



Geneva Colston

May 4, 1930 - February 3, 2024

The Obituary of a Phenomenal Renaissance Woman

Mrs. Geneva J. Colston, Trustee Emerita

(May 4, 1930 – February 3, 2024)

Mrs. Geneva J. Colston, 93, received her heavenly wings on February 3rd surrounded by loved ones. Geneva is predeceased by her husband, Ervin “Mike” Colston, parents, V. C. Laws Sr. and Esther Thomas Laws; sisters, Marianne Chandler and Virginia McCammon; “special sisters” Gertrude Sampson, Dr. Rachel Archie and Portia Dyson; John and Naomi Dempsey, Michael Dempsey, Maureen Dempsey Kendall and Judith Dempsey Hook. Geneva’s family will always love her. She leaves to cherish her memory: sister Ethel Traylor and brother, V. C. Laws, Jr., loving daughter, Dr. Gayle Colston Barge (Carlos). She will be forever in the hearts of dedicated grandchildren Darron L. Barge and Mario M. Barge, Esquire (Marlena), great grandson Maximus Barge, Mya Dukes, Ginni Dempsey Ragan, Mary Dempsey McAlpin, Nick Petitti and their families, nieces, nephews, cousins, Missionary sisters and friends.

Geneva graduated from Worthington High School. She will always be remembered as a loving, committed woman of God who served her family, church and community with a compassionate heart. The paternal and maternal granddaughter of AME ministers, she professed her faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, joining St. John A. M. E. Church as a young girl. Geneva was the oldest member of St. John where she actively served for

eighty-five years. Her all-encompassing work on behalf of the Juanita R. Jones Women's Missionary Society (WMS) was dedicated to the precepts of the organization that she loved. She served as president, co-chair of the food pantry, administered the card ministry and volunteered with the Scioto Village Juvenile Correctional facility. Uplifting families and children, she served lunch at the YWCA Family Shelter and homeless camps. The recipient of numerous awards including Miss St. John and Sensational Sister, Geneva's elegance and presence undergirded every aspect of her extraordinary life.

Geneva was also a member of the following groups: Young at Heart, Pastor's Aide, Usher Board, Steward Board, Trustee Board, and Lay Organization. She empowered future generations as a member of the ACE League youth group and teaching Sunday School. Geneva served as the first female Pastor's Steward in the 3rd Episcopal District, continuing the tradition of leadership in this position by her father, V. C. Laws. Sr. An advocate for what she believed to be "right and good", Geneva was a voice for those who needed her support. Her global travel experiences with Gayle from Africa to China were filled with moments during which she made a difference in the lives of others. One of the highlights of her global WMS work occurred in Sierra Leone where they traveled to trace the family's Mende ancestry. She visited and made contributions to seven organizations that benefited women and children. Geneva was honored during the 103rd Founder's Day celebration of St. Helena AME Secondary School where she addressed the students.

Geneva was a treasured member of the Dempsey family where she served lovingly as their private home assistant for over five decades. Her stalwart example inspired countless generations to be the best versions of themselves. In her younger years she travelled around the country playing basketball despite the underlying dangers of racism and segregation, receiving countless accolades for her prowess on the court. As a competitive player in the AAU, a precursor to the WNBA, Geneva was featured in countless articles and referred to as the "Bill Russell of Women's Basketball." As a state champion during her play with the Novelty Food Bar team, she competed in numerous

national tournaments representing Ohio. She would later travel as an amateur bowler, enjoying the competition and friendships she developed along the way.

Being in her presence was always a gift. Geneva's extraordinary life will be a benediction for all who were blessed to know her. Rest in glory and peace, Beloved Geneva. You fought the good fight. You finished the race. You kept the faith. The celebration of Geneva's phenomenal life will be held on Saturday, February 10, 2024 with visitation at 8 am followed by services at 9 am - St. John A.M.E., Church 7700 Crosswoods Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43235. Interment will be immediately following the service at Walnut Grove Cemetery, Worthington. In lieu of flowers, the family requests your consideration for the Geneva J. Colston Scholarship Fund that will be established in the near future.

Cemetery Details

Walnut Grove

Worthington, OH 43085

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 10. 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM (ET)

St. John's AME Church
7700 Crossroads Dr.
Columbus, OH 43235

Funeral Service

FEB 10. 9:00 AM (ET)

St. John AME Church
7700 Crosswoods Dr.
Columbus, OH 43235
<http://stjohnameccol.org/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Rutherford Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Geneva Colston*



Rutherford Funeral Homes - February 09, 2024 at 03:01 PM

JT

“ *Janicé and Tammie purchased the Serene Retre at for the family of Geneva Colston.*



Janicé and Tammie - February 10, 2024 at 10:56 AM

CC

“ *The Corbin family of old Worthington past, extends heartfelt sympathy to all the Laws and extended family for your loss at this time, remembering you with fondness and appreciation. Laetitia (Florida), Caroline (Massachusetts), Sam (Ontario, Canada), Susy (Ontario, Canada), Mary (Marquette, Michigan)*

Caroline Corbin - February 09, 2024 at 07:25 PM

ER

“ *Cousin Geneva was an awesome cousin to me and my family. Although she was my cousin I referred to her as Aunt because that's how she treated me with her wisdom, guidance and grace. Aunt Geneva has received her heavenly reward and is with our Father, I am so grateful and blessed to have known and loved her.*
Erica Raymore & kids

Erica Raymore - February 09, 2024 at 06:30 PM

AG

“ *All My Love, Laura Gettleman purchased the Love's Journey for the family of Geneva Colston.*



All My Love, Laura Gettleman - February 09, 2024 at 03:08 PM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Geneva Colston.*



February 09, 2024 at 12:29 PM

DC

“ *Diana Cage planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Geneva Colston.*

Diana Cage - February 09, 2024 at 12:29 PM

TF

“ *The Laws Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Geneva Colston.*



The Laws Family - February 09, 2024 at 11:27 AM

DL

“ *Dave&Nancy Laws purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Geneva Colston.*



Dave&Nancy Laws - February 09, 2024 at 11:17 AM

DJ

“ *It is not often that one has the opportunity to attest to greatness, but I am privileged to do so in the case of Geneva Colston. She is a treasure in my growing up in Worthington Ohio. She defined Saint John's Church and its goodness to the community. Our loss is heavens gain.*

Dennis Jones - February 09, 2024 at 10:24 AM

RH

“ *Soror Gayle, you have my deepest condolences during this time. May the loving memories of your mom bring comfort to your heart.*




Rossetta Howell - February 08, 2024 at 11:25 PM

LS

“ Soror Barge
I would like to extend my condolences and my deepest sympathies to you and your family, I didn't have the opportunity to meet your mother but as they say the fruit does not fall from the tree and I know she had to be a Jewel as you are, I am here for you Soror if you need anything I'm a phone call away or I have the shoulder for you to lean on....
Love in Delta
Soror Lolita

Lolita Smith - February 08, 2024 at 10:39 PM

MB

“ Gayle, I sent continued condolences to you and your family. Just reading about your mother tremendous life make me feel like I think her. One thing I can share is that she instilled in you all the passion that you possess. Gayle you share a lot of your mother. Keep her dreams alive. Mothers are so Special. When their last day on earth come, they may travel home to heaven, but you will never forget them. Rest In Heaven Ms. Colston. Your legacy will live on. God Bless!   

Marsha Bailey-Cantrelle - February 08, 2024 at 10:14 PM

JG

“ *It was a pleasure to meet Ms. Coulston on her birthday several years ago. Such a lovely lady. Julia Gill*

julia Gill - February 08, 2024 at 06:04 PM

BF

“ *Gayle praying for you and your family during this time. What a beautiful tribute and as saying goes “she get it from her momma”. I see her through her legacy, Dr. Gayle. Peace be with all of you.*

Barbara Fluker - February 08, 2024 at 03:11 PM

MF

“ All of my life I have none about Geneva as my Aunt and uncle Mike as my uncle. I never considered them as anything else.

We grew up next to her father and mother, they were always grandpa and grandma Laws.

Aunt Genevs was my first sunday school teacher you encouraged me to love the lord .

I remember when I was called to preach at a young age I had my trail sermon and was so critical of my message, went to her with tears in my eyes.and she shared with me that words that I spoke were not mine they were words that come from god ,for me to put my trust in him and not in myself.

Through my journey in ministry those words have guided me I will always love and miss her , but I'm grateful that she touched my life and been a part of my life.

Those that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. May she rest in God's arms.

Rev Michael Fluellen

Michael Fluellen - February 08, 2024 at 02:44 PM

MC

“ Dear Gayle and family,
Your mother was such an amazing, kindhearted, talented, and religious lady. Your friends from school have wonderful childhood memories that she provided to you and all your friends. Whether your mother and father were attending a school function, throwing a birthday party, or participating in a St. Michael’s event, they shared their kindness with both you and all your friends.
Last week I heard that you and Carlos were in Columbus visiting with your mother, and I contacted St. Timothy’s Church to have a Mass said for her, not even realizing she had already gone home to heaven to be with God and her treasured husband.
You and yours are in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. May your love for God and for your parents, along with your cherished memories, provide you with strength and comfort now and always.
Merrlyn & Michael Cahill

Merrlyn Cahill - February 08, 2024 at 08:23 AM

EJ

“ When I got to meet Mother Colston, she was not a stranger because I had developed a bond with her “clone” Baby Girl, Gayle. Full of vibrancy, motivation, personality, a history buff and a phenomenal storyteller! I listened to her talk the game of basketball on TV at Lucy Allen’s Thanksgiving dinner, but when she told me she had made history as a commander on the floor herself, I was awe-inspired! She stood tall and shared her shoulders for others to climb—a role model extraordinaire. We will miss her but she left us much to emulate! Rest well, God’s servant. We will meet again.
-Ella Goode Johnson
Dallas TX

Ella Goode Johnson - February 07, 2024 at 01:57 PM

KS

“ Aunt Geneva,
Memories of you will forever shine bright within my hearts. You will truly be missed.

Kimberly Sampson - February 07, 2024 at 12:04 PM

JS

“ To Gayle, Carlos, & Family, My deepest condolences to all of you. Aunt Geneva, Aunt Geneva, Aunt Geneva what a woman of grace and stature!!
Rest Well Queen! She was one of the sweetest (but stern) people I know. I will miss our conversations and so much more. I know Uncle Mike is lovingly happy to see you.
Well Done Thy Good & Faithful Servant!!!
Until we meet again.....

Jill Story - February 07, 2024 at 11:52 AM

DS

I extend my heartfelt condolences to Soror Gayle and family, reminding you that, God is still Good.

Dr. Nettiestine Smith - February 07, 2024 at 11:59 AM

RW

Robyn Dyson Woodson
You will be missed goes without saying. We all understand it was your time to leave this earth but there's a special place and people waiting for you and to see your face again. You have spread your love in ALL you do. And yes Aunt Geneva your chocolate cake too(that's a personal message between us)
My prayers and heart goes out Gayle and her family as well as our entire family

Robyn Dyson Woodson - February 07, 2024 at 09:09 PM

FB

My Aunt Geneva was one of a kind. She was very generous, kind, loving, a great cook, fun to be around, talented, always showed up to family reunions, baby showers, graduation parties. we looked forward to her chocolate cake. my prayers go out to Gayle and the family. Love, Niece Freddie Bondurant

Freddie Bondurant - February 08, 2024 at 02:23 PM

BL

*Soror Gayle Barge, my prayer is that God Comforts you and your family as you mourn the loss of your love one.
Soror Bobbye Lowe*

Bobbye J Lowe - February 11, 2024 at 05:24 PM

MW

“ *McCullough & Tina Williams purchased the Gracious Lavender Basket for the family of Geneva Colston.*



McCullough & Tina Williams - February 06, 2024 at 10:52 AM

MW

“ *From: McCullough & Tina Williams planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Geneva Colston.*

McCullough & Tina Williams - February 06, 2024 at 10:52 AM