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# Thomas E. Teamer, corrections officer

A Mass of Christian Burial for Thomas E. Teamer, 79, of Buffalo, a retired state corrections officer, was held Friday in St. Martin de Porres Church. Burial followed in Forest Lawn.

Teamer, who was born in Philadelphia but lived in Buffalo since early childhood, died Sept. 21, 2002, in Millard Fillmore Hospital following a long illness.



He attended Buffalo public schools and Buffalo State College, and was an Army veteran of World War II, when he was stationed in Germany. He received the World War II Minority Veterans Award.

Teamer spent 30 years as a cor-

rections officer, retiring in 1986. He also was a state warrant officer.

He was a member of the Young Men's Democratic Association, the Afro-American Police Association, the Royal Serenaders Chorus, and Paramount Lodge 73, Free & Accepted Masons.

He is survived by four daughters, Yvonne A., Kelly Holloway and Kim Wright, all of Buffalo, and Robin Conroy of Houston; three sons, Gerard of Jacksonville, Fla., and Carl Bolger-Teamer and Frank Gates of Buffalo; six sisters, Willa Mae Moseley of Camden, N.J., Roberta Saunders of Rochester, and Bernice Dees, Madeline Little, Lillian and Gloria Collins, all of Buffalo; 15 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

# Mildred B. Thomas, NFTA bus driver

Mildred Belcher Thomas, 78, the first African-American woman to become an NFTA bus driver, died Sunday (Jan. 13, 2002) in her Buffalo home after a long illness.

Born Mildred Belcher in Calhoun Falls, S.C., one of 10 children, she attended school in Calhoun Falls, where she played basketball, and moved to Buffalo in 1941.

Mrs. Thomas was a Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority bus driver for 40 years and was noted for her outstanding record of safe driving, prompt service and courtesy to riders. She received numerous awards for safe driving, including Salesman of the Month and the 12-year Safety Emblem. She retired in 1984.

She was active in Mount Zion

Church of God Holiness and was a member of the William-Emslie YMCA. She enjoyed gardening.

She and her husband, Steve, were married in 1942. Also an NFTA bus driver, he died in 1987.

A resident of Angola for many years, she moved back to Buffalo after her husband's death.

Surviving are three sisters, Thelma Barnes, Annie Kee and Inez Greene, all of Buffalo; two brothers, Clarence Belcher of Philadelphia and John Belcher of Buffalo; a stepson, Steve Perry of Angola; and six grandchildren.

Services will be held at noon Friday in Mount Zion Church of God Holiness, 32 Oakgrove Ave., after a wake in the church at 11 a.m. Burial will be in St. Matthews Cemetery, West Seneca.



# Albert Thompson, city school superintendent

By DALE ANDERSON

*News Staff Reporter*

Albert Thompson, who served as superintendent of the Buffalo Public Schools during crisis-filled years from 1990 to 1996, died Wednesday in Sisters Hospital after suffering a heart attack at home. He was 63.

Thompson, the first African-American to serve as school superintendent in the city, was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a cancer of the plasma cells in bone marrow, in April 1995.

Considered a numbers wizard and a nuts-and-bolts leader, he began his 41-year career with the district in 1955 as an industrial arts teacher. He moved to the central office in 1969 and was named an associate superintendent in 1985.

He served as interim superintendent for a year after the departure of his predecessor, Eugene Reville.

"Fiscally, my time was the worst time to

be superintendent," he said in a farewell interview on his last day on the job in 1996. "In six years, there was only one year we had a reasonable increase in school aid. Other than that one year, we've had one trauma after the other."

He cited as major accomplishments the establishment of several Quality Schools programs, the expansion of gifted-and-talented programs and construction of the Makowski Early Childhood Center.

Thompson said he also was proud of the growth in business partnerships with schools, which totaled more than 75 when he retired.

He said he would like to be remembered as "somebody who did the best he could."

A Buffalo News editorial praised him upon his retirement for "his personal demeanor, professionalism and sense of integrity."

Born in Buffalo, he attended School 17 and Burgard Vocational High School, where he ran cross country and was on the track team, student newspaper and Student Coun-

cil.

At the same time, he helped support his family after his father, a Pullman porter, suffered a stroke and died when Thompson was 13.

"We were a welfare family," Thompson said. "My mother did curtains, washing, ironing. I had a job mopping, sweeping, working in the corner store."

At Buffalo State Teachers College, he ran cross country and was a straight-A student. Drafted into the Army, he served in the Signal Corps in Europe.

Thompson's first job as an industrial arts teacher was at School 17. He next went to School 73, where he was building representative to the Buffalo Teachers Federation and encouraged girls to take industrial arts.

Active in volunteer youth work, he met his wife, Freddie, a registered nurse, when they worked together in the Police Athletic League youth program.

During the 1960s, he was a community activist and an area vice president of



# during years of crisis, dies at 63

**BUILD.** As a member of the Civic Betterment League, he helped create the first independent Head Start program in the Walls Community Center on Glenwood Avenue.

Thompson later taught at Woodlawn Junior High School and in 1969 was assigned to the central administration's Division of Finance and Research. In 1979, he was named an assistant superintendent of schools for finance after serving in that role with a lesser title for four years.

In 1985, Reville named him deputy superintendent, the second-highest position in the system.

In addition to serving as a school administrator, he was Sunday school superintendent for 25 years at Second Temple Baptist Church and was a church trustee.

Surviving, in addition to his wife, are a son, A. Jeffery, and a daughter, Jennifer.

A funeral will be held Saturday at 11 a.m. in Second Temple Missionary Baptist Church, 812 E. Delavan Ave. Interment will be in Acacia Park Cemetery, Pendleton.



Albert Thompson: was the first African-American to serve as Buffalo school superintendent.

**THOMPSON— Albert**

Age 64, of Buffalo, suddenly October 29, 1997; beloved husband of Freddie Mae (nee Grimes); dear father of Albert J. (Paula) Thompson and Jennifer A. (Larry) Johnson; grandfather of one grandchild. The family will be present Friday from 7-9 PM at the 2nd Temple Baptist Church, 812 East Delavan Ave., where funeral services will be held on Saturday at 11 AM. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the International Myeloma Foundation, 2120 Stanley Hills Dr., Los Angeles, CA, 90046. Arrangements by (Delaware Chapel) AMIGONE FUNERAL HOME INC.

**THOMPSON—Joseph**

Age 86, July 25, 2001 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Retired from the City of Buffalo. Survived by wife Katherine Kelly-Thompson; daughter Denise Kelly; granddaughter Brandi McMillon. Memorial service at Zion Dominion, 360 Genesee St., Wednesday, August 1st at 1 PM.

**THOMPSON—Sidney E.**

July 22, 1997. Family will receive friends on Saturday at 10 AM with funeral to follow at 10:30 at the THOMAS T. EDWARDS FUNERAL HOME INC., 995 Genesee St.



## Samuel S. Walker

A memorial service for Samuel S. Walker, a retired railroad worker, will be held at 4 p.m. Friday in Lutheran Church of Our Savior, 26 Brunswick Blvd.



Walker, 82, died March 24, 2001, in Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Batavia, after an eight-year battle with lymphoma.

A native of Calhoun Falls, S.C., he moved to Buffalo in 1936 and worked for 42 years for the New York Central, Penn Central, Conrail and Amtrak as a cook, attendant and waiter. He retired from Amtrak in 1980.

He also had worked part time at Bethlehem Steel Corp. in the 1950s.

He served in the Army at Fort Benning, Ga., from 1942 to 1945.

Walker was active in the Men's Club of Lutheran Church of Our Savior and was committed to the revitalization of the Cold Spring neighborhood, serving on the board of Buffalo Triad Housing Programs and as a member of the Masten Neighborhood Block Club.

He enjoyed gardening, walking his dog and playing bridge at the 1490 Senior Citizens Center and the Salvation Army.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, the former Georgie Stokes; two daughters, Sandra and Sonia, both of Buffalo; a son, Samuel J. of Camarillo, Calif.; a sister, Bessie of Charlotte, N.C.; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

He donated his body to the University at Buffalo Medical School.

# Ella Jeanette Watson, school administrator

Ella Jeanette Watson, 65, of Williamsville, a retired Buffalo teacher, guidance counselor and administrator, died Wednesday (July 22, 1998) in Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital, Amherst.

Born Ella Jeanette Rousseau in Wilkesboro, N.C., she earned her bachelor's degree in 1956 from Shaw University in Raleigh, N.C. She later earned her master's degree from Buffalo State College in supervision and career guidance counseling.

She and her husband, Gillis, were married in 1957. She taught at her alma mater, Lincoln Heights High School in Wilkesboro, while he served in the Army. Upon his discharge in 1959, they moved to Buffalo.

She taught elementary grades in Niagara Falls schools from 1959 to 1962 and in Buffalo schools from 1964 to 1968, when she became a school social worker. She was a guidance counselor at Bennett High School from 1972 to 1985.

Mrs. Watson was supervisor of pupil personnel services for the Buffalo Public Schools from 1986



to 1993, when she became acting director of guidance and counseling. She retired in 1995.

Throughout her career, she was an advocate for young people and encouraged them to pursue higher education. She often volunteered as a counselor for community and service organizations.

She was a member of Lincoln Memorial United Methodist Church, Delta Sigma Theta sorority, the Buffalo Council of Supervisors and Administrators, and Retired Teachers of Western New York. She was particularly active in the Buffalo Chapter of The Links. A 25-year member, she was president from 1992 to 1995.

In addition to her husband, a retired Buffalo school principal, survivors include two daughters, Marilyn LaVergne of Montclair, N.J., and Lynne Toyne of South Orange, N.J.; three sisters, Rebecca Mitchell of Trenton, N.J., Ovelia Harris of Wilkesboro and Vivian Hairston of South Bend, Ind.; a brother, Matthew Rousseau of Yardley, Pa.; and four grandchildren.

Services will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday in Lincoln Memorial United Methodist Church, Northland at Main Street. Burial will be in Forest Lawn.

**WELLS—Morton L. Sr.**

February 17, 1995. Family will be present Wednesday at 11 AM at Pilgrim Baptist Church, 665 Michigan Ave., where funeral services will follow at noon. Arrangements by H. ALFRED LEWIS MORTUARY INC.

**WESTRAY—Margaret**

December 1, 2000 of Buffalo N.Y. Beloved sister of Wendell P. of Upper Marlboro, MD.; dear aunt of Dr. Walter Holland (Jean); also survived by other relatives and friends. Friends may call Friday at St. Phillip's Episcopal Church, Sussex near Grider. Visitation 10 AM. Funeral Mass at 11 AM. Arrangements are entrusted to the MEMORIAL CHAPELS OF BUFFALO, 66 East Utica St. Entombment in the Atrium of Rosewood Mausoleum at Forest Lawn Cemetery.



# Thomas White, one of city's first black firefighters

Services for Thomas R. White, 80, who was among the first three African-American firefighters in the City of Buffalo, will be held at noon and 1 p.m. Monday in Mount Zion Church of God-Holiness.

Burial will be in Forest Lawn.

He died Wednesday (Feb. 21, 1996) in Sisters Hospital.

White was born in Rome, Miss., and traveled to Buffalo with his family as a small boy. He attended Buffalo schools and served in the Coast Guard for more than 2½ years during World War II.

He began his firefighting career in 1953 at Hook and Ladder 3 on Spring Street, spending most of his career at that station and winning



the William J. Conners Medal for Bravery while assigned there. He later transferred to Engine 34 on Main Street, shortly before his retirement in the 1970s.

White was a member of Mount Zion Church of God-Holiness for more than 45 years. For more than 40 years he served as a Sunday school teacher and then superintendent of the Sunday school program and was chairman of the Church and Sunday school picnic during his tenure.

He was a church trustee and in 1994 was honored for 40 years of service to the trustee board.

Surviving are his wife, the former Ezella Varnado; a brother, Charles of Maywood, Ill.; a sister, Ida Mae Skinner; four grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

## **WILLIS—Bernice**



Entered into rest March 22, 1998; beloved wife of David Willis Sr., loving mother of five; also survived by a host of grand and great-grandchildren, one sister Georgia Union-Miller and a host of other relatives and friends; predeceased by one brother Donald Scott and two sisters Ruby Hill and Clara Union. Wake Friday 7-9PM at St. John Baptist Church, 184 Goodell Ave. Funeral Saturday 10AM. Interment at Forest Lawn Cemetery. Arrangements by PROVIDENCE MEMORIAL CHAPEL.

**WILSON—Gertrude M.**

Entered into rest November 2, 2001, mother of Herman F. (Lillian) Davis Wilson and Delores (Raymond) Evans; grandmother of 13; great-grandmother of 20; great-great-grandmother of one; also survived by a host of relatives and friends. Viewing Thursday 6-8 PM at THOMAS T. EDWARDS FUNERAL HOME, 995 Genesee St. Wake Friday 2 PM, funeral 3 PM at St. Luke A.M.E. Zion Church, 314 East Ferry St. Interment at Ridge Lawn Cemetery.

**WOFFORD—Maurice W.**

August 23, 1996; husband of Esther; father of Maurine, Mauri Hicks and Melanie; brother of John (Ruby), Dorothy Webster and Frances Costley; also survived by four grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and other relatives. The family will receive friends Tuesday, 11 AM at Mount Zion Holiness Church, Oak Grove in Hedley, where funeral service will follow at 12 Noon. Interment in St. Matthew's Cemetery. Arrangements by H. ALFRED LEWIS MORTUARY INC.



# Sarah Louise Woods, singer; toured U.S., Europe

Sarah Louise Woods loved to sing, especially in the various choirs she performed with at St. John Baptist Church, 184 Goodell St. Singing allowed her to tour the nation and Europe, and even perform for President Clinton.

Ms. Woods died Monday (Jan. 24, 2000) in Erie County Medical Center after a very brief illness, three days after her 54th birthday.

Born in Buffalo, she was a 1964 graduate of the former East High School. At age 4, she joined St. John Baptist Church, where she was alternately a member of the Junior Choir, the Youth and Young Adult Choir, United Voices of St. John and the Radio Choir, among others. She toured as a soloist with the Gemini Dance Theatre.

In addition to the various church choirs she sang with, she was a member of the Progressive National Baptist Convention Choir. In 1996, she sang a duet



with gospel superstar Tremaine Hawkins at the National Baptist Convention in Charlotte, N.C., at which Clinton was in attendance.

Ms. Woods had been employed at M. Wile Co., 77 Goodell St., and Jim Bell Cleaners, 1379 Jefferson Ave. Most recently she had worked as a teacher's aide at School 31, 212 Stanton St. Prior to that, she was a teacher's aide at School 12, 33 Ash St.

Ms. Woods, who enjoyed working with children, also was employed at St. John Christian Academy, a private elementary school run by St. John Baptist Church, and at the church's summer youth program.

A funeral service is set for 11 a.m. Saturday at St. John Baptist Church. Burial will be in Forest Lawn.

Ms. Woods is survived by her husband of 32 years, David L.; a son, David of Warren, Ohio; her mother, Mary Alice Walker-Boyd; six sisters, Cassandra Brown of New York City and L. Jayne Robinson, Linda M. Gray, Mary Alice Boyd, LeDonia A. Boyd and Regina D. Boyd; two brothers, Richard D. Boyd and Samuel K. Boyd; and two grandchildren.

# Daniel S. Workman Jr., banker, served the East Side community

June 13, 1944 — April 21, 2007



His job was banker.

But Daniel S. Workman Jr.'s avocation was finding ways to help make Buffalo a better place, especially struggling

communities on the city's East Side.

A Mass of Christian Burial for Mr. Workman, a retired vice president and regional community investment officer for M&T Bank, will be offered at 11 a.m. Saturday in St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church, 555 Northampton St.

He died Saturday in Roswell Park Cancer Institute after a long illness.

A city resident, Mr. Workman won numerous awards for helping a wide variety of organizations on the East Side, said Sister Philip Marie Cirincione, pastoral associate at St. Martin de Porres.

She described Mr. Workman as a humble, unselfish man who was always willing to pitch in and help, without seeking accolades for his service.

"I knew this man for 40 years, and he's going to be very sorely missed by many people," Sister Philip Marie said. "He was a banker who was always willing to help people and organizations in our neighborhoods."

"He believed in the people of Buffalo, and the only credit he ever wanted was seeing things get done in the city," said Mr.

Workman's wife of 41 years, the former Joanne Hill.

Last year, St. Martin de Porres named Mr. Workman its Man of the Year, the bank named him Manager of the Year, and the Buffalo Niagara Partnership named him Minority Volunteer of the Year. This year, he received the Buffalo NAACP's human relations award for outstanding community service.

He was a director of the Community Action Information Center and Catholic Charities. He was also active with the NAACP, the MADD DADS, the Catholic Diocese Board of Education, the Catholic Central Board, the Oshei Foundation and other organizations.

A Buffalo native, Mr. Workman retired last year after 32 years with the bank. He was a U.S. Air Force veteran and graduate of Bishop Timon High School, the University of the Philippines and the University at Buffalo.

Mr. Workman played the piano, loved music and was known for teaching line dancing to fellow parishioners at St. Martin de Porres Church.

He took a five-year leave of absence from the bank to serve as a deputy special assistant to Hugh Carey, who was governor of New York from 1975 until 1983.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Workman is survived by a daughter, Latrise; a son, Daniel III; a sister, Rita Workman Alleyne; and four brothers, Vincent, Ronald, Rudolph and Warren.

# Dr. Lydia T. Wright, broke racial and gender barriers

May 5, 1922 — Aug. 23, 2006

Dr. Lydia T. Wright, who broke racial and gender barriers in Buffalo and was the harbinger of change in Buffalo Public Schools, died Wednesday in Niagara Lutheran Home. She was 84.

Born in Shreveport, La., Dr. Wright grew up in Cincinnati. She attended the University of Cincinnati and Fisk University, and earned her medical degree in 1947 from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tenn.

After completing her training at Harlem Hospital in New York City and Children's Hospital in Boston, Mass., she married Dr. Frank G. Evans, an internist, in 1951, and they opened offices on Jefferson Avenue in Buffalo a year later. The first African-American woman to practice medicine in Buffalo, she specialized in pediatrics for 36 years, retiring in 1988.

Dr. Wright was on the staff of several local hospitals and was a faculty member of the University at Buffalo's medical school. She also was a member of numerous professional organizations.

Dr. Wright broke another barrier in 1962, when she was the first African-American appointed to the Buffalo Board of Education. A strong advocate of integration, she was careful to say it wasn't the cure for educational ills.

"Most Negroes look upon



**Dr. Lydia T. Wright specialized in pediatrics in her 36-year medical career.**

school integration as a guarantee that their children will learn and will soar to great heights of achievement. This is a myth," she was quoted in a 1964 article in The Buffalo Evening News.

"Children coming from homes where there is order and high expectations have a good chance of success in school," she said. "But children from homes where parents seldom read . . . where there is no routine, nor high expectation, these children create chaos in the classrooms. They are the under-achievers and potential drop-outs."

"Whether or not a child attends an integrated school, he never will succeed, unless he receives worthwhile instruction in that school," she said.

During her time on the School Board, Dr. Wright also proposed high schools that specialized in a particular area of the curriculum and drew students from all parts of the city — foreshadowing the magnet school system. Her appointment expired in 1967.

At the time of her death, she was the only living Buffalo resident for whom a public school was named: the Lydia T. Wright School of Excellence on Appenheimer Avenue.

Dr. Wright also broke barriers in the Episcopal Diocese of Western New York in 1967, serving its standing committee as the first woman and the first African-American. She was a member of St. Philip's Episcopal Church and served on its Altar Guild.

She was the recipient of nu-

merous awards and recognition through the years, among them the Red Jacket Award of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, presented to Dr. Wright and her husband in 1980, in recognition of civic service over a period of years.

The NAACP honored her with the Medgar Evers Award in 1988 and the Education Award in 1964, and her biography was featured in the first edition of "Who's Who of American Women."

Besides her husband, survivors include a son, Frank G. Jr.; and a daughter, Tamara E. Rowland.

Services will be held at 10:45 a.m. Monday in St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Sussex and Grider streets, Buffalo.

— Janice L. Habuda

**WRIGHT—Evelyn (Mostiller)**

September 24, 1996; beloved wife of the late Edward W. Sr.; mother of Evon Steward, Edward W. Jr. (Shenetta), Eugene, Elaine, Eric (Grace), Ernest and Eunice Jackson; also survived by four brothers, five sisters and 13 grandchildren. Friends may call Sunday 12-9 PM at the H. ALFRED LEWIS MORTUARY INC., 968 Jefferson Ave., where the family will be present 7-9 PM. Services will be conducted Monday 10 AM. at Blessed Trinity R.C. Church, 317 Leroy Ave.



## **WRIGHT—Sadie**

September 28, 1994 of Buffalo, NY. Wife of Osmond. Beloved mother of Fay and Noel. Also survived by three sisters, two brothers, grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends. Arrangements are entrusted to MEMORIAL CHAPELS OF BUFFALO, 66 E. Utica St. Friends may call Friday at St. Philips Episcopal Church, Suffolk at Grider Sts., Buffalo. Wake and vesper at 7 o'clock. Funeral services Saturday, 10:00 AM from St. Philips. Friends are invited. In lieu of flowers contributions may be made in Mrs. Wright's name to St. Philips Memorial Fund.