



DINWIDDIE COUNTY

Joyce Myrick Simmons

2022 Hometown Hero



Joyce Myrick Simmons was born to the late Cornelious Myrick, Jr. and Yvonne Edwards Myrick on February 8, 1945 in Dinwiddie County. She is the oldest of three siblings, with a younger sister named Barbara, and a late brother, Wallace (Zeke).

Joyce was raised on the corner of Old Stage Road and Flatfoot Road. Her grandfather owned J.E. Edwards Grocery and later passed the torch to her mother. Joyce began work at the store at an early age. While she did not always enjoy working as a youngster, she now fully understands this work was the foundation for a good life. She inherited a strong work ethic, along with how to respect, love and care for others.

Joyce was educated in Dinwiddie County and graduated from Southside High School. Following graduation, she attended Virginia Union University where she received a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. She continued postgraduate study at VUU in Business Education.

After graduation from Virginia Union University, Joyce Myrick married the late Alpheus G. Simmons, who was enlisted in the Army and serving our Country. When they were first married, Mr. Simmons was stationed in Wildflecken, Germany, where the newlyweds had the opportunity to live for one year. While in Germany, Mrs. Simmons used her teaching knowledge to work with middle and high school students. She recalls feeling truly blessed

to be able to travel around Europe during that time. Through her marriage, God blessed Mrs. Simmons with a wonderful family. Her father and mother-in-law, the late Samuel and Catherine Simmons, brothers-in-law Sammy and Cee, and sister-in law Jackie.

Upon their return to the United States, Mr. and Mrs. Simmons purchased a home in Dinwiddie County and started a family. They were blessed with three lovely daughters, Tondrea D'Anne, Andrea Nicole, and Brandi Richelle. Mrs. Simmons also has two God-Daughters, Patricia Goode and Shelby Carswell, and a Son-in-Law, Desmond Seaborn. Mrs. Simmons is grandmother to five wonderful grandchildren, Jaylen, Jordan, Justin, Cruz, and Charlie.

Mrs. Simmons worked as a secretary at Dinwiddie County Middle School for four years before becoming an Elementary School Teacher. She taught at various grade levels in Dinwiddie County Public Schools over the next 34 years.

In retirement, Mrs. Simmons enjoys entertaining and preparing meals for family and friends in her home. She loves shopping and lunching with her many close friends. Most of all she enjoys spending time and traveling with her children and grandchildren. Mrs. Simmons shared it has been truly wonderful having her only granddaughter, Charlie, living next door and she gets to put her on the bus each morning and get her off of the bus in the afternoons. The two consider this their special time together and they have so much fun and share many secrets.

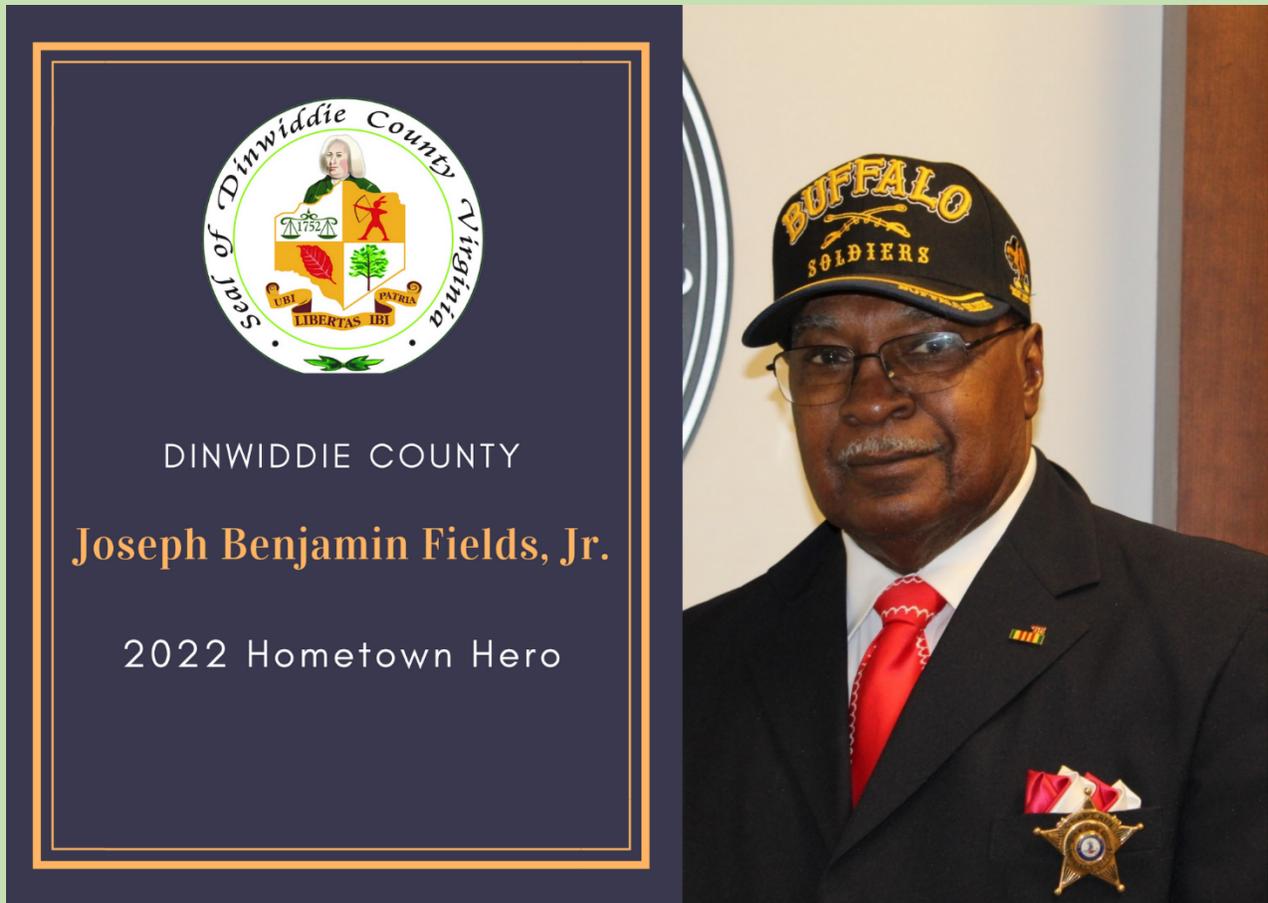
Mrs. Simmons accepted Christ at an early age and He continues to be the head of her life today. She was baptized in Little Zion Baptist Church in Carson, Virginia where she has served as a member of the choir, worked with the children's ministry, seniors' ministry, and is always willing to fill in wherever needed. She remains an active member there today.

In addition to family and church activities, Mrs. Simmons is very active in the community. She has volunteered with the American Cancer Society for more than 20 years, served on the Board of Directors of Crater Community Hospice, is a member of the Virginia Birdies, and currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Carson Youth Empowerment Center.

Mrs. Simmons shared that she has been truly blessed with a wonderful and God-sent sister, family and friends; and outstanding church family; and the best neighbors in the world. Her motto is "To God be the Glory."

Mrs. Simmons' mother, Yvonne Edwards Myrick, was a Hometown Hero in 2016 and her uncle, Reverend Daniel Edwards, was recognized as a Centenarian in 2021.

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Joseph Benjamin Fields, Jr. was born July 17, 1944, in Church Road, Virginia. He was the only child born to Joseph Benjamin Fields, Sr. and Pearl Lewis Fields.

Joseph Fields grew up in Dinwiddie County and graduated from Southside High School in 1963. Following high school, he entered the military and served three years in the Army's 82nd Airborne division as a Parachute Rigger. Mr. Fields' service included one year of service in Vietnam (1965-1966).

On July 24, 1965, Mr. Fields married Miss Earnestine Marie Bower. The new Mrs. Fields was a secretary at Sunnyside Elementary. The couple was married for 26 years before her passing on April 1, 1993. Together, they had one child, Brian Keith Fields, who is currently a member of the City Council in Dumfries, Virginia.

Mr. Fields spent his entire career enriching the lives of others. He was a teacher in Nottoway and Dinwiddie Counties, working with at-risk youth; and he spent more than 20 years as a salesperson for Petersburg Motor Company.

Mr. Fields accepted the call to ministry and the position of Pastor at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Dinwiddie in 1975; in 1980, he began serving as pastor of Mt. Nebo Baptist Church in

Blackstone where he served for 34 years before retiring. Forty-seven years later, Reverend Fields is still pastoring at Mt. Zion.

Rev. Fields earned his Associates Degree from Richard Bland College. At the time, he was one of only five African-American students on campus. He enjoyed his time at RBC so much that he stayed as long as he could and transferred 90 credit hours to Virginia State University where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in 1985. Fields attended seminary at Virginia Union University and earned a Masters of Theology from Frederick L. Ray Biblical Seminary, and his Doctoral degree from Richmond Seminary. Reverend Fields also received an Honorary Doctoral degree from Tabernacle Divinity School.

On June 20, 1998, Reverend Fields married Ms. Regina Beckles. While they did not have children together, he grew to love her daughter, Tiffany Beckles, as his own. Together they are grandparents to four grandchildren: Devonte Hampton, Devonte "Scooter" Sampson, Alexis Fields, and Marquis Beckles.

For the past six years, Reverend Fields has served as Chaplain of the Dinwiddie County Sheriff's Office under Sheriff D.T. "Duck" Adams.

Reverend Fields is a member of the:

- ✓ United Churches of Dinwiddie County and has twice served as Vice President.
- ✓ Sunday School Union of Dinwiddie County
- ✓ National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- ✓ Southern Christian Leadership Council
- ✓ Congressional Voters League and served as State Delegate
- ✓ Historic Southside High School Alumni Association
- ✓ Buffalo Soldiers
- ✓ Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 12145
- ✓ 555 Parachute Association and currently serves as Chaplain
- ✓ Dinwiddie County Advisory Task Force on Equity and Racial Reconciliation
- ✓ Dinwiddie County Faith-Based Initiative

In his free time, Reverend Fields enjoys riding his Honda Gullwing Trike. He was eager to share that his wife makes his trike look pretty. Reverend Fields is also a self-proclaimed "automobile nut" and enjoys "tinkering with his toys".

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