



Birdie Mae Leverett

January 10, 1928 - January 11, 2020

Birdie Mae Leverett was born on January 10, 1928, to the late Rev. Houston and Francis Parker in Lawton, Oklahoma. She was one of five children, but her unique combination of midwestern values and southern charm is what made her the feisty, sassy lady we all know and love. She graduated from Douglass High School and was baptized at Saint Elmo Baptist Church.

In 1964 Birdie and husband Lonzy Leverett made Baltimore, Maryland their new home where she became an active member of Grace Presbyterian Church.

Birdie was a loving homemaker whose large, wonderful meals were legendary among friends, family, and more than a few players of the Baltimore Colts. Birdie's green thumb was the envy of her community and the pride of her house. Her ability to nurture flowers and plants was not surprising given that Birdie brought life to every room she entered. An avid reader of books and newspapers, Birdie was an unexpected touchstone in the Baltimore political scene. Her refreshing honesty, deep breath of knowledge, and sincere interest in the success of her community was coupled with her unwavering willingness to share her opinion. She worked tirelessly to register people to vote because she firmly believed in the power of education and using your voice in every step of the political process.

But Birdie's primary interest was always her family. Birdie, Sis, Miss. Birdie, Grandma, Guru, Mom — she was known by many names but the one word that comes up most often when one is asked to describe her is — teacher. Birdie taught everyone in her life a little something, whether it was how to cook, sew, garden, and starch your jeans or how to question authority, dissect the news, and stand up for those who can't do it for themselves. Getting schooled by Birdie Leverett was a rite of passage, specifically for elected officials. Politicians often benefited from Miss Birdie's extensive oppositional research by way of talk radio and brutal honesty delivered with her infectious laugh and the sound of her favorite jazz music playing in the background. It's only fitting, of course, that she had her very own jazz theme song called "Little Birdie" by Wynton Marsalis.

Like most good teachers, Birdie was always learning. She took special interest in

whatever captivated her family's attention, be it fashion, football, or the government. Birdie was known as a giver who would reach out to those in need with a helping hand. She gave her time, her love, and her support freely and without hesitation. To know Birdie is to love her and loving her could happen in an instant — and usually over the phone. As her daughter

Marie's unofficial secretary, she used her gift of effortless conversation to get to know and befriend each and every person on the other end of the line. Any problem, every celebration, and any occasion were an opportunity for her to share her gift of gab — and what a gift it was. She was a gift.

Birdie died restfully on January 11, 2020, one day after her 92nd birthday leaving to cherish her memory: her daughters, Dr. Marie J. Washington and Sarah F. Rivers (Louie Rivers, Jr.); grandchildren, Jacqueline Leverett Washington, Louie Rivers III (Whitney Rivers), Robert C. Rivers (Yenni Rivers), Zonobia Marie Washington-Sheff (John L. Sheff); and great-grandchildren, Louie Rivers IV, Samuel Bruce Sheff, and August Rivers.

Birdie is also survived by: brother-in-law, Theodore Simpson, Sr.; nieces, Doris Spinks, Annette Brown, Karen Parker-Bryant, Linda Leverett, Hilda Leverett-Moore, Kathleen Vines, Karen Lukott-Parker; nephews, Mitchell D. Parker (Elenore Parker), Melvinal Spinks, Theodore Simpson, Jr. Birdie is preceded in death by her husband, Lonzy Leverett; brothers, Riley D. Parker, Sr., James A. Parker; sisters, Flora Parker Spinks, and Mattie M. Parker-Simpson; sister-in-law, Zonobia Parker; son-in-law, Reginald J. Washington; nephews, Riley Parker, Jr., Paul Leverett.

Cemetery

Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington, VA,

Events

JAN **Wake** 10:30AM - 11:00AM

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March Life Tribute Center - Randallstown
5616 Old Court Road, Windsor Mill, MD, US

JAN **Service** 11:00AM

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