



Mr. Leonard W. Lee

September 7, 1934 - May 11, 2014

On Sunday, May 11, 2014, Leonard Wendell Lee, 79, departed this life at Rose Arbor Hospice Residence, Kalamazoo, MI. Born September 7, 1934, to the late Arnold W. Lee and Alberta Grace Edwards Lee in Snow Hill, AL. He is survived by his wife, Gloria Elizabeth Willis Lee, Kalamazoo, MI; son Wendell (Stephanie) Lee, Grand Rapids, MI and granddaughter Nicole Jones, Clarkston, MI. Additionally, he is survived by his siblings; A. Clifton (Nancy) Lee, Brooklyn, NY, William (Susan) Lee, Brooklyn, NY, A. Grace Lee Mims, Cleveland, OH; brothers-in-law Thomas (Marilyn) Willis, Knightdale, NC, Alden Willis, Poughkeepsie, NY, Mervin (Patricia) Willis, Poughkeepsie, NY, and sister-in-law Frances Strother. He was preceded in death by brothers Clarence Lee, Arnold W. Lee, Jr.; sister Consuela Lee Moorehead, cousins, Dr. Robert Stone and Dr. Charles McMillan brothers-in-law Dr. Howard Mims and Rev. Rufus Strother, sisters-in-law Jackie and Margaret Lee; grandson Kyle Keenan, nephew Christopher Lee and niece Debra Willis Hall.

Leonard received his Bachelor's Degree from Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA and Master's Degree from New York University, New York, NY.

He and Gloria were married June 24, 1961, after graduation from NYU and they moved to Schenectady, NY. His place of employment was Sunnyview Hospital. His home church was St. Paul/St. Peter AME church in Snow Hill, AL. They became members of Friendship Baptist Church, Schenectady, NY,

where he was baptized. As newlyweds, this was a great setting. Especially instrumental in their adjustment were Dr. Jesse T. Henderson, Jr. and his wife, Mary.

Leonard served in the U.S. Army where he worked in the Army Medical Research Lab, Fort Knox, KY. In Schenectady, NY, he was Director of the Vocational Rehabilitation Center at Sunnyview Hospital and Rehabilitation Center. He relocated to Kalamazoo, MI where he was Director at Michigan Career and Technical Institute (formerly State Technical Institute and Rehabilitation Center), Plainwell, MI from which he retired in 1995 after 20 years.

A devoted family man, Leonard was dearly loved by many. He lived his life by the mantra of his late grandfather, W. J. Edwards; "Deeds Not Words." His pride and dedication to family and friends allowed him to touch the lives of countless others. He was instrumental in organizing/promoting the DOMAP (Descendants of Mike and Phoebe) bi-annual family reunion.

Leonard was a proud Morehouse College alumnus and made frequent visits to his alma mater for football games and other alumni functions. He was an avid reader and subscribed to numerous magazines and newspapers. He enjoyed gardening and found working in the soil very therapeutic. He loved sports and when his days of participating in them were over, he would watch them on TV and discuss them with family and friends. Leonard was an ardent traditional jazz music fan. He enjoyed attending concerts wherever he could find "good music" and would often travel to Chicago for jazz festivals.

Leonard mentored young people in the NAACP ACTSO program with committee members Cal Street and Bertha McNeal for a number of years. He also served as Treasurer for Mrs. Gloria Lett's school board campaign.

The memories of Mr. Leonard W. Lee are cherished by his family mentioned

above along with nieces and nephews; Monica Moorehead, Cameron (Carmen) Moorehead, Shelton "Spike" (Tonya) Lee, Joie Lee, David Lee, Cinque' Lee, Arnold Tone Kaplan-Lee, Malcolm (Cami) Lee, Kenyatta Lee, Yolanda (Rodney) Jones, Marcia (Jimmie) Gross, Andrea (Jerome) Booker, Dwayne (Karen) Willis, Kimberly Willis, Kenya (Morris) Horton, Oronde Lacy; cousins Augusta Grubb, Donald P. Stone, Wendell (Sandra) Edwards, Dierdre (Lee) Jackson and Laura Strother, along with special family friends Hoyt, Margaret, Charz and Quiznn Fraasier.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 17. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Harper Funeral Home - Chapel
521 Douglas Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI

A Service in Loving Memory

MAY 17. 1:00 PM (ET)

Harper Funeral Home - Chapel
521 Douglas Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI

Tribute Wall



“ Harper Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Leonard W. Lee



Harper Funeral Home - May 17, 2014 at 10:40 AM



“ Mr. Leonard W. Lee

October 23, 2023 at 06:06 AM

SM

I remember Leonard Lee always carried himself with grace and distinction. I knew him when he directed the MRS state vocational school in Plainwell, MI. He was the 1st Black Man to head the school. We were so proud of him and his commitment to people with disabilities. Mr. Lee was quiet, yet he accomplished much. May his memory always be a blessing to the family.

Sylvia Meniffee - March 22, 2025 at 07:15 PM



“ Mr. Leonard W. Lee

October 06, 2023 at 10:42 AM

RM

“ Dear Family, Deepest sympathy from the Montgomery/Thomas Families of Snow Hill, Al. Wish we could attend, but you are & always will be in our prayers.

Renee Montgomery-Perdue - May 21, 2014 at 03:46 PM

CD

“ To Gloria and family, we were sorry to learn of Leonard's passing...you have our deepest sympathy, and prayers.

Charles & Ann Dunigan - May 20, 2014 at 10:10 AM

FL

“ A very kind person. MCTI 1993-1995 graduate.

Fred Lawrence - May 18, 2014 at 09:52 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Leonard W. Lee.



May 16, 2014 at 08:50 PM

PS

“ Dear Cousin Gloria and the Lee Family,

Your cousins Precious and Bobby and our families are sending our love and prayers at this time. We treasured cousin Leonard and are grateful for his life. We wish you comfort in knowing how many people send their love and support.

*Sincerely,
Precious*

Precious Stone - May 16, 2014 at 08:40 PM

PM

“ *Mr. Lee was a kind and dignified gentleman. Always respectful. It was a pleasure to work with him at MCTI (STIRC).*
Patty Miller-Kramer

Patty Miller-Kramer - May 16, 2014 at 03:19 PM

PM

“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



Patty Miller-Kramer - May 16, 2014 at 03:15 PM

NE

“ *My Condolences to the Family of Mr. Leonard Lee. The loss of a loved one brings much grief and pain. But the Bible talks about doing away with this pain at Revelation 21:4. May "Our Creator and "Heavenly Father" provide you with peace and comfort.*



Neighbor - May 16, 2014 at 05:44 AM

PG

“ *Pauline Gardner lit a candle in memory of Mr. Leonard W. Lee*



Pauline Gardner - May 15, 2014 at 07:51 PM

JS

“ *I worked with Leonard while at the State Technical Institute in Plainwell, and he was my tennis partner for years. He was a wonderful very well liked director and friend.*
Jim Smalley

Jim Smalley - May 15, 2014 at 04:01 PM

KF

“ Gloria and family, I was so sorry to hear about the loss of Mr. Lee. I worked with him for many years at "State Tech". He was a kind, gentle and caring man. The staff respected him; he was always referred to as "Mr. Lee" by staff and students alike. He truly had a mission to work with persons with disabilities and always looked for that silver lining in all the students. He was an inspiration and definitely was the wind beneath our wings. I am sorry that Bill and I will be out of town on Saturday and will not be able to attend the service. Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.
Kathy and Bill Fretz

Kathy and Bill Fretz - May 15, 2014 at 03:01 PM

JE

“ JoAnn Embrey lit a candle in memory of Mr. Leonard W. Lee



JoAnn Embrey - May 15, 2014 at 07:56 AM

JE

Gloria: I am sorry for your lost, trust in the lord he will direct your path.

JoAnn Embrey - May 15, 2014 at 07:57 AM

DB

“ DaNetta Blake lit a candle in memory of Mr. Leonard W. Lee



DaNetta Blake - May 15, 2014 at 07:48 AM

MC

“ To all of Mr. Lee's Family, please accept my deepest condolences. He was one of the kindest, gentle people I have ever known. I worked at Michigan Career and Technical Institute while he was there. We would often have late afternoon talks and his insight into people was amazing, genuine and kind. He always found the good in others and nurtured that. The gift of having him in our lives was truly a gift. Micky Chamberlain

Micky Chamberlain - May 15, 2014 at 07:28 AM

MJ

I would like to share with the family my deepest respect and admiration for Mr. Lee. I agree with Micky's comments on Mr. Lee's wonderful leadership. In my role, as a nurse program specialist, I reported to him whenever students told me about more serious issues. He always took time to listen, and advise me on actions to take. Somehow, he always found the time.

Certainly the best director I ever worked with, and I am very sorry for your loss.

Michelle Johnson

Michelle Johnson - June 03, 2014 at 11:41 AM

AN

“ Wendell, and Family, I wanted to share my deepest condolences in this time of sorry. My thoughts and prayers will be with you on Saturday.

Anne - May 14, 2014 at 04:53 PM

GB

May the peace which comes from the memories of love shared, comfort you now and in the days ahead.

Gregory & Michelle Burt - May 15, 2014 at 08:21 AM