

Press



Release

Mr. Benton Cortez Phillips

April 12, 1925 – July 26, 2010



Benton Cortez Phillips was born on April 12, 1925 in Heflin, Alabama to Charles Phillips and Geneva Freeman. He departed this life on July 26, 2010 at Sinai-Grace Hospital. His parents, two sisters, Garnette and Westeria Mosley, and two brothers, James and Donald, preceded him in death.

After his family moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee, he worked in his youth, on Lookout Mountain. After Benton graduated from Howard High School, he entered the Marines Corps during WWII. Later, he moved to Michigan where he married the late Lucille Jones and had three children, Stanley, Deborah and Diane. He later married the late Hallie Pope and became step-father to her children, Constance, William and Jacquelin.

While working for Chrysler Corp., he held several other jobs too. He was a Life Member with the Montford Point Detachment Marine Corps League in Detroit. He was an entrepreneur in spirit: a licensed chef, a real estate broker, and active in the stock market.

He always had a good story to tell:

*I was trainin' at Camp LaJ eune the land that God forgot.
The sand is 14 inches deep and the sun is scorch in ' hot.
Twice as minutes splurged, other times spent wash in ' our own duds.
When I get to Heaven, St. Peter I will tell,
"Another Marine reportin' Sir, I done my stretch in Hell."
Submitted by Kesho Leach*

After his retirement, he enjoyed fishing with his brother and grandchildren. He belonged to a bowling league and gained many friends there. But most of all, he was devoted to his family roots. Always an active member of the *Phillips-Freeman-justice* Detroit Chapter, he desired to attend family reunions once a year to " ... come together as one." Even in his failing health, he was a devoted member of New Calvary Baptist Church, and read every one of his church bulletins that arrived in the mail. He often searched the scriptures with his magnifying glass and highlighter, and listened to religious programs.

He is survived by his sister, Venedia Sparks (Joseph), his children, Stanley (Cynthia), Deborah Leach, Diane (Gregory) Hunter, and three stepchildren, Constance (John Sr.) Rowser, William (Marva) Pope Jr., and Jacquelin St. John of SF, twelve grandchildren and nineteen great-grandchildren