



## Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.

October 22, 1922 - November 29, 2011

Arthur Washington, Jr., who was affectionately known as, Art, “Junior”, Dad, Grandpa and Pom Pom by his family and friends, was born on October 22, 1922, in St. Louis, MO, the second of eleven children born to the late Arthur and Frankey (Riley) Washington, Sr. He passed away November 29, 2011, at Tendercare of Westwood, at the ripe, fruitful age of 89. Raised as a Methodist in Springfield, IL, Christian foundations were laid for his life. He served as a Deacon and Trustee of both Pioneer Baptist and Bible Baptist Churches in the 1970's. A public confession of faith in Christ was made, and he was baptized in 1965 at the Galilee Baptist Church in Kalamazoo, MI. He also had an extreme love for music. He always kept a song in his heart and hummed his favorite hymns until the end. His first educational achievement included being Valedictorian at Feitshans High School in Springfield, IL. Arthur served our country during WWII in the Armed Forces from 1943-1946, in which he was honorably discharged. Upon discharge from the service, he graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelors of Science degree in Sociology and also with honors when receiving his Masters of Science degree in Social Work, both from the University of Louisville (Kentucky). While attending college, he met and married Marjory Anita Wade in 1949 and moved to Kalamazoo, MI in 1955. Marjory preceded him in death in 1972. To this union was added Steven, Marjory and Tiffany. In 1973, Arthur met and married Spencer “Toni” Curley, who preceded him in death in October. Their union extended the family to include Frank, Jerome, Kenneth and Nancy. Not just a resident of

Kalamazoo, but a drum major for justice and social change, Arthur served as Kalamazoo's first African-American city commissioner and a long time civil-rights advocate and community volunteer. He was first elected to a two-year term on the City Commission in 1959. He was re-elected to three additional terms before stepping down shortly after being re-elected in 1965 when he became a state employee and was no longer eligible to hold an elected position. Along with his love for his family, he loved the Kalamazoo community. Arthur served as vice-president of the Douglass Community Association and on the boards of the Northside Association for Community Development, Family Institute and Safe House. He was a tireless worker with youth, from the Boy Scouts and local basketball and softball leagues that he formed to the Bombardiers Drum and Marching Corps that he founded in 1961 and ran for more than 30 years. In addition to serving on the City Commission, Arthur was a member of the Metropolitan Kalamazoo Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and served as its president from 1957 to 1961. In 1965, Arthur was promoted to casework supervisor for child welfare services in the newly merged county and state Department of Social Services, and a few months later he was named social services director for Calhoun County. He later returned to the Kalamazoo County agency and retired in 1989 as administrative assistant to the DSS director, although he remained on the DSS board for another dozen years. In addition to serving the city as a commissioner, Arthur was a member of the Community Services Council and the Kalamazoo United Fund and served on the former Kalamazoo County Board of Supervisors. Honors bestowed upon Arthur were the STAR Awards' Irving S. Gilmore Lifetime Achievement Award and the local NAACP's Humanitarian Award, both in 1989. In 1996, he was also the first person to receive the Distinguished Veterans Award from the NAACP. In 2003, the city renamed its Crosstown Center, which is the home of the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety and some Kalamazoo County courts, the City of Kalamazoo Arthur Washington Jr. Crosstown Center. This honor was the highlight of his daily conversations; he was so proud of this

honor and loved the Public Safety officers and their service to the community. Vocal in his support for equal rights, he often was found on local picket lines during the Civil Rights Movement. He felt a calling to empower and motivate the advancement of people by seeking solutions for any injustice that he witnessed for the remainder of his life; his legacy has made an impact on all who encountered his presence. In addition to his parents and his wives, he was preceded in death by sisters, Ester Davenport and Mildred Osbey; and brothers, Richard Washington and Robert Washington; son, Jerome Jackson. 2 brother in-laws, Albert Morris and Jerome Curley; 1 sister-in-law, Sylvia Jackson and 1 daughter in law, Mary Deal. Arthur is survived by his children, Steven Washington, Tiffany (Herbert) Jackson and Kenneth Rowell of Kalamazoo, MI, Marjory (David) Patrick of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, Nancy (Steven) Gillenwater of Canton, GA, and Frank Jackson of Portage, MI; his siblings, William (Oshia) Washington, Clarissa Hale, Diane (Chearsey) Hammuck, Lillian Woodson, all of Springfield, IL, Michael Washington, Houston, TX and James (Arlene) Washington, Sr. of Kalamazoo, MI; In-laws, Albert (Connie) Curley of Junction City, KS, August Curley of Fayetteville, GA, Priscilla (Ted) Evans of Surprise, AZ; Lavern Morris of Flint, MI and Sandra Weeden of Kalamazoo, MI. Also surviving him are his 13 grandchildren, David (Vanessa) Patrick, III of Lithonia, GA, Diana (Jamal) Mickles of Ferndale, MI, Jasmine (Steve) Henry of Livonia, MI, Brandi Washington of New York, NY, Dawn (Greg) Smith of Romulus, MI, Daniele (Antoine) Mason of Philadelphia, PA, Lauren Lacey of Washington, DC, Mackenzie Lacey of Grand Rapids, MI, Brittany Gillenwater of Champaign, IL, Meaghan and Stephanie Gillenwater of Canton, GA, Kalisha and Alicia Jackson of Kalamazoo, MI; eleven great-grandchildren, Jeremiah and Victoria Patrick, Greg and Grace Smith, Joanna and Justina Mickles, Antonio and Andres Fields, Kamarria and Ke'Marion Jackson; god children, Stephanie Stevenson, Bruce and Reginald Hamlett, and Diane Cooper; special friends, Anna Whitten, Moses Walker, Pat and JD Harmon, Barbara Daniels Johnson and Nell Fryer Wilson and also a host of

nieces, nephews and friends. Special thanks to the staff of Tendercare of Westwood, Mt. Zion Baptist Church and Galilee Baptist Church for their love and support. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Boys and Girls Club of Kalamazoo, Douglass Community Association, Metropolitan Kalamazoo NAACP Branch, or The Northside Association for Community Development.

# Cemetery Details

## Ft. Custer National Cemetery (Military Honors)

15501 Dickman Road  
Augusta, MI 49012

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 4. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

The Galilee Baptist Church  
1216 North Westnedge Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

## Visitation

DEC 5. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

The Galilee Baptist Church  
1216 North Westnedge Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

## Service

DEC 5. 11:00 AM (ET)

The Galilee Baptist Church  
1216 North Westnedge Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007



# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.*

October 23, 2023 at 06:06 AM



“ *Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.*

October 06, 2023 at 10:42 AM



“ *To a fantastic brother-in-law and husband to my Sister Spencer.  
With love to Tiff and the family.  
Uncle A*



**August O. Curley** - December 08, 2011 at 12:36 PM



“ *Mr. & Michael Shotwell lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.*



**Mr. & Michael Shotwell** - December 07, 2011 at 11:01 AM

SW

“ Sandra & Lawrence "Sonny" Weeden lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.



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**Sandra & Lawrence "Sonny" Weeden** - December 06, 2011 at 10:54 PM

MG

“ As a young person I always looked forward to the Memorial Day Parade and "The Bombideers Marching Band." Mr. Washington touched the lives of hundreds of youth in this community. Thank you for unselfishly giving of yourself to provide hope, discipline, structure and self esteem for others. Rest in peace, you finished this leg of the journey.



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**Min. Doreen Gardner** - December 05, 2011 at 06:31 PM

NF

“ Tiffany Jackson and Family,  
  
Art gave us a unique example of one who fought the good fight, who lived life to the fullest, and who remained faithful to the vision of life God had planted in him.



*You are in my thoughts and prayers.*

*Love, Nell Fryer-Wilson*

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**Nell Fryer-Wilson** - December 05, 2011 at 05:25 PM

DH

“ *Duane Hobson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.*



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**Duane Hobson** - December 05, 2011 at 10:03 AM

CG

“ *Cedric G. Wilson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.*



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**Cedric G. Wilson** - December 05, 2011 at 09:12 AM

DS

“ *David Seaberry lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.*



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**David Seaberry** - December 05, 2011 at 08:09 AM

AC

“ *He was my mentor, my friend and my hero. I will truly miss him.*

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**Amerriel (Overton) Cunningham** - December 05, 2011 at 08:08 AM

WS

“ I will always remember the Drum and Bugle Corps that Mr. Washington started. So many kids got a chance to showcase their talents early. I am so sorry to hear of the loss to the Kalamazoo Community.

*Dr. William Smith*

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**William Smith** - December 05, 2011 at 12:24 AM

RJ

“ Robert (Bobby) McFadden Jr. lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.



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**Robert (Bobby) McFadden Jr.** - December 04, 2011 at 08:02 PM

PW

“ Paula I Wilson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.



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**Paula I Wilson** - December 04, 2011 at 07:14 PM

GS

“ Gersteen Sherrod lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.



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**Gersteen Sherrod** - December 04, 2011 at 02:51 PM

AT

“ *Angela Buchanan Tabron lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.*



Angela Buchanan Tabron - December 04, 2011 at 12:09 PM

QK

“ *Quintin Knox lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.*



Quintin Knox - December 04, 2011 at 12:03 PM


JP

“ *Best wishes to the family of Arthur Washington, Jr.*



*Jacqueline Patrick-Manns*

Jacqueline Patrick-Manns - December 04, 2011 at 08:46 AM

 Atoyia Gamble

“ *I light this candle in loving memory of a great man, father and grandfather. To all that he touched.*



Atoyia Gamble - December 03, 2011 at 08:22 PM

HT

“ Hazel Tellis lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Washington, Jr.



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Hazel tellis - December 01, 2011 at 06:33 PM