

BLACK ENTERPRISE

A NEW JOURNEY BEGINS

Bonaventure Greenwich Cemetery • May 15, 2020



BROTHER

PRINCE

JOHNSON, JR

HIS Story

And now...because of what the Lord has done, we give thanks, a standing ovation for the life and times of Prince Johnson, Jr., husband, father, grandfather, brother, and loyal friend across generations. He had a dry sense of humor, fairness, compassion, and the uncanny ability to put others at ease no matter the occasion. He unassumingly cared for others, and would literally without hesitation, say yes to the crisp, white shirt off his back.

Oh, how memories of him will live forever; how he believed in the resilience of people; and, the importance of emulating good character and a spirit of trust. His committed work ethic was a true testament of his upbringing, guided by his parents, the late Prince, Sr. and Dorothy Mae Lawyer Johnson. As a young teenager, Prince moved around the corner from his parents and siblings to live with his aunt, Ophelia Jones, where he helped her in the daily running of her confectionary store on Savannah's westside. The Westside taught him things that his parents and aunt were not proud of, but he took those street lessons and applied them to his book lessons, graduating from Saphronia M. Tompkins High School, *Most Studious*, in the class of 1964. Prince, Jr. went on to continue his education, *thinking* he would attend college and later register for mortuary school. His studies and labs *seemed* interesting, until one lab class led him to a few sleepless nights -the dissecting of a cat...that ended that (in his voice). While at Savannah State College, Prince pledged Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. ('67) and was a member of the Men's Glee Club concert choir. In 1968, he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology.

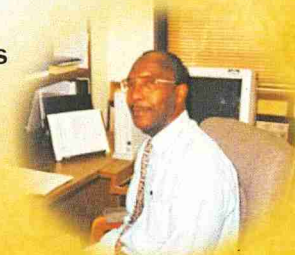
With an amazing bass voice -both singing and speaking, Prince blessed the ears of many Savannahians who tuned into hear him on WSOK Radio Station, which at that time was the only black, local radio station. He and best friend, Leonard Jenkins were two young disc jockeys, enjoying life, and sometimes used the airwaves for their own personal messaging. Prince met a young lady and would occasionally dedicate the song "Me and Mrs. Jones" to her -the lady in the white Cougar. He was cool and smooth with it!

In 1971, Prince no longer had to send his nameless song dedications to "the lady in the white cougar". On August 28th at St. Anthony's Catholic Church, he married her. Young Prince married into a family where he was never considered an "in-law", he was always family. Together, he and Hilda Reaves loved each other unconditionally and raised two little people of their own. He had a deep commitment to family. He meant the world to them -a friend and confidant; their own personal suited, superhero of respect and integrity, showing them the value of trust, responsibility, and reliability. All of Myron and Princess' friends loved their "cool daddy".

His first professional job was the beginning of an extensive public service career. Prince never forgot his friends and other Savannahians that were not afforded some of the same opportunities as him. When he landed his job with the Economic Opportunity Authority (EOA), he used this as his chance to circle back. At EOA, he provided old and new friends with job development and training, helping to prepare them for work -from résumé assistance to skill-building to tying ties. However, Prince eventually moved on and began working at the Department of Labor Resources during the height of the civil rights and urban renewal movements that were stirring in Savannah. In the Office of Community Services, he became deeply involved in administering the department's job training programs and other community enhancement projects of the city. Prince later joined the Revenue Department, where he worked alongside the first African American to be employed by the agency. These milestone moments captured his zeal for public service, and led to his enrollment at Georgia Southern College, where he received his Master's degree in Public



Most Studious
Class of '64



Administration. As Prince entered a new decade, he was asked to manage the Savannah location of Exclusive Temporaries, a full service, permanent and temporary placement service. Even though he had earned his second degree, he still had the desire to become an entrepreneur, and opened his own janitorial supply company, MyPrin Distributors. Years later, MyPrin dissolved under the economy's pressure, and Prince continued his public service by joining a new group of outstanding pros, where he was the Court Director for the Recorder's Court of Chatham County. After more than 30 years of committed public service on behalf of the residents of his native Savannah, Prince retired in 2012.

His commitment to church, community, and Alma Mater was no different, as he served in a number of lay roles at St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church, where he was a Lector, past President of Parish Council, and a member of the "Monday Counters". In his spare time, Prince enjoyed getting on his bass guitar, mimicking tunes from some of his old wax tunes, while watching CNN and Headline News. He loved hearing all about what his granddaughters were up to.

The pain felt by each of us these past few days, leaves us scrambling to move on without him. His undenied will came from a place of having loved and been loved unconditionally by wife of forty-nine years, Hilda; son, Myron (Vivica); daughter, Princess; granddaughters, Caylen, Rayna, Ryan, Jada, Jay'Sherie, J'Laila and Jai; siblings, Benjamin Lawyer, Mary L. Jones, Amos (Betty) Johnson, Sr., and Pamela (Troy) Edwards; sisters-in-law, Sandra Lawyer and Kathy Reaves; brother-in-law, Donnie Reaves; mother-in-law, Carolyn M. Reaves; aunts, Ruth E. Germany and Toweezer Suber; uncle, James E. Harrell; goddaughter, Irene Alexis; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, church family, friends, and the Saphronia M. Tompkins Class of 1964. He will never forget his special neighbors, Abraham and Annette Mitchell, David and Pat Williams, Cynthia and the late Freddie Smith, David Dearing, and the late Lee Watts Williams, Sr.

Order of Service

PRESIDING OFFICIANT • Father Romanus, MSP

PROCESSIONAL

Nova Tate

GREETINGS AND INVITATION

OPENING PRAYER

OLD TESTAMENT

GOSPEL

REFLECTIONS OF PRINCE

Former Mayor of Savannah, Otis S. Johnson, *cousin*

SELECTION

Pamela E. Edwards, *sister*

HOMILY (Eulogy)

PRAYER OVER THE PLACE OF COMMITTAL

PRAYER OF COMMENDATION

COMMITTAL AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

CONCLUSION

SELECTION

SSU's Men's Glee Club Alumni
with Prince Johnson, Jr. singing bass



To the Lady in the White Cougar

Hilda,

49 years of marriage...we made it! There aren't enough words to express my sincere thanks to you for the sacrifices you have made over the years for our family. More importantly, the sacrifices you made to care for me over the past several months has been phenomenal -you didn't miss a beat, even when I suggested you go home and get some rest, you stayed with me. I know that Myron and Trice will be ok because they still have their strong soldier with them, and those little seven Grandgirls will still have Grandma Pig to call. Don't worry about me, I prepared a house for you here on earth, and now I will go to prepare an everlasting home. I'll be waiting.

Signing off,
PJ the DJ



With Sincere Thanks

We are most grateful for the gift of family and friends like you. You each have been so kind and thoughtful during this extremely difficult time. Your prayers, visits, calls, flowers, and every act of kindness and genuine concern means so much to us. We appreciate all the love and support you have extended to us.

Special thanks to the RNs, LPNs, CNAs, Physical and Occupational Therapists on the 4th and 6th floors of St. Joseph's/Candler Hospital, along with St. Joseph's/Candler Hospital Home Healthcare Nurses and Therapists.

Active Pallbearers

Trent Chavis
Irene Alexis
Jerome Briscoe, II

Chris Turner
Shuyknia Miles
Keynard Campbell

Honorary Pallbearers

Brandon Lawyer
Leonard Bostick
Donnie Reaves

Tommy Lawyer, II
Leonard Jenkins
Sean L. Stephens, Sr.

Frederick Myron Smith*
*pre-deceased

Final Arrangements

Adams Funeral Services, Inc. • 510 Stephenson Avenue • Savannah, Georgia 31405