



Mrs. Adelaide Catherina Bentley,

August 18, 1928 - April 2, 2020

Adelaide Catherina Veronica Bentley, affectionately known as "The Mayor of East Towson," was born August 18, 1928 in Towson, Maryland, the seventh of nine children born to the late Rev William C. Williams and Catherine Williams. God granted her 91 years and 7 months before He called her to her heavenly home on Thursday, April 2, 2020 after a brief illness.

Adelaide was the matriarch of the Williams family. Her love and commitment to family and the East Towson Community knew no boundaries. Her life's passions were GOD first, family, and maintaining and improving the East Towson Community.

Adelaide was educated in the Baltimore City Public School System attending The Saint Frances Academy with great pride.

After high school, she worked for 21 years at Kirch-Taylor Cleaners after which she was employed at Black & Decker in Towson as an invoice clerk until she retired in 1983.

Adelaide was married in her very young years to Isaac Thomas in 1946. That union ended in divorce. In 1953 she married the love of her life, the late Luther D. Bentley, Sr. They were married for 36-1/2 years.

Adelaide was a devoted member of the Mount Olive Baptist Church on Bosley Avenue in Towson, Maryland for over 61 years under the leadership of the Pastor, Rev. Avery N. Penn. She was a member of the Gospel Chorus, Senior Choir, Pastors Relations Ministry, the Flower Circle and President of the Missionary Ministry.

A resident of the East Towson Community her entire life, Adelaide was always active in the well-being of her Neighborhood. She was an active member of several non-profit organizations namely, the Esther Progressive Temple #586, and the ADAH Chapter No. 8 Order Of The Eastern Star serving on many committees throughout the years.

In 1998, Adelaide became President of the North East Towson Improvement Association, Inc. (N.E.T.I.A.) making it her mission to work with community members to maintain and improve life in the East Towson Community. Her aim was that East Towson continue to be the wonderful neighborhood it had always been throughout the years.

In the mid 1990's, the N.E.T.I.A. worked with Dutch Ruppertsberger, then County Executive, now serving as the U.S. Representative for Maryland's 2nd Congressional District since 2003, to acquire the use of the Carver School Building at 300 Lennox

Avenue.

After the Carver School Building was renovated by HUD, Dutch worked with the N.E.T.I.A. to turn this property into East Towson's Community Center. Since then, the Carver Community Center has been the home and monthly meeting place for the N.E.T.I.A. and has served as a safe space for East Towson residents to learn, grow and celebrate for nearly 25 years. In that time, residents have enjoyed the benefits of computer classes, Karate classes, knitting and crochet classes. The Center has also served as the monthly meeting place for the Black Police Union and is a satellite office for the Baltimore County Chapter of the NAACP.

Adelaide's leadership was laced with the wisdom to know when to set work aside and bring people close. That understanding led the N.E.I.T.A. to sponsor an annual "Come Back-to-East Towson Day," to bring present and previous East Towson residents together, and an annual Christmas Party for all community members.

In the late 1990's and early 2000's, Adelaide worked with community members and the late Mary Harvey, Director of the Baltimore County Community Conservation Organization to institute the program "Christmas-in-April". Its purpose was to improve the homes of East Towson residents. The program provided for the installation of new roofs, building and repairing porches, painting, and other cosmetic improvements free of charge.

After this program, Adelaide approached Mary again concerning better housing for the East Towson Community. Following many, many community meetings, Dutch Ruppertsberger and Mary Harvey brought new housing initiatives to the East Towson. They brought old houses and renovated them and purchased property to build new homes.

Under Adelaide's leadership and the hard work of N.E.I.T.A. members, the dream to beautify the East Towson community became a reality.

By 1998, the Carver Playground Summer Camp was started for children ages 5 through 12 at a nominal fee \$25.00 for five weeks of fun and activities as well as providing jobs for community youth. After a slow start with maybe 25 campers, the program's registration mushroomed and today the Camp is at capacity registering an average of 56 children each summer. Even in the midst of rising cost and periods of economy uncertainty, today's registration fee is still only \$175.00 per camper for five full weeks of summer fun.

There were many other accomplishments under Adelaide's leadership. In 2005 two Historic East Towson signs were placed on Pennsylvania and Virginia Avenues. In partnering with the late County Executive, Kevin Kamenetz, Adelaide along with members of N.E.T.I.A. in the restoration of slave quarters built with chestnut logs known as the "Jacob House." This historic structure was dedicated on June 25, 2011 and is now located on the grounds of the Carver Community Center. Also working with Baltimore County and the Baltimore Gas & Electric Company, Railroad Avenue was finally paved.

By 2018, a small community park at the end of East Pennsylvania Avenue in Towson was dedicated in Adelaide's name by Neighbor Space of Baltimore County.

Adelaide was still going strong at age 91, tenpin bowling competitively every Thursday night.

She was also quite the fashion queen, always dressed to the minute with her hats and clothing from the latest and greatest styles.

She leaves to mourn: four children, Acquannetta Johnson (Carlos), Andrea Jackson, Brendenia Garret, and Luther D. Bentley, Jr. (Cynthia). Her grandchildren are Nancy Goldring, Acquannetta Desbordes (Damian), Columbus R. Robinson, Felicia Garret, David, Lamar, and Christopher Bentley, Daisha and Deaira Garret, her sister, Nancy Frazier and brother Russell Williams (Peggy) . She also has six great-grandchildren, and five great-great grandchildren and six nephews, three nieces, and many great nephews, great nieces, cousins and friends. The family would also like to acknowledge her devoted friends: Florene Fields, Priscilla Brown, Cleo Cole, Luvera Dixon, and Bonita Smith.

Cemetery

Events

Pleasant Rest

APR Visitation 10:00AM - 07:00PM

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Pleasant Rest, MD,

Chatman-Harris Funeral Home West
5240-44 Reisterstown Road, Baltimore, MD, US, 21215

Comments



“ To My Dear Friend, Acq:
Know that you are in my thoughts and prayers, especially during this difficult season. May you find strength and comfort in the coming days knowing that you were always there for each other. May you be comforted with memories of all the beautiful time shared with your beautiful mother. May you and your family be forever blessed. Sending you love, my Sister-Friend.
--Linda Rascoe



Linda Rascoe - April 08 at 05:10 PM



“ Dearest Acq,
Sally and I are much saddened to hear of your Mom's passing. We never had the pleasure of meeting this fine woman, but I could see her in your eyes when you would speak of her to me. Your eyes would brighten and your ever present smile would widen. I could see that you were very proud of her and for good reason. She was a servant to others and a fine woman, who raised a fine daughter. You are a testament to her.
Pray you find some peace in knowing that you are in our thoughts and prayers.
Love Chuck & Sally

Charles Eary - April 08 at 09:19 AM



“ Dear Acq and Family:

Pam and I were very sadden to hear of the demise of your mother.However, during times like these, our family has always found PEACE and CLOSURE in the following:

But Now They Deserve A Better Country, That Is, An Heavenly, Wherefore GOD Is Not Ashamed To Be Called Their GOD, For HE Hath Prepared For Them A City, HEBREWS 11:16 KJV

May your FAITH continue to SUSTAIN you and your Family.

Mervin and Pam--Chesapeake, VA



Mervin and Pam McCoy - April 06 at 03:55 PM



“ I had the pleasure of knowing Mrs. Bentley when I worked in the office across the hall from hers for several years. She would make me smile every morning when she arrived at 9 am. I always admired her inner strength to face each day despite whatever was trying to hold her down. She will be missed by many. - Carole Shupe

Carole Shupe - April 06 at 02:24 PM