



Mrs. Mary Mace Spradling

December 31, 1911 - January 19, 2009

Mrs. Mary Mace Spradling passed away peacefully in her sleep on January 19, 2009. She was born in Louisville, KY on December 31, 1911. She was a member of the Christian Church-Disciples of Christ. Mrs. Spradling earned a degree in education from Kentucky State University and a degree in Librarianship from Atlanta University. She taught English and French before becoming an librarian in Kentucky. In 1957, she was hired to establish and direct the Young Adult Department of the Kalamazoo Public Library. Mrs. Spradling also established the Alma Powell Library at the Douglass Community Center. She remained with the Kalamazoo Public Library until her retirement. An established author and researcher, Mrs. Spradling is known world wide for her reference book, "In Black & White: African Americans in Print". She started collecting books on or about African Americans at an early age and continued throughout her life. Her personal collection contained over 3000 volumes, considered one of the largest private collections of African American Books in existence. In 1998, she donated her collection to the Kalamazoo Valley Community College. The collection is located in the Anna Whitten Building of the Arcadia Creek Campus and is available to the public. Mrs. Spradling was a community activist, belonging to many organizations and boards. She was on the board at Nazareth College for many years. Other organizational participation included the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the NAACP, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Board, Michigan Library Association, and the American Library Association. She also received the

NAACP Humanitarian Award in 1984. She is preceded in death by her beloved husband, Louis Spradling; her parents, Rev. Minor Jeremia Mace and Ella Nora Trivers Mace Gibbs, and her sister, Martha Mace. Survivors include a cousin, Mary Mullins of Campbellsburg, KY. She also leaves two guardians who lovingly cared for Mary for many years, Mrs. Betty Floyd and Mrs. Phyllis Seabolt. She touched many lives in the community and was loved and respected by all who knew her. A RECEPTION IS BEING HELD at 1:00 p.m. (immediately following services) at: ANNA WHITTEN HALL (KVCC ARCADIA CAMPUS-DOWNTOWN KALAMAZOO) on the 2nd floor. A short program will be held at the reception, along with Mary's book collection to be displayed for viewing.

Previous Events

Service

APR **25**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Christian Church (The Disciples of Christ)
2208 Winchell Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI

Tribute Wall



“ *Mrs. Mary Mace Spradling*

October 23, 2023 at 06:06 AM



“ *Mrs. Mary Mace Spradling*

October 06, 2023 at 10:42 AM



“ *Mary, you will live on in our hearts.##imported-begin##Betty Floyd##imported-end##*

April 28, 2009 at 09:10 AM



“ *May God keep & guide the family in your time of sorrow. I first met Mary when I was a student at WMU; she became a resource for me as I sought to find answers on some of the local history on African Americans. Her graciousness and willingness to help found a place in my heart that I shall never forget.*

God Bless##imported-begin##John Davis##imported-end##

April 20, 2009 at 10:10 AM



“ Mrs. Spradling took me in hand when I was a new, idealistic but confused new English teacher at South Junior High School in January of 1968. Her enthusiastic book talks showed me that believing in myself and being passionate about my personal causes can make a huge difference in the life of young people.##imported-begin##Steve Tod##imported-end##

April 19, 2009 at 08:27 AM



“ I lived in Kalamazoo from 1978-1983. I visited Mrs. Spradling and Mrs. Gibbs often. We shared dinner and a "highball" on Friday nights". We talked about new books and sat in her library, which she built next to her home. When my family visited, it was a "must" to visit Mrs. Spradling. Though I had not seen her in years, Phyllis Seabolt always provided me an annual update. I shall remember Mrs. Spradling always. May she rest in peace.##imported-begin##Alice M. Burke##imported-end##

January 31, 2009 at 05:15 PM



“ Mary was a very sweet lady. I new her from Park Place Living Center where I work. I will always remember her.##imported-begin##Marie Kolberg##imported-end##

January 25, 2009 at 02:13 AM



“ My condolences to friends and relatives of Ms. Spradling. She was my first 'Boss' at the Kalamazoo Public Library all through high school. Like my own mother, I have her to thank for showing me how to conduct myself in a professional manner. Although I didn't get to see her much after I moved away from Kalamazoo, I thought of her often. She will be missed.##imported-begin##Brenda Perry##imported-end##

January 23, 2009 at 01:25 PM



“ Dear Mrs. Spradling,
I can remember when we first met at Grandma Powell's house. Though time may have moved on, it did not separate us. I visited you this past summer, as I had done for several years. I held your hands, brushed your hair and fondly revisited pictures and other treasures in your room.
I am Blessed to have known you. I Thank You for sharing your Gift of Time with me.
Lovingly - "Davy"##imported-begin##N. Davis##imported-end##

January 22, 2009 at 12:13 AM