



Rosabelle Jefferson McKinney

March 3, 1945 - July 5, 2015

Obituary for Rosabelle McKinney

Rosabelle "Bea" McKinney was born Rosa Bell Jefferson to Virginia (nee Simmons) and Phillip Jefferson in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina on March 3, 1945. A vivacious, energetic, and kind person from her very start, Rose was devoted to education, enjoying life, and adventure. Rose was popular and well-regarded in high school with many friends who remained her lifelong companions. She graduated from Laing High School in 1963. In 1964, at age 18, Rose joined the United States Marine Corps. A "woman Marine," she was based in Quantico, Virginia, outside Washington, D.C. After serving three years in the Marine Corps, Rose met and married Romaine McKinney, Jr., a Naval hospital corpsman. Rose and Romaine moved to Detroit, Michigan to live. The young couple focused on building a home and family together. Rose worked at Bank of the Commonwealth and, in 1969, Rose and Romaine had a daughter, Renee. Eighteen months later, in 1971, they were blessed with a son, Romaine III. In 1976, Rose and Romaine divorced. They remained strongly committed to raising Renee and Romaine as a team, however, and were on good, friendly terms for the remainder of Rose's life. While working full-time at Allied Chemical Corporation and Peerless Cement and raising her two children, Rose took advantage of her veteran's benefits and her employers' support for education to earn a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Sienna Heights College in 1983. A human resources and workplace safety administrator, Rose loved her work and was

committed to the well-being of employees as well as accomplishing her employers' goals. Rose valued cooperation and communication between labor and management and she strove to maintain a fair workplace where everyone was heard and appreciated. Rose continued to advance at work, taking on special projects and overseeing ever more new initiatives, even as Peerless Cement became St. Mary's Cement, and then Blue Circle Cement and, eventually, LaFarge North America. In 1991, again while working full-time, Rose earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Central Michigan University. In 1999, Rose transferred to Blue Circle's Atlanta, Georgia facility. This was followed by a transfer to what by then was LaFarge North America's Whitehall, Pennsylvania facility. Rose earned the respect of her colleagues and made new friends everywhere she went. She maintained her strong professional relationships throughout her life and many of her supervisors, supervisees, and colleagues became her dear friends. Rose retired from LaFarge North America in 2005 and took up residence in St. Clair Shores, Michigan. Retirement did not suit her, though. So, after a mere nine months of retirement, Rose went right back to work at SAS Global Corporation as that company's very first human resources manager. At SAS Global, for nine years, Rose continuously innovated, streamlined processes, and fostered an inclusive, fair working environment. As usual, Rose's magnetic personality and kindness made colleagues into friends. Rose's August 2014 retirement--though richly deserved--was felt to be a real loss to the organization. In her second retirement, Rose volunteered her time to St. John Hospital in Detroit and Beaumont Hospital in Grosse Pointe, Michigan. Rose was a lifelong supporter of the American Red Cross and Vietnam Veterans of America and gave generously of her time and money to those organizations. Rose loved music, particularly Motown, gospel, and rhythm and blues. Particularly Luther Vandross. Always Luther. She danced and sang daily; Rose had joy deep in her heart and in her soul.

Rose loved to read and she engaged her lifelong interest in learning new things even in retirement. Rose also loved to travel. In addition to domestic

business and leisure travel and visits to far-flung family and friends, after retirement, Rose participated in frequent local day trips with the City of St. Clair Shores senior program. During her lifetime, Rose visited both London and Paris, made multiple visits to Mexico, Hawaii, and the Caribbean, and took several cruises, including an unforgettable Alaskan cruise.

Rose was a member of Grace Community Church and, more importantly, a devoted and faithful Christian. She believed in hope. She believed in forgiveness. She practiced love and acceptance every single day of her life. Rose was a family woman. She was a loving and devoted mother to Renee and Romaine III and grandmother of Rayna, all of whom survive her. Rose was their lodestar and their comfort. She shared with both of her children daily and they sought her advice and guidance in every aspect of their lives.

Romaine McKinney, Jr., Rose's former husband and dear friend, also survives her. Rose was the beloved sister of Gloria Stokes, Frank Jefferson, Vivian Gethers, Pernel Jefferson, Judy Tolly, Phillip Jefferson, Kenneth Jefferson, Elijah Jefferson, Troy Jefferson, Jennifer Middleton, and Karen Jefferson, all of whom survive her. Rose's much-loved mother, Virginia Jefferson, also survives her, as do her aunts, Ida Jefferson, Reverend Henrietta Cummings, Edna Smalls, and Pearl Owens, and her uncle, John Dilligard.

Rose was the cherished sister-in-law of Tyrone McKinney, Loretta Wilkes, Dwayne Wilkes, Gwendolyn Wilkes, Phillip McKinney (deceased), Larry Wilkes (deceased), and Linda Wilkes (deceased). Rose is also survived by many cousins, dozens of nieces and nephews, and a host of friends, each of whom feels her loss deeply. A funeral Service will be held 12:00PM Instate 11AM Wednesday, July 15, 2015 at Grace Community Church, 21001 Moross Detroit, MI 48236. Visitation will be Tuesday from 2-9PM at Bagnasco & Calcaterra Funeral Home, 25800 Harper Ave St Clair Shores, MI. Burial to Follow in Resurrection Cemetery. share a memory with the Family at www.bcfh.com

Cemetery Details

Resurrection Cemetery

18201 Clinton River Road
Clinton, MI

Previous Events

Funeral

JUL **15**. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Grace Community Church
21001 Moross Road
Detroit, MI

Tribute Wall

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“ Dear Sir/Madam,

I would be grateful if you could pass on my condolences to the family of Rose McKinney, especially her son and daughter who I met very briefly in the early 2000's. I have looked on your pages at your web site and that seems to me to be a place for those who have known her a long time or family to express themselves. They may not remember me at all and consequently I do not feel it is appropriate for me to comment there.

I knew Rose for just 3 years although we had since kept sporadically in touch by email. We worked together in Atlanta from 1999 to 2001. We got to know each other well as we were both new to the area and new to the work. We had many fascinating conversations and I was very comfortable talking to her. I will always remember her laugh and sense of humour as well as her straight talking, no nonsense approach to life. She cared very deeply about people. To me she is one of life's special people and I will always remember her. There is a place in my heart with her name on it. I had always dreamt that one day I would catch up with her again. Sadly not to be but the memories of our discussions will be treasured for ever.

I would like to express my deepest sympathy to her family and friends. I wish I could do more to ease their pain.

I trust you to do whatever is appropriate with this email and can only hope it helps a little bit.

Best Regards,

*Donald Stewart
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United Kingdom*

Donald Stewart - July 14, 2015 at 10:49 AM