

Shirley Jones

June 23, 1945 - August 3, 2012



Shirley's Life Story

Through the life of Shirley Jones we are reminded that happiness is not found in the accumulation of wealth or possessions, but that it is through the love we share with those around us that we find joy beyond measure. She was a no-nonsense sort of woman who wasn't afraid to speak her mind, yet it was also clear that she lived a life guided by the personal faith that was engraved upon her heart. It was easy to see that the greatest gift in Shirley's life was her precious family, and that it was these loved ones who were always first and foremost in her life. She had a heart that beat to serve so many within her reach and made it her life's mission to help others improve their lives while reaching their full potential. A true blessing in every way, Shirley will be deeply missed while her memory remains forever near and dear to the hearts of many.

We most often remember 1945 as the year that WWII came to an end, sending countless young servicemen and women stateside where they resumed the life they set aside for a time. Industry was again able to focus on meeting peacetime needs while rationing on common goods became a thing of the past. This year was greeted with great joy as a young couple looked forward to the birth of a new baby later that summer. The big day finally arrived on June 23rd when Willie and Rosie Jones welcomed a healthy baby girl into their hearts and home.

Baby Shirley started life in the family home in Collierville, TN alongside her brother, James Kennie. In 1952 the family moved to Bay City, Michigan where her father worked at the Grey Iron Foundry, while her mother owned and operated Fashion Splendor Beauty Salon. Very early on Shirley earned the nickname of "Squirt" as a child who always squirming around on her father's lap, making her nearly impossible to hold onto. As the only girl in the family she enjoyed chasing after her older brother, Kennie, which she did with such great fervor that she skinned her knee on a chain link fence while climbing to get some peaches on one occasion. Shirley also had a close relationship with her younger brother Willie Nadren and taught him how to catch snails with salt. As a young woman she worked at a restaurant in the old Sears Building in a variety of positions, she joked she had to take the order, cook the food, serve it, and do the dishes, too.

Education always played an important role in Shirley's life. She was a 1963 graduate of Bay City Central High School. With her high school education behind her, Shirley later continued her education at Saginaw





Valley State University, graduating in 1987. Her education didn't end there as she proudly completed her master's degree in criminal justice and political science in 1989, also from Saginaw Valley State University.

Throughout her life Shirley displayed a strong work ethic and took great pride in her work. When she was just 23, she became the first African American at the Bay County Building where she worked as a court reporter. Shirley later spent several years working as a social worker with Lutheran Child and Family Services before settling in at the Bay County Department of Corrections. While there she found great reward in helping people rehabilitate their lives as a probation agent.

Although she enjoyed her work, there was nothing of greater importance in Shirley's life than her family. She was delighted to become a mother to the beautiful baby girl she named Halima Shani, and together they shared such a special bond. Shirley also took every opportunity to dote over her parents, brothers, and nephews. Even her Yorkie, Finnigan, that has been called her shadow got the royal treatment.

As her friends and family can attest, the holidays were such a special time when Shirley was around. Christmas was always her favorite time of year, and she got started on the cooking and baking days ahead of time in order to prepare the perfect feast. Shirley's table was always overflowing with generous amounts of pies, cakes, in addition to southern sweet treats of all kinds. Perhaps her most famous "goodie" was her eggnog that was said to put hair on your chest just by smelling it! Shirley's blue ribbon 7 Up pound cake was another family favorite.

There were so many things that enriched Shirley's life. Her faith was her guiding light, and her favorite verse was Luke 18:27 that reads, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Shirley was also a member of Second Baptist Church. She was an avid gardener known for her green thumb whose colorful display was the envy of the neighborhood. Shirley was also a talented bowler who had no problem beating her nephew

by bowling several 300 games. Saturdays often found her at the library volunteering her time working with the adult literacy program.

Shirley was a world traveler who traveled with her daughter and a backpack across Spain, taking in the sights of Toledo, Madrid, Barcelona, and Seville. Shirley's favorite trip, however, was the one she took to the Upper Peninsula with her classmates. She was a member of the NAACP and a huge University of Michigan football fan who was known to scream so loudly during the games that her dog





needed to take cover! Shirley's favorite games were the ones she watched with her daughter over the phone. She also enjoyed watching sci-fi movies and reading crime mysteries and dramas. When it came to television, Shirley especially liked watching *Criminal Minds*, *Law & Order*, and *Hell's Kitchen*.

Shirley inspired so many others in numerous ways. She taught others to be proud of their own individuality and was quick to remind us that everyone puts their pants on one leg at a time. Shirley wasn't

one to mince words, but was also more than willing to give credit where credit was due.

We will miss so many things about Shirley Jones - things like her timeless wisdom, her priceless belly laughs, and her positive outlook on life, but most of all we will miss her unconditional love. Life will never be the same without Shirley here, but her compassionate legacy will live on through those whose lives she touched.

Shirley died on Friday, August 3, 2012.

Shirley's family includes her daughter, Halima Shani Jones Henderson of New York City; her mother, Rosie Jones of Essexville; brothers, James Kennie Jones and Willie Nadren Jones, both of Bay City; nephews Jeremy (Jennifer) Rall of Los Angeles CA, and Tyson Jones of Bay City; and many dear aunts, uncles, and cousins. Shirley was preceded in death by her father, Willie F. Jones. A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, August 8, 2012, at 6 p.m. at the Hyatt Ewald Funeral Home, 700 N. Monroe St., Bay City, MI, with Rev. John Williams officiating. The family will receive friends at the funeral home on Wednesday from 3 p.m. until service time. In lieu of flowers, those considering an expression of sympathy are asked to consider memorial contributions to the Heartland Hospice Memorial Fund. Arrangements made with the Hyatt Ewald Funeral Home. Please visit www.lifestorynet.com where you can leave a memory or sign the online guestbook.



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