59 AM

BD

“ *Our Condolences to all of your family,so our continued prayers are with you.* 🙏🙏🙏❤️



Barbara Dennis-Brown - August 14, 2025 at 02:05 PM

GG

“ *Oscar attended Perryville Methodist Church when he visited his Perryville home. He was loved and adored by everyone. He had a beautiful voice singing all the hymns. He usually exited the church before most of us as he sat in the same seat middle back. Sometimes he came early enough that we could chat. He brought us up to date on his grandkids and great grandkids. So happy that he and I had a nice big hug the week prior to his passing. What a blessing having Oscar as part of my life. May he rest eternal.*

Gloria Grant - August 14, 2025 at 01:33 PM

DB

“ *Doretha Bounds Burrell lit a candle in memory of Oscar Lorenzo Purnell*



Doretha Bounds Burrell - August 14, 2025 at 07:47 AM

MW

“ *Sending our condolences to the Family. He was truly a dear friend to us and we will miss him. RIP Oscar!*

Love Morgan and Marlene White

Marlene White - August 14, 2025 at 01:54 AM

EG

“ *During my last conversation with Oscar, we reminisced about old Fruitland days, and About me taking him and my brothers to their Summer job. There was always a lot of joking and laughter. Those were good times. Our Condolences to the Purnell Family. Our Thoughts and prayers! 🙏*



He will surly be missed!

Peaches, Pluke and Mickey!

Elnora (Peaches) Gibson - August 13, 2025 at 08:44 PM

SP

My Deepest Condolences to my Purnell Family, Oscar's extended family, his friends and other love ones. May you find peace in knowing that he is resting in the arms of Jesus. Cherish the fond memories you have of him. 🙏 Rest my Cousin and Enjoy your Heavenly Reunion with your parents and siblings.

Starr Purnell - August 16, 2025 at 08:12 AM

BP

“ *Condolences to the family. Keeping your family in our prayers.*
Becky & Roland



Becky & Roland Palmer - August 13, 2025 at 10:27 AM

EF

“ *Ella Fisher lit a candle in memory of Oscar Lorenzo Purnell*



Ella Fisher - August 12, 2025 at 09:24 AM

MF

“ *My Condolences and Prayers to the family*

Marie Fortune - August 10, 2025 at 10:20 PM

TW

“ *Sorry For Your Loss* ”



Thomas Widgeon - August 10, 2025 at 07:22 AM