



Mr. Sylvester "Sonny" Peterson

March 6, 1946 - January 21, 2026

UTICA – Mr. Sylvester “Sonny” Peterson, age 79, passed away on Wednesday, January 21, 2026.

Born in Utica on March 6, 1946, Sylvester was the son of the late James Butts and Susan “Margaret” Peterson. Sonny was a graduate of Utica Free Academy and furthered his studies as a student of MVCC specializing in management courses. He was proud to have served his country as a U.S. Army Veteran stationed in Italy.

At one time he was wed to Anna L. Byrd, and from that union came the blessing of two children. He was later united in marriage to Irene Hawkins, and from that union came the blessing of four children.

Sonny worked for many years at the Utica branch of the U.S. Postal Service until his retirement.

Sonny was a natural comedian, always laughing and joking. Still, he was very respectful, especially when it came to the ladies. He was very committed and family oriented. He was an excellent provider to the point that his children never wanted for anything. Sonny always went of his way for his entire family. On several occasions, he had the honor of speaking to students about military life and his vast experience. And at one time, he was a Mason at the Hiram

Lodge. Sonny enjoyed walking. He faithfully watched Jeopardy, and he was able to answer most of the questions, no matter what the category. He was an avid Yankees fan, and he loved to listen to jazz music. He is known for having said, "When I'm gone, I won't have to answer to anyone regarding the decisions I've made!"

Sonny is survived by his daughters and sons-in-law, Malissa and Antonio Ward, Tania Peterson, Margaret and James Walton, and Valerie and John Brooks; sons and daughters-in-law, Sylvester Jr. and Ruth Peterson, and David and Tangela Billins; grandchildren, Portia Peterson, Antonio Ward, Jr., Destiny Ward; Quondell Henry, Kianna Lipscomb, Tamara Simmons, Shameer Peterson, Donesha Gordon, Sylvaha Peterson, Ashley Peterson, Jordin Peterson, Jermaine Peterson, Ava Peterson, Sylvester Peterson III; Katlyn Brooks, Danielle Billins, Erica Billins, Dana Billins, David Billins, Jr., and Tavhya Billins; 31 great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren; sisters, Marion H.B. Henderson, Linda Walker (the late Leroy Walker), Patricia Henry, Loretta and Charles Kelly, Sharon Peterson, and Sandi King (the late Earl King); and his brother, Daniel E. James. He was preceded in death by his sisters and brother-in-law, Lisa Rivers, Betty Jean Peterson, and Dorothy and George Brown. He is also survived by a host of nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, and cousins – with special mention of Norman Stuckman. He is additionally survived by his brother-in-law, Jimmy Rivers.

Sonny was additionally predeceased by his cousin, who he loved as a brother, Pop Stuckman; nephew, Melvin Lucas Jr.; great-niece, Narkita M. Lucas; uncle, Alvin Peterson; and aunts, Gert Doles, and Ruby Robinson.

The family would like to extend their gratitude to the 3rd and 4th floor staff at The Grand Rehabilitation and Nursing Center at Utica for their care and compassion.

Visitation will be held on Wednesday, January 28, 2026, from 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc., 932 South St., corner of Hammond Ave. Sonny's Home Going Service and Celebration of Life with Military Honors conferred will commence at 12:00 p.m. at the funeral home. For those unable to attend, you may be present virtually at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88468929013>. Interment will take place in New Forest Cemetery.

Cemetery Details

New Forest Cemetery

2001 Oneida Street
Utica, NY

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 28. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.
932 South Street
corner of Hammond Ave.
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6714
eannacefh@roadrunner.com
<https://www.eannacefuneralhome.com>

Home Going Service

JAN 28. 12:00 PM (ET)

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Tribute Wall

DG

“ Sending prayers and condolences to the family 🙏🙏🙏. The Gibbs Family

Deanna Gibbs - January 31 at 12:15 PM

KA

“ Mr. Sonny was a familiar face at the post office. My condolences to the family



Kendel Archie - January 29 at 09:18 AM

DW

“ I remember Sonny working at the post office downtown. Always a gentleman. Rest in peace. Job well done.



Dawn Winston - January 28 at 03:52 PM

LP

“ My Dear Loving Cousin. You will be missed. God bless

Lillian Peterson - January 28 at 12:11 PM

ES

“ I took care of uncle Sylvester for the past year he’s not my real uncle I’m from Louisiana but I treated him like he was my uncle he was a good man from what I experienced with him he always kept me laughing even though his own pain rest on uncle Sylvester until we meet again

Eleanor Slater - January 28 at 07:01 AM

LP

My dear cousin. You will be missed. Lillian Peterson
Sending condolences to the family. May the peace of the Lord be with you all. God bless 🌸

Lillian Peterson - January 28 at 11:46 AM

MW

Thanks to all for your kind words. My father is truly missed

Malissa Ward - February 17 at 11:56 AM

GD

“ My deepest Sympathy to the family.He was always smiling with a joke good ole postman.Rest in the Master Wings.



Grace Decastro - January 28 at 03:44 AM

MB

“ Sister Walker and Peterson family,May God comfort you in your time of loss

Marguerite Brooks - January 27 at 09:53 PM

RL

“ *Ruthie Liggins lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sylvester "Sonny" Peterson*



Ruthie Liggins - January 27 at 03:40 PM

BJ

“ *Even though I haven't seen you for in a while uncle I still remember when we were little and you came to visit us I love you uncle and I hope you meet up with your older sister and tell her I said hi! Brian jr*

Brian Alexander jr - January 27 at 03:28 PM

FG

“ *Sending my condolences to Mr Sonny Peterson family. Sending my prayers to you Malissa 🙏*



Felicia Greene - January 27 at 02:11 PM

JE

“ *Joyce Enoch lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sylvester "Sonny" Peterson*



Joyce enoch - January 27 at 12:31 AM

HB

“ Condolences to the Family of Sylvester Peterson who I served with in the U.S. Army, 8th Logistical Command, Camp Darby, Livorno, Italy 1965. He was my supervisor, mentor and friend while serving there and we reconnected after 50 years. I was able to visit with him at his Utica, NY, Nursing Facility in 2022 when share old memories and the fun we had traveling in Italy. Pete was an outstanding soldier, person and friend and I will cherish his memory. Farewell Dear Brother.

Howard A Berry - January 26 at 11:35 PM

PH

My brother Sonny was a kind and beautiful soul. He was friendly to everyone. My family will love and miss him tremendously. Rest-in-peace brother until we meet again.

Patricia Henry - January 28 at 08:49 AM

HA

“ Howard A. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. Sylvester "Sonny" Peterson.

Howard A. - January 26 at 11:18 PM

EJ

“ Ernest Jones lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sylvester "Sonny" Peterson



Ernest Jones - January 26 at 06:08 PM

CS

Congratulations to all of my family. Such a great loss. Stay encouraged in the Lord family. Safety and blessings.

Cynthia slade - February 13 at 08:45 AM

CS

Condolence.

Cynthia slade - February 13 at 08:46 AM

LB

“ *Lonnie Brown lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sylvester "Sonny" Peterson*



Lonnie Brown - January 25 at 10:47 PM

TM

“ *To our lifelong friends, Missy & Mr. Pete... and family. We send our heartfelt condolences, prayers and love ❤️ to you during this time. So sorry for your loss.*

Much LOVE,

Jerome & Tyra McKinsey and family 🌺🙏

Tyra McKinsey - January 25 at 06:41 PM



To the Peterson family, my family. Words can never express the loss of Mr. Sonny but I hope you all will find peace that he's not suffering anymore. He's with the Lord. 🙏

Love you all.

Natasha Simmons and family 💜🙏

Simmons Woman - January 26 at 07:44 AM

DR

“ *Darlene Branch Robinson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sylvester "Sonny" Peterson*



Darlene Branch Robinson - January 25 at 04:48 PM

WF

“ *Workman Jackson & Prince Families lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sylvester "Sonny" Peterson*



Workman Jackson & Prince Families - January 25 at 04:27 PM

BS

Condolences to the Peterson family. Grew up with Sonny. Betty Billins Stokes

Betty Billins Stokes - January 25 at 10:15 PM

EJ

Isn't it interesting how a name from the past can ignite such fond memories in the present? I remember Mr. "Sonny" Peterson as one of the nicest people I had the pleasure of sharing time with back in the day! He was always positive, kind and thoughtful in his manner, with a gracious smile and inviting presence. May peace rest with you, and may peace accompany and comfort your friends and loved ones at this time of transition. I offer my sincere condolences.

*Ernest Jones;
Syracuse, NY*

Ernest Jones - January 26 at 06:06 PM



"Going to miss ya, Sonny" Condolences to the family'. Shelley Aurora, III

Shelley Harrell - January 26 at 08:02 PM