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Obituary; 2003-09-21; Johnson, Jessica

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Homegoing Celebration
for



Jessica (Judy) Johnson

Sunrise
June 19, 1909

Sunset
September 21, 2003



"For God giveth to man that is good in his sight,
wisdom, and knowledge and joy..."

Ecclesiastes 2:26

Monday, September 29, 2003

Visitation - 11:00 a.m.

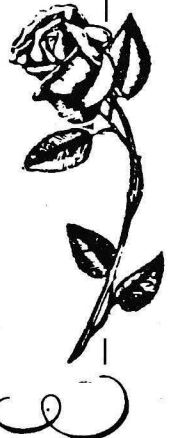
Funeral Service - 12:00 noon

BETHEL AME CHURCH

1525 Michigan Avenue

Buffalo, New York 14209

Rev. Richard A. Stenhouse, Pastor
Officiating



- Obituary -

Jessica (Judy) Johnson, the only child of the late Marcellus and Mary Burbridge Grimm, was born on June 19, 1909 in Lexington, Kentucky. After a brief confinement at St. Francis Geriatric Center, she was called to eternal rest on Sunday, September 21, 2003.

When Judy was one year old, the family moved to Clifton, Ohio. She was educated in Clifton, Ohio Public Schools.

In 1937, Judy and her husband, the late Ralph Johnson, moved to Buffalo, NY. She became a member of Bethel AME Church that same year, under the pastorage of the late Bishop Ormonde Walker. She was on the Usher Board, a member of the Walker Willing Workers, Laymen's Organization and the Jewletts.

Bishop Walker was a Democratic Candidate for Ellicott Councilman and Judy served as his assistant campaign manager. Her love and concern for others with personal problems and those dealing with governmental issues were a big part of her political agenda.

In 1957, her dear friend, the late Cora P. Maloney, became the first female Council Member and Judy became her secretary. After Mrs. Maloney's death in 1961, Judy became secretary to Delmar Mitchell, President of the Common Council.

Her political base grew, and in 1963, she was elected Assistant Secretary of the Democratic State Committee. In 1966, Judy became Buffalo's first female Director of the License Bureau. Later in 1966 she became Confidential Aide to the late Mayor Frank A. Sedita. The 1st female and 1st Black member of a Mayor's inner Cabinet. In 1968 Judy became Chairperson of the 13th Zone Democratic Committee, in 1973 Assistant Treasurer and in April 1976, elected First Vice Chairman of the State Committee.

A major highlight of her political career was becoming the 1st Black Treasurer of the City of Buffalo. The late Stanley Makowski was mayor.

Mrs. Johnson retired in 1977 from active political positions. She volunteered at a number of agencies including as Executive Director, 1490 Enterprises, Inc. Her memory will live on, for the many 1st endeavors she undertook and proved successful.

Two sons: Jesse and Edward, and grandson Ralph Rainey preceded her in death.

She leaves to cherish her memory: eight grandchildren: Larry Rainey (Rosalyn), Stephen Rainey, Kathi Cochran (Larry), Karen Rainey, all of Chester, PA, Pamela Johnson (Virgil) of New Castle, DE; Brian, JoAnn and Robert Johnson of Dan Diego, CA; thirteen great grandchildren; ten great-great grandchildren; daughters-in-law: Lennis Rainey of New Castle, DE, Lois Johnson, San Diego, Calif; Herbert L. Bellamy, Sr. whom she called her son, and a host of other persons she loved.

Pallbearers

Brian Johnson
Virgil Johnson
Larry Rainey

John Bellamy
Jason Bellamy
Steven Rainey

Honorary Pallbearers

Arthur O. Eve
David Swartz
Joseph Merritt

Joseph Crangle
George K. Arthur
Clyde McGowan

Earl Hargrove

*When I leave you for a while
Please don't grieve and shed tears
Stand tall with a smile
And for my sake and in my name,
Reach out your hand in comfort and in cheer.
In spirit I'll always be near.*

- Acknowledgment -

The grandchildren, great and great-great grandchildren, and all loved ones, express our sincere appreciation for your love, kindness and concerns. Your prayers, visits and gifts of love, were evidence of God's love. We ask your continued prayers and we pray that God will bless each of you.