



Ressie Lee Henderson

June 19, 1936 - July 17, 2020

June 19, 1936 was a hot day in Gibsland, Louisiana. The Lord decided it was time to send Francis and Arthur Lewis a blessing with a beautiful baby girl named Ressie Lee. She was the baby daughter of eight children. Her siblings, John D. Lewis, Robert Lewis, Hosea Lewis, Henry Lewis, and Nellie Lewis, all preceded her in death. Left to mourn Ressie are her brother, Arthur Lewis; sister, Verleen Decatur; daughter, Debra Lee Henderson-Cardone; son, Frederick Lee Henderson; and grandsons, Dante Lee Cardone, and Frederick Henderson, Jr. She also leaves behind a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Ressie and her family moved to California in 1942, where she lived in South Berkeley and attended elementary school. Ressie was a talented student, and she enjoyed singing in the choir, drawing, painting, and she also had a passion for styling her doll's hair.

At the age of nine, she united with the Liberty Hill Baptist Church where her father was a member of the Deacon Board. When her parents purchased a home in Richmond, California, she attended Stege Elementary School. Later, she attended El Cerrito High School and earned her diploma at Adult School at Berkeley High. In 1952, she graduated from Cosmetology School in Richmond, California. In addition, she attended the California College of Arts and Crafts where she majored in Fine Arts.

Ressie met and married Charles Henderson in 1952, and after a 20-year marriage she divorced and never remarried.

She was extremely multifaceted and entrepreneurial. She owned a day-care center, hair salon, and a clean and sober transitional home. In addition, Ressie taught Cosmetology at Laney College, El Camino College, and the International College of Cosmetology in Oakland. She also taught art and sculpture classes at the South Berkeley Senior Center.

Ressie was a young teenage mother and the most important thing in her life was her love for her daughter, grandsons, and son. Because she was a young mother, her daughter felt

they were more like sisters. She loved traveling with her daughter and grandson to Paris, Puerto Rico, Yosemite, and on many family outings. In fact, when her daughter relocated to Southern California and became a single mother, Ressie joined her daughter and assisted in raising her grandson, Dante.

Friday afternoon, on July 17th, 2020, the Lord knew Ressie was tired of her life's journey and He entered her room at John Muir Hospital and very gently took her into eternity to join the angels and her parents, brothers, and sister.

To ensure the health and safety of our community, we are following all guidelines set by local, state and CDC officials. If you are planning on attending a service, please contact the funeral home in advance, so that we can plan accordingly.

Below is the recording of the funeral services Please feel free to watch below.

<https://vimeo.com/443258538>

Password: RLH19362020

Events

JUL **Funeral Service** 11:00AM - 01:00PM
30

Chapel of the Chimes
4499 Piedmont Avenue, Oakland, CA, US

Comments



“ Dear Debra and other family members of Ressie,

I watched the video of Ressie's memorial service tonight and was deeply moved by it. In spite of it being "virtual" because of the Covid-19 pandemic, I felt very much there with all of you. The service was emotional, wise, and beautiful.

Debra, I think you did a splendid job of organizing this service. Also, your speech about your mom was very moving to me and full of insight into both yourself and your mom. I know Ressie would have been proud (but not surprised) at the thought and skill you put into this tribute.

I did not know until recently about Ressie's many gifts, entrepreneurial successes, or the breadth of her education. Mainly what I knew about her is that every time I was around Ressie, I felt understood, appreciated, and that she was happy to see and spend time with me.

Ressie was beautiful, stylish (beautifully dressed and groomed), kind, and also just plain fun to hang out with. I was unaware of her artistic gifts, and I'm very glad that Debra had some of Ressie's stunning paintings displayed prominently at the memorial service. It was hard for me to take my eyes off Ressie's beautiful art.

My heart goes out to Debra, James, Dante, Ressie's niece—who also spoke eloquently at the service, and to the many people whose lives were touched so positively by Ressie. I agree with those who said at the service that Ressie's spirit remains accessible to us. In fact I'm feeling her warm and generous spirit as I write this.

I'm most grateful to have known Ressie Lee Henderson. Stevie Wonder wrote a song with the words, "When you feel your life's too hard/Just go have a talk with God." I am all for that, but having a talk with Ressie is a great healing option as well. So Ressie, you can expect some cosmic phone calls comin' your way!

Geoff Geiger,
Berkeley High classmate, teaching colleague, and friend of Ressie's daughter Debra Cardone

Geoff Geiger - August 02 at 05:55 AM



“ Debra: I am glad I had the chance share online the lovely service for your Mom. Ressie was quite a lady !! You were a a loving, caring daughter and I know a great comfort to her. What a joy to hear Hope sing. I would have loved to have heard her sing Summertime. My prayers are with you, James, Dante, and family and friends during this time of transition. Love, Diane

Diane Doron - July 30 at 08:44 PM



“ To my friend Debra and the family of Mrs. Ressie Henderson, my thoughts and prayers are lifted up today to our heavenly parent, God Almighty, to keep the loving comfort of His daughter Ressie in safe keepings now and forevermore.

Much sympathy and sincere condolences are with you always!

Peace,
Rev. Dorothy Taliaferro Staples

Rev. Dorothy T. Staples - July 30 at 02:19 PM



“ Ressie, your beautiful and kind spirit was a gift to the world. If only everyone could be like you, the world would be a better place.

Joy Belin

Joy Belin - July 30 at 11:22 AM



“ We'll miss you Ressie. I loved your peaceful demeanor, and you were such an amazing and kind mother to Debra and grandmother to Dante. It was always nice to see you. Love, Sandy

Sandy Granich - July 29 at 11:24 AM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Ressie Lee Henderson.



July 29 at 11:21 AM



“ Dear Debra and family,
I'm am so sorry for your loss and will hold you in my prayers. Debra, our friendship has revealed just how profoundly your mom's beautiful soul lives within you. Sending blessings and love,
Mary Kay Kosnik

Mary Kay Kosnik - July 28 at 11:59 AM



“ Love, The Moorer Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Ressie Lee Henderson.



Love, The Moorer Family - July 28 at 09:43 AM



“ To the family of Mrs. Ressie Lee Henderson,

I am so thankful that I was able to work with Mrs. Ressie. She was such a sweet and thoughtful woman. I'll always remember the way she used to check in on me by asking if I had slept or eaten enough. She was so beautiful inside and out. I'll never forget her. Rest in Peace, Mrs. Ressie

tara - July 27 at 09:40 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Ressie Lee Henderson.



July 27 at 11:32 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Ressie Lee Henderson.



July 26 at 11:30 PM



“ She was so beautiful and strong. She made great Thanksgiving dinners with all the trimmings. She loved life, and she loved to cook. Her meals were delicious. She made the dinners with ALL the trimmings! I will always be grateful to Resse and her turkey dinners for my 10 years of Thanksgivings with her. I will never forget her. Loved her art too!/ Yvonne Ho

Yvonne Ho - July 26 at 05:58 PM



“ Dearest Debra,

My heart was always warmed at hearing you share such wonderfully loving stories about your remarkable mom. My love and thoughts are with you, your family, and all those who were blessed to share in her life.

Warmly,
Lisa

Lisa Slater - July 24 at 07:17 PM



“ Debra my prayers are with you for the passing of your mom. May your Heart and Soul find Peace and Comfort.

Valerie Malone - July 24 at 07:06 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Ressie Lee Henderson.



July 24 at 05:54 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Ressie Lee Henderson.



July 24 at 11:12 AM



“

Dear Debra,

I am so sorry to hear of your dear mom's passing. I know how much you loved and cherished her. Ressie will be greatly missed but her warmth, kindness, and gentle spirit will be remembered forever. May those loving memories bring peace, comfort, and strength to you, Dante and your family.

In deepest sympathy.

Judy Swaby



Judy Swaby - July 24 at 11:01 AM



“

Dear Debra,

I am so sorry to hear of the passing of your mom. Sending you lots of love and my heart goes out to you in this sad time. I did not know your mom, but we spoke about her several times and I could feel the love and devotion you had for her. The photograph of her is quite beautiful and I sense that she was a lovely person who raised an amazing daughter. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

Love, Maggie Jo

Maggie Jo Feldman - July 23 at 07:03 PM



“

I am so sorry, my friend. You always made sure your mom was comfortable and took such great care of her. Sending you and your family strength and healing thoughts. Xo, Wendy

Wendy Yeung - July 23 at 06:24 PM



“

I love you, Debra. The Hamlin Family holds you in our hearts at this time of loss.

Wanda Holland Greene - July 23 at 05:37 PM



“ Debra and Dante, please accept our sincere condolences on the loss of your mother and grandmother. Gary, Jared, Corey and I are so very saddened to hear of her passing. I remember your mother fondly Debra when we last visited California all those many years ago. She was always very sweet and kind to my father and mother and entire family. We will continue to pray for your strength as you go through this difficult and challenging time. We know that God will see you through this time and continue to provide you comfort in your time of sorrow. Please let us know if we can help you with anything. We love you and will be praying for you. Love Leslie Henderson-Williams and family.

Leslie Henderson-Williams - July 22 at 08:23 PM



“ Debra, Ressie and I had good times together she had a good spirit I am going to miss her in this place but will rejoice again when we meet with our father. At this difficult time may you find comfort in knowing that other share in your sorrow. Love you and may Good continue to bless you.

Freddie Smith - July 22 at 05:48 PM



“ Debra I was so very sorry to hear about the passing of your dear sweet mom!! She was a joy to be around at our family reunion. May God strengthen and keep you and your family during this difficult time

Mimi Moorer - July 22 at 01:32 PM



“ Cousin Ressie had a beautiful spirit and heart. I am glad I had an opportunity to get to know her and spend time with her at our family reunions. My last memory of her was at our Dallas family reunion. I remember her dancing and having a good time. I know that she loved her family and was a very supportive mother and grandmother. Cousin Ressie may you continue to dance in Heaven. RIP!

Love,
Wanya

Wanya Moorer - July 21 at 09:30 PM



“ Dear Debra and Dante,
Our hearts and thoughts are with you. Debra, you were such a good daughter caring for your mother as best you could. I know she appreciated it, too. It was lovely to be with you on the several occasions when I met Ressie. She was strong and cheerful. Let us know how we can help you during these difficult times.
Much love, Carol Bier and Jerry Cooper.

Carol Bier - July 21 at 04:20 PM



“ Carol Bier and Jerry Cooper purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Ressie Lee Henderson.



Carol Bier and Jerry Cooper - July 21 at 04:17 PM



“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album



Chapel of the Chimes Oakland - July 21 at 12:59 PM