

Larry W. Ross

Larry W. Ross was born on May 29, 1947 in Little Rock, Arkansas and graduated from Scipio Africanus High School in 1964. As a high school senior percussionist, Larry had the unique opportunity of playing with the renowned pianist John Puckett. During this time, he learned fluid melodies and spontaneous breaks in many music renditions.

Larry is a 1969 graduate of Philander Smith College (now Philander Smith University) with a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education. He earned his Master of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education in 1971 from State College of Arkansas (now the University of Central Arkansas), and also completed additional studies at the University of Indiana, Bloomington, and Arkansas State University-Jonesboro. He is the recipient of numerous awards in church, business and the community.

Larry had a long and noble career as a percussionist; working first with the John Pucket Trio (1964-1966), the Henry Shead Trio (1966-1969) and the Art Porter Trio (1969-1993). The Henry Shead Trio was the house band for “The Vic Ames Show” which aired on ABC’s Little Rock Channel 7 five days a week.

In the summer of 1969, Larry traveled to and around Europe performing at Intercollegiate Jazz Festivals with the innovative UAPB New Directions Quintet. Other members of the UAPB Quintet were James Leary (Bass), John Stubblefield (Saxophone), Sonelious Smith (Piano), Benjamin Jones (Trumpet). After returning from Europe, Larry began his long and storied career with the Art Porter Trio. He has also performed with Pearl Bailey, Cab Callaway, Placide Adams and New Orleans Dixieland Band, Pharoah Sanders, TeRoy Betton, Betty Fowler, Amina Claudine Myers, Doug Stiles, Nan Renaud, Leonard Johnson, and many, many others.

He was conferred an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters Degree in 1992 by Philander Smith College; an Honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree in 1999 by Jackson Theological Seminary of the African Methodist Episcopal Church; and an Honorary Doctor of Pharmacy Degree in 2015 by the Arkansas State Board of Pharmacy.

Larry is married to Lillian White Ross, a Retired Tenured Professor and Chair of Language and Letters at Philander Smith College. They have three adult children: Angela M. Ross, Larry Ross II, Esq., Erica Ross Hughes (Lenny), and one grandchild, Chase Hughes.

Larry is a retired executive from AT&T/Southwestern Bell Corporation with thirty-two years of service; retired Presiding Elder of the Arkansas Region of the Christian Methodist Church (2003-2014).

