



# John Eddie Sharp

NOV 10, 1938 - MAY 31, 2024



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# John Eddie Sharp

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## John Sharp Obituary

John Eddie Sharp (1938 - 2024) John Eddie Sharp, 85, passed away peacefully at his home on May 31, 2024, surrounded by his loving wife, children, and grandchildren. Born at home on November 10, 1938, in Dyersburg, Tennessee, John was welcomed by an adoring family. Reflecting on his life, he often said he was pleased with the successes of his family and that he lived a good life.

John attended Hopewell, a two-room school in Dyer County. His family owned 25 acres of land where he explored the hills, climbed trees, swung from grapevines, enjoyed blackberries and pecans, drank from artesian wells, and raced against blue racer snakes.

At age 14, John's family moved to Flint, Michigan, a booming automobile manufacturing city. He attended school in blue suede shoes his mother bought for him. One day, while walking home with a friend who attended church with him, he was crowded by the city boys. They hustled a race and dropped quarter bets against the boy in blue suede shoes. John was pitted against the fastest freshman and the Tennessee country kid beat him soundly.

He discovered his natural athleticism and excelled in football, track, and wrestling. As co-captain of the football team, he helped lead them to historic victories in the Valley, City, and State championships. He broke records in track, placed first in his wrestling weight class, and was voted prom king in his senior year. John graduated from Flint Northern High School in 1957.

John was recruited by Iowa, Nebraska, and Michigan State, accepting a four-year scholarship to Michigan State. He was drafted into the US Army in 1963, choosing to be stationed at Schofield Barracks in Hawai'i over Germany. There, he eloped with his college sweetheart, Marcia Ricketts, and they were blessed with a daughter, Camara.



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John worked at the Kalihi YMCA for a year before being recruited to Palama Settlement in 1968 to coach Pop Warner football through the Pakolea program, which means to raise or grow straight in Hawaiian. The incentive-based academic program required athletes to score 90-100% daily in core courses before being allowed to suit up for practice. He visited the homes of his players to meet their parents and explain the program requirements, instilling respect, discipline, and integrity into the young men of Kalihi Palama.

Throughout his later years, John enjoyed recounting the antics and accomplishments of “his boys.” His hand-picked coaching staff drilled football fundamentals into the Bantam and Midget players, leading them to win 15 Pop Warner Championships for Palama Settlement. A number of his players eventually became professional football players. It touched his heart when, years later, the Palama Settlement champions, grown into upright men serving their Hawai’i community, in recognition of him throughout the island of Oahu shouted out “Coach Sharp!”

In 1995, John was inducted into the Greater Flint Afro-American Hall of Fame. In 1983, he was recruited to the Hawai’i Job Corps Center, where he served for 27 years before retiring.

John and Sharon Matutino became a couple in 1974 and married in an Islamic ceremony witnessed by family and friends in 1976. They married again in a 1983 civil ceremony officiated by Judge Patrick Yim on the grounds of Iolani Palace.

Their blended family includes Camara, and three married children: Sala and Demond Smith, Yahya and Ella Sharp, and Sandrina and Brian Crowley III. Their 11 grandchildren are Quincy Smith; Aiyana, Nasir, Zoe, and Kiara Sharp; and Aliyah, Kelis, Irish, Genevieve Guy, Brian IV, and Kilian John Eddie Crowley.

John is welcomed home to the Light by his father and wife, Charlie Robert and Margree Sharp; his mother and husband, Lizzie Jones and Filmore Light; sisters Deborah Sharp Kaye and Margaret Light Walker; and his first wife, Marcia. He is survived by his siblings Jimmy Sharp and Callie Sharp Gray; beloved Uncle Clark and Auntie Virgie Sharp; a host of aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, Sharon’s entire Ohana, and a multitude of dear friends and colleagues.



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to the family, please visit our floral store.

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## Tribute Wall

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**Sharon Matutino Sharp** posted:

Thank you, Dwight and Rosie. Yes, John truly enjoyed your collard greens. He looked forward to Dwight's visits so they could kid each other about stuff. He did miss when you both moved away. He even dreamt about meeting Dwight for real, that's how much he missed the banter and teasing. Love you both. Sharon

August 20 at 3:06 AM



**Dwight And Rosie Kimbrel** posted:

John I'll always remember bringing you some collard greens and hopefully you enjoyed them. And the times Dwight would say let's buy some and bring them to John. Sorry Sand it was just a little work. I'll miss bringing you some tarts and rolls hot from the oven. I'll remember your laugh and your smile . Miss and love you .

August 8 at 9:59 AM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring John by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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