



Howard Gasaway, Sr.

January 1, 1932 - December 9, 2025

Howard Gasaway Sr. was the third child of the late Alfonzo and Beulah Gasaway. He was born on January 1, 1932, in Tupelo, Mississippi, and moved to Washington, DC, at an early age. He attended DC public schools and later completed high school in St. Clair Shores, Michigan. Howard attended the University of North Carolina and Fayetteville State College.

Howard began his professional career with DC Parks and Recreation as a Recreational Specialist. He later helped organize the new Maintenance Division within the DC Department of Parks and Recreation and went on to serve as Manager of that Division. He retired from District Government service in 1980 after 31 years. During his tenure, he received numerous awards recognizing his service and contributions to the community.

Air

When Howard joined the U.S. Army, he volunteered for the 555th Airborne Infantry Battalion because he admired their uniforms—especially their knickers. When he later learned he would be jumping out of fully operational airplanes, he cried for his mother. Years later, his nephew John unknowingly followed the same path and had a similar reaction.

The 555th Airborne Infantry Battalion, known as the Triple Nickles, made history during World War II as the nation's first African American paratroopers.

Howard served for six years, qualifying as a Jump Master and Master Parachutist. He trained new members of the battalion as paratroopers and was honorably discharged in 1954 at the rank of Sergeant First Class. The Triple Nickles paved the way for future generations of Black paratroopers. Later, the 555th Airborne Infantry Battalion was moved under the Third Battalion of the 82nd Airborne Division.

Land

Howard's most enduring legacy reflects his commitment to community action and environmental stewardship. Beginning in 1984, Howard and members of the Seafarers Yacht Club advocated for the restoration of the Anacostia River when few others did. Their efforts led Mayor Marion Barry Jr. to request Howard's assistance in organizing the first Anacostia Clean Up Day.

Volunteers removed large debris, including tires and appliances, from the river. This work helped spark what eventually grew into DC Water's Clean Rivers Project and is now known as the Anacostia Watershed Society Earth Day Clean Up. In 1991, Howard received the Stewardship Award for his environmental contributions. In 2016, the Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association awarded him the Meritorious Award for more than 30 years of service.

Howard was also deeply dedicated to working on political campaigns for mayors, council members, city chairmen, and Board of Education nominees.

Sea

Howard loved the water. He joined the Seafarers Yacht Club, one of the oldest all-Black yacht clubs in the United States, in 1976. In 1981, he became Commodore and led the club for sixteen years. He later served on the board as a lifetime member until his passing. In 1987, Howard became the first Black Commodore of the Potomac River Yacht Clubs Association. In 1997, the

association presented him with the Distinguished Service Award, making him the first Commodore to receive this honor.

Mayor Marion Barry Jr. appointed Howard as Admiral of the Potomac River and the Anacostia River for life. In this role, Howard welcomed tall ships entering Washington, DC's Southwest Harbor. He was an honorary member of the Potomac River Pilots Association and an active member of the Chesapeake Bay Yacht Clubs Association, where he served as Director of State Legislation beginning in 2005.

Howard further expanded his navigation skills through the United States Power Squadrons, joining the ABC Potomac River Power Squadron in 2000. He served as Education Officer, teaching boating safety courses, and as a Vessel Safety Examiner, ensuring vessels met safety requirements. Howard served as Commander in 2004, 2007, 2011, 2016, 2017, 2022, and for a seventh term in 2023. In 2004, he received a House Resolution of congratulations from Delegate James E. Proctor Jr. of the Maryland House of Delegates. In recognition of his installation as Commander, a flag was flown over the Maryland State House in Annapolis and later presented to him.

Howard enjoyed cruising his vessel, My Sweet J, a 43-foot Viking, with his loving wife Janett and First Mate on the Anacostia River, the Potomac River, and the Chesapeake Bay.

For 38 years, Howard was the loving husband of Corinne H. (Rogers) until her death in 1988. Together, they raised five children: Howard Jr., Corine H., Oliver R.R. Sr., Edwin V. Gasaway Sr., and Rochelle Gasaway-Green.

In 1989, Howard married his sweet "J" Janett Proctor. Together, they shared her three children: Anthony Martin, LaNee Banuelos, and Sondra Williams.

Howard is survived by his devoted wife of 36 years, Janett; his son Edwin Sr.; daughters Corine and Rochelle Gasaway-Green (Marshal); stepchildren Denise Banuelos (Ramiro) and Sondra Williams; grandchildren Howard Gasaway III (Saundra), Bernard Gasaway (Sherece), Corinne Gasaway, Oliver Gasaway Jr. (Amanda), Rapheale Gasaway (Levy), Edwin Gasaway Jr., Dominique Gasaway, and step-granddaughter Bianca Brown-Williams; great-grandchildren Howard Gasaway IV, LaPria Parker, Tyrell Battle, Amina Gasaway, Brenae Gasaway, Bethany Gasaway, Corie Gasaway, Cora, Maddison, Mekala, Persiah Robinson, and Jairus Gasaway; step-great-grandchildren Kylie and Kasey Williams and Ji'zell Gibbs; great-great-grandchildren Asaya Austin and Osie Gasaway; and his sister, Alice Hammock.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Alfonzo and Beulah Gasaway; his first wife, Corinne H. Gasaway; siblings Nanie, Andy, Clydie, John, Earl, and Gloria; sons Howard Gasaway Jr. and Oliver R.R. Gasaway Sr.; and stepson Anthony Martin.

Howard will be remembered for his exceptional leadership, his sensitivity to the needs of everyday people, and his ambition to shape his own legacy. His spirit will undoubtedly continue to live on in the minds of all who knew him.

Well done, good and faithful servant.

You made a visible difference.

Cemetery Details

Lincoln Memorial Cemeteey

4001 Suitland Road
Suitland, MD 20746

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 19. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Phillips the Apostle Church
5416 Henderson Way
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Funeral Service

DEC 19. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Phillips the Apostle Church
5416 Henderson Way
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Tribute Wall

RB

“ A note of thanks to Howard’s past as partner with the Anacostia Watershed Society together bringing Earth Day into a reality of lifting hands and hearts to restoring the Anacostia River! One of the few rivers that can boast near restoration to a swimmable condition like it was 60 years ago! Hail to Capitan Gasaway! May his enduring spirit serve to shape our next generation of Anacostia stewards!
Robert Boone
Founder and CEO
Anacostia Watershed Society 1988 - 2012

Robert Boone - December 19, 2025 at 05:46 PM

TK

“ Pop, as I knew him, always had a kind smile and word; through the 50 years of knowing him. My sincerest condolences to the family. He will be missed.

Tony K.

Tony King - December 19, 2025 at 04:26 PM

ZW

“ Mr. Howard was one of the hardest working team leader for Vincent Gray’s campaigns in Ward 7 and he worked us like Hebrew Slaves and our team learned so much from Mr. Howard . We literally hit all the hills in Ward 7. He will be truly missed in Ward 7

Zina Williams - December 18, 2025 at 12:40 PM

EF

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with your family and this time of sorrow. May God comfort you through his history of the Bible and the gift of prayer. Thinking of you all.

Evans family - December 17, 2025 at 11:41 AM

TF

“ The American Benefits Council Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Howard Gasaway, Sr..

The American Benefits Council Family - December 17, 2025 at 11:00 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Howard Gasaway, Sr..



December 17, 2025 at 11:00 AM

ET

“ Dear Sondra, sending you and your family love and prayers. May the memory tree always bring you cherished memories! Love, ET

Ellen Terry - December 17, 2025 at 08:49 AM

DE

“ D. E. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Howard Gasaway, Sr..

D. E. - December 17, 2025 at 08:45 AM

SW

“ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/07/06/anacostia-cl-ean-seafarers-harold-gasaway/>

Sondra L Williams - December 16, 2025 at 07:08 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Howard Gasaway, Sr..*



December 16, 2025 at 11:24 AM

SW

“ *The incredible legacy you created will live on in family, friends and the lives you touched.*

Sondra Lynnette Williams - December 15, 2025 at 03:38 PM

SW

“ *1 file added to the album Howard Photos*



Sondra Lynnette Williams - December 15, 2025 at 03:08 PM



“ We the Marshall-March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love, and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.

Marshall-March Funeral Homes - December 13, 2025 at 04:14 PM