



## **Brigadier General Joe L. Cheatham**

August 15, 1928 - January 8, 2008

Brigadier General Joe L. Cheatham was born on August 15, 1928 and departed this life on January 8, 2008. He is the second of three children born to the late Joe and Katie Mae Cheatham of Malvern, Arkansas. He is also preceded in death by his brother, James “Happy” Cheatham.

He is survived by his wife of 57years, Pat, and daughters and sons-in-law Becky and Bobby Rice, Susan and Glenn Nutt, Sarah and Dr. Charles Davidson and Nancy and Buddy Green as well as grandchildren Josh and Tammy Robinson, Chris Robinson, Stacy and Zack Pitsch, Lacy and Rene McKale, Rachel Beasley, Phillip Davidson, Jenny Davidson and Austin Boone. Great grandchildren are Brooklyn Robinson and Brynn Pitsch. He is also survived by his brother and sister-in-law Roy and Ruby Cheatham of Benton, Arkansas and numerous nieces and nephews.

BG Cheatham received his early education at Malvern, Arkansas, graduating with honors. After serving in the U. S. Navy, he received a Bachelors of Science from Henderson State University in 1953 graduating with a perfect 4.0 average and was awarded a medal as the Outstanding ROTC Cadet at Henderson and at summer camp prior to his commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U. S. Army Infantry and was placed on active duty as a Company Commander of basic training at Ft. Chaffee and in Germany as a Platoon Leader with the Fourth Infantry Division. In 1955 he entered Loyola University School of Dentistry in New Orleans and graduated Magna Cum Laude; only the second student ever to receive this honor. In 1961 he was commissioned a Captain in the Regular Army and assigned to Ft. Ritchie, Maryland where he was awarded the Army Commendation Medal. His next duty assignment was as Chief of the Dental Services at Asmara, Ethiopia. He was decorated by the Ethiopian Emperor and, upon reassignment, awarded the Army Legion of Merit. He was recognized by the State Department for his active role in enhancing the prestige of the U.S.A. and the Army and Army Medical Department. While in Ethiopia he received an early promotion to Major. Major Cheatham’s next duty was Ft. Bragg, North Carolina where he performed as Chief Clinician, Chief of Diagnosis and Chief of Oral Surgery at various facilities. He attended Advanced Medical Field Service School Officers course at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas; again, graduating with highest honors.

Major Cheatham completed a two-year residency at Darnell Army Hospital, Ft. Hood, Texas in 1966-68 and was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and recognized as the Outstanding Resident. He was subsequently awarded Board Certification in 1974. His next assignment was as Commanding Officer of the 137th Medical Detachment in Dong Tam, South Vietnam. While in Vietnam he was awarded the Vietnamese Honor Medal First Class by the Government of South Vietnam; a second Army Commendation Medal, Vietnamese Service Medal with Four Battle Stars indicating his participation in four major campaigns. He also received a Bronze Star, a second Legion of Merit, Civic Action Medal, another Defense of America Medal, Vietnamese Service Medal and Combat Medics Badge. His assignment to Ft. Benning, Georgia was highlighted by his various duties as Deputy Commander, Chief Clinician and Chief of Diagnosis and Oral Surgery at various troop and dependent clinics and was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and was made an Honorary Doughboy by the Commanding General.

In 1971 he was selected by the Chief of the Dental Services, Assistant to the Army Surgeon General, for a two-year residency at Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health where he received a Masters Degree in Health Sciences.

After completion of the residency in 1973 at Johns Hopkins, LTC Cheatham was selected for early promotion to Colonel. He held five different administrative positions at the Health Services Command, San Antonio, Texas before his selection for Flag Rank as a Brigadier General in 1977. He was Deputy for Dental Services at Health Services Command, San Antonio, Texas and was responsible for all health services in the 50 United States, Panama and Puerto Rico.

In 1978 BG Cheatham was awarded the coveted Surgeon General's "A" Specialty Prefix Dentistry Outstanding Achievements in his specialty.

Upon his retirement in 1979, BG Cheatham was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for 23 years of outstanding service.

BG Cheatham was the author and co-author of 52 professional articles and publications. He was a life-long lecturer, teacher, researcher, Practitioner as well as a recognized organizer for Health Services delivery. In addition to his administrative duties, BG Cheatham was a consultant to the Surgeon General and recognized for his teaching in Dental Specialties.

BG Cheatham at one time was a member of the American Dental Association, The Academy of General Dentistry Constitution and By-Laws Committee, Academy of General Dentistry, the Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas Dental Associations, Pierre Fauchard Society, Xi Psi Phi Fraternity where he served as Secretary for two years, Association of the U. S. Army, Association of Military Surgeons, Fellow of the American College of Dentistry, and Fellow of the International College of Dentists. His other honors include his election to Alpha Chi Scholastic Fraternity, Henderson College in 1952, Blue Key National Honor Fraternity, American Kappa Upsilon Honorary Dental Society, C. Victor Vignes Dental Honorary Dental Society. He was twice listed in Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities and was the recipient in 1977 of the Distinguished Alumni Award, Henderson University. BG Cheatham presented lectures and classes at the National and International level. He was a Charter Member of the Mekong Delta Medical Society. BG Cheatham was honored by the United States Army Command for his support of Dental Activities and completed the Financial Management Workshop for Management Executives. He was recognized by the U. S. Army Europe and 7th Army for meritorious service as a distinguished lecturer in support of that theater's Dental Services. BG Cheatham was twice recognized for his contributions to the American Dental Associations' Scientific Program.

After retirement from the U. S. Army in 1979, Dr. Cheatham was Professor and Chairman of the Department of General Dentistry, the University of Texas School of Dentistry, Houston, Texas. In 1984 he joined a group of physicians and dentists to establish a joint medical/dental clinic, The Doctors at the Galleria, Houston, Texas and was Director of Dental Services until his retirement in 1991.

On May 15, 1959 the Student Council of Loyola University, New Orleans, presented Dr. Joe L. Cheatham with a citation for Distinguished Services to the University. The Officers and Airmen of Detachment "8" 1137th Special Activities Squadron, Ft. Ritchie Maryland, made then Capt. Cheatham an Honorary Member of Professional Services above and beyond the

call of duty.

The family would like to thank Dr. Richard Johns, Dr. Scott Beau, Dr. Bruce Murphy and their staffs, Arkansas Heart Hospital Congestive Heart Failure Clinic and Arkansas Hospice for the care they provided.

The funeral service will be at 1:00 p.m., Friday, January 11, 2008 at Roller-Chenal Funeral Home Chapel (501)224-8300, with Reverend Dennis Baw officiating. Entombment will follow at Riverwood Memorial Gardens in Maumelle, Arkansas, with full Military Honors.

The family will receive friends at the funeral home from 6:00 until 8:00 p.m., Thursday.

### ☛ Service Information

Visitation	Service	Cemetery/Interment
Roller-Chenal Funeral Home 13801 Chenal Parkway Little Rock, AR 72211 1/10/2008 at 6:00 - 8:00 P.M.	Roller-Chenal Funeral Home Chapel 13801 Chenal Parkway Little Rock, AR 72211 1/11/2008 at 1:00 P.M.	Riverwood Memorial Gardens 301 Carnahan Drive Maumelle, AR 72113

Obituary Provided By:  
Roller-Chenal Funeral Home  
**13801 Chenal Parkway**  
**Little Rock, AR 72211**  
**www.rollerfuneralhomes.com**

*With All Our Respect*