



## Mr. Joe Nathan Idlette, Jr.

March 10, 1933 - October 21, 2025

Joe Nathan Idlette, Jr., affectionately known as “Buddy Joe,” was born on March 10, 1933, in Indian River County, Florida, to the late Joe Nathan Idlette, Sr. and Nancy Cookley Idlette. He was one of seven children blessed to this union. Joe received his formal education at the historic Gifford High School, where he excelled both academically and athletically, serving as the star quarterback of the football team and a guard on the basketball team. Following his graduation, he was drafted into the United States Army, where he honorably served his country as a motion picture photographer during the Korean War. Upon his honorable discharge, Joe was united in holy matrimony to his beloved wife, Bernice Ross Idlette. Their union was richly blessed with six precious children.

From an early age, Joe was an active and devoted member of Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church. Throughout his lifetime of service, he faithfully served as a trustee and steward board member, Sunday school teacher, and a member of the male chorus. Joe furthered his education at Bethune-Cookman College and Indian River Community College, studying Citrus Technology, Real Estate Principles and Practice, Farm Finance, and Banking. His professional journey included 14 years with Pan American Airlines at the Kennedy Space Center, where he served as a Senior Classified Data Technician.

In 1969, Joe embraced his entrepreneurial spirit and founded a successful

commercial landscape management and pesticide business. Alongside close friends, he went on to open Hillcrest Supermarket, the first supermarket in Gifford. Their shared vision of community progress continued with the formation of Industrial Growers, a 160-acre citrus operation that began with their families planting seeds together on weekends. Later, Joe partnered with two friends to establish Uni-Four Construction, a company dedicated to building affordable custom homes for first-time home buyers and helping families secure financing.

Joe's commitment to service extended far beyond his professional life. He served in the National Guard, volunteered with the Indian River County Ambulance Squad for four years, and was a board member of Habitat for Humanity for a decade. He also served on the board of Our Father's Soup Kitchen and was an active member of the Men's Promise Keepers fellowship.

A true trailblazer, Joe made history in 1974 as the first Black elected to the Indian River County School Board, where he served faithfully for 20 years, including three terms as chairman and multiple terms as vice-chair. His legacy of leadership, perseverance, and service continues to inspire generations.

On October 21, 2025, God called His faithful servant home to eternal rest. Joe was preceded in death by his parents, Joe and Nancy Idlette; and his sisters, Fannie Mae Buckner, Josephine Taylor, Joyce Littles, and Lillie Mae Walker. Left to cherish his memory are his devoted wife of 71 years, Bernice Idlette; three sons, Anthony Idlette, Sr., Joe Idlette III, and Keith Idlette; three daughters, Jacqueline (Julius III) Idlette-Reason, Jennifer Idlette, and Jody Idlette; ten grandchildren, Alexis Wilson, Ola (Gevon) Doby, Julius Reason III, Xanthia Idlette, Anthony (Suzette) Idlette Jr., Lavonne Idlette, Tristen Idlette, Jonte Reason, Jade Reason, and Joanna Idlette; one sister, Gloria Idlette Wilson; one brother, Eugene Idlette; two goddaughters, Tammy Broxton-Brown and Wanda Munnings; one adopted daughter, Plynie Tory; eleven

great-grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, and dear friends. Joe Nathan “Buddy Joe” Idlette, Jr. leaves behind a legacy of faith, service, and community that will live on in the hearts of all who were blessed to know him.

# Cemetery Details

## Hillcrest Memorial Garden

6026 North US Hwy #1  
Fort Pierce, FL 34946

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **31**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Mt. Zion AME Church  
4221 28th Avenue  
Vero Beach, FL 32967

## Service

NOV **1**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Pathway Church  
1105 58th Ave.  
Vero Beach, FL 32966

# Tribute Wall



“ *Hortense & Mills Memorial Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Joe Nathan Idlette, Jr.*



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**Hortense & Mills Memorial Funeral Home** - October 29, 2025 at 10:16 AM

MP

*RIH COUSIN BUDDY JOE. YOU FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT. WELL DONE 🙏🙏🙏🙏*

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**Marcus Perry** - October 29, 2025 at 12:22 PM

JC

*Joe Idlette was a truly great man. It was an honor and privilege to know him. With heartfelt sympathy to Bernice and the Idlette Family, Judith Cawley*

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**Judith Cawley** - October 30, 2025 at 10:52 PM

TR

“ Dearest Aunt Bernice, Cousin Norris, Lil Joe, Keith, Jackie, Jen, and Jody and the Idlette children:



*Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with you. We are truly saddened by the passing of Uncle Bud; however we find comfort in having known him, loved him, and experienced the genuine love and compassion he shared with us and so many others.*

*We are forever grateful for the example he set — his gentle and calm demeanor, his integrity, his character, and his unmistakable poise. He will be deeply missed, yet his memories will live on forever within our hearts.*

*We promise to help carry his torch and honor his legacy in the way we believe Uncle Joe would be proud and pleased.*

*With love and heartfelt sympathy,  
Jason and Tracy Coppin and Family*

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**Tracy** - November 02, 2025 at 12:45 AM

JH

“ You have my sympathy, Tommie, Senior, and Juanita Harrington

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**juanita Harrington** - November 01, 2025 at 02:18 PM

CF

“ Carmen F. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. Joe Nathan Idlette, Jr..

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**Carmen F.** - October 31, 2025 at 02:54 PM

MM

“ My thoughts and prayers are with my family during the loss of Cousin Buddy Joe. May the love, peace, strength, and comfort of our Lord and Savior be encamped around you all. Love you Cousin Miriam (Panky)



Miriam M - October 31, 2025 at 01:19 PM

IH

“ Indian River Habitat for Humanity planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. Joe Nathan Idlette, Jr..

Indian River Habitat for Humanity - October 31, 2025 at 08:25 AM

IH

“ Indian River Habitat for Humanity purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mr. Joe Nathan Idlette, Jr..



Indian River Habitat for Humanity - October 31, 2025 at 08:25 AM

TN

“ The Relford Family, Charlotte, NC. purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Mr. Joe Nathan Idlette, Jr..



The Relford Family, Charlotte, NC. - October 30, 2025 at 12:37 PM

JJ

“ *Joyce A Jordan lit a candle in memory of Mr. Joe Nathan Idlette, Jr.*



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**Joyce A Jordan** - October 29, 2025 at 10:08 PM

TH

“ *Tammie Napier Haugabook lit a candle in memory of Mr. Joe Nathan Idlette, Jr.*



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**Tammie Napier haugabook** - October 29, 2025 at 09:03 PM

BJ

“ *Our, Deepest Condolences to The Idlette Family. Keeping, you all in our Prayers! Love, The Jenkins Family.*



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**Barry Jenkins** - October 29, 2025 at 02:02 PM

OD

“ *Granddaddy I'll miss you and I love you. Forever in my heart love Ola*

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**Ola Doby** - October 29, 2025 at 12:34 PM



“ 38 files added to the album LifeTributes



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**Hortense & Mills Memorial Funeral Home - October 29, 2025 at 09:50 AM**