

*Honoring the Life of*  
***“Crazy” Marvin Braxton***



**Sunrise**  
**May 30, 1943**

**Sunset**  
**December 27, 2024**

Public Viewing: Thursday, January 16, 2025 ~ 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Wake: Friday, January 17, 2025 ~ 12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Funeral Service: Friday, January 17, 2025 ~ 1:00 p.m.

Watsons Funeral Home  
10913 Superior Ave.  
Cleveland, OH 44106  
(216) 721-0066

***Pastor Elder Greg Henderson, Officiant***

## *Obituary*

Marvin Braxton was born on May 30, 1943, in Cleveland, Ohio to the late Charles and Laura Braxton. He was the sixth child of eight children.

Marvin grew up in the Miles Park section of South-East Cleveland where he attended Beehive Elementary School and then Nathan Hale Jr. High School, however, Marvin never went on to high school. Instead, Marvin became a horse “Hot Walker” at the Thistledown Racetrack and begun to travel during that type of work with different racetracks throughout the country.

Marvin’s love for music began at the age of nine where he learned how to play the harmonica. Marvin could also play the piano, harp, flute, clarinet, tuba, and guitar. He could sing too! The beginning of Marvin’s professional musical career would start at Leo’s Casino in Cleveland where he won a contest that resulted in his going to New York City, where all kinds of things would begin to happen for him.

Marvin won twice the amateur talent night contest at the Apollo Theater in Harlem. It was there in 1969, where he was introduced to very famous and influential people. One of these was the legendary Sylvester “Sly” Stone, of Sly and the Family Stone. Marvin played the harmonica and was a vocal on one of Sly’s founding recording group, the “6IX”, in California where Marvin would later reside.

On September 25, 1969, Marvin recorded two songs with Jimi Hendrix “Drinking Wine”, “Sipping Time” and “Villanova Junction”. Marvin often called himself “Little Jimmy Reed”, Harmonica, or Lil Marvin where he also recorded his first album called “Lil Marvin” also in 1969.

Marvin would have the opportunity to play with many other global and local blues, reggae, and pop legends such as The Fulla Love Orchestra, B.B King, The Beatles, Ray Charles, Robert Lockwood, Guitar Slim, and Barry Manilow.

Marvin would continue traveling and playing various music genres across the country and overseas. Tiring of the travel, he would later move back to Cleveland. It was home where he would eventually meet and marry his wife Aurelia (Rita) on August 20, 1988.

He then joined the Cleveland-based band, Dave and the Blues Express. After the death of the Lead Singer Dave, the band became “Crazy Marvin and the Blues Express.” His wife Rita would join him and occasionally played the tambourine with the band.

Marvin was the life of the party with a contagious laugh and free spirit. He loved to bake and cook. His cooking specialty were lamb, rabbit, and other exotic dishes as what he would call “Monkey hips and rice.” Often seen as a dapper dresser, Marvin loved wearing his three-piece suits, and cowboy hats. Marvin was also an avid bike rider. The consummate entertainer, Marvin dressed up in costumes such as in gorilla, bunny rabbit, reggae, or clown suites to entertain the crowd and his family. Marvin would go on and receive several awards such as the 2013 induction into the Cleveland Blues Hall of Fame. The 2013 Resolution of Recognition by the City of Cleveland and Glenville Community. The 2006 King of Harmonica given by the Cleveland Gay Rose Production Group. And Marvin was among the 1957 to present, Greatest R&B Legends from Cleveland, Ohio. Marvin participated many times in the Cleveland Blues All-Stars Shows.

Proceeded in Marvin’s death are his parents Charles and Laura Braxton; his wife, Aurelia White Braxton; son, Marvin Jr.; brothers, Verdie and Ronald; sisters, Cleo and Laura Ellen; stepdaughters, Cyd Charisse (Bunny) and Aurelia (Junebug) White.

Marvin leaves to cherish his memories are sisters, Marlene Armstrong and Diane (Leo Patterson); children by marriage, Robert White Jr.; Andre White (Denise); Gwendolyn (Johnnie West); Eunice White; a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and other family members and dear friends.

*My Children,*

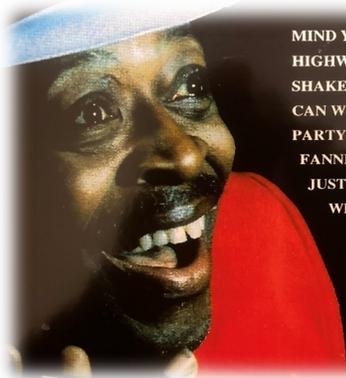
*By: Diane Patterson*

*God saw the tears in our eyes,  
and wiped them all away.*

*And said; relax my children, he is  
home now...*

*I’ll take good care of him.*

*The father of us all, thank you, Lord.*



MIND YOUR BUSINESS  
 HIGHWAY'S N' BIWAYS  
 SHAKE YOUR LIVER  
 CAN WE TALK BEFORE WE SEPARATE  
 PARTY OVER HERE  
 FANNIE MAE  
 JUST GOT MARRIED  
 WILLOW WEEP FOR ME  
 BAYOU WOMAN \*  
 BLUES INJECTION \*  
 \* BONUS CD TRACKS



## *Order of Service*

*Musical Prelude*

*Processional*

*Prayer and Officiate.....Pastor Elder Greg Henderson*

*Scripture Reading .....Old and New Testaments.....Andre White*

*Obituary.....Phylcia James*

*Music Selection.....Fred Wheatt*

*Poem.....Javon White*

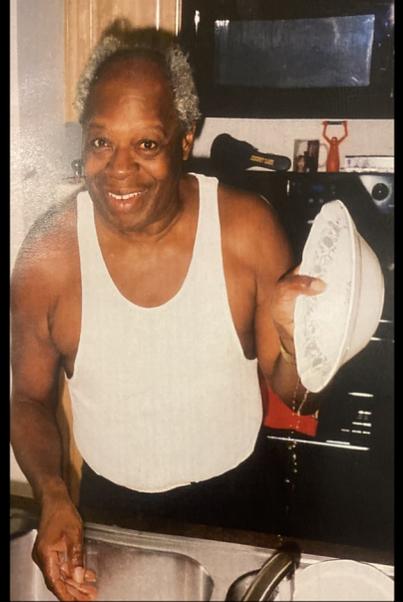
*Tributes ..... Family and Friends (Limit to 3 minutes)*

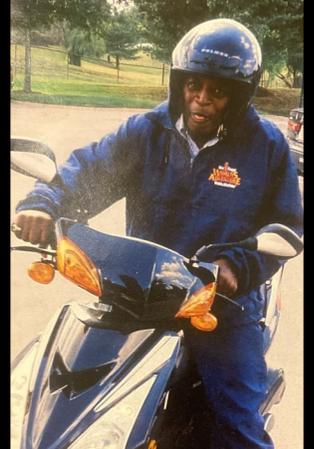
*Eulogy.....Pastor Elder Greg Henderson*

*Final Viewing*

### *Repast:*

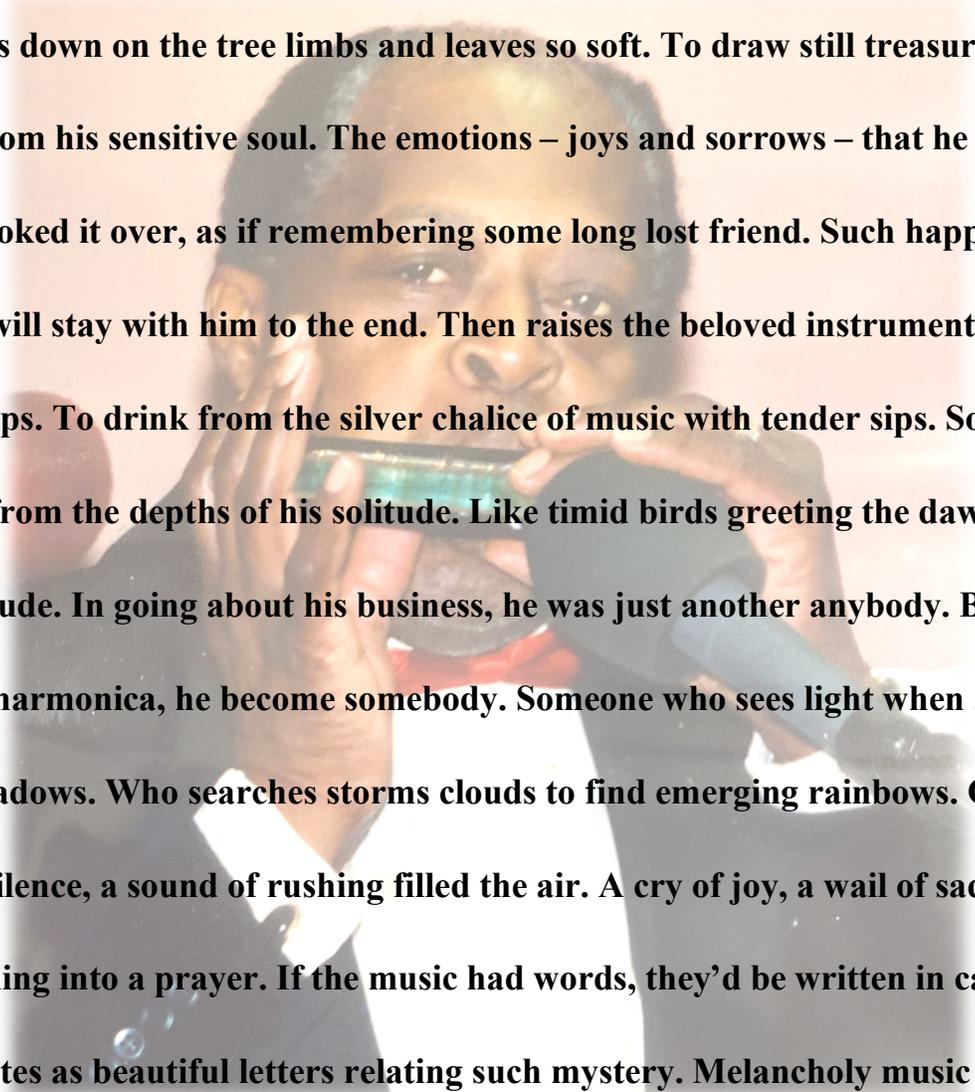
Beachland Ballroom and Tavern  
15711 Waterloo Rd.  
Cleveland, OH 44110  
(216) 383-1124







-- Harmonica with Soul -- By John Herlihy

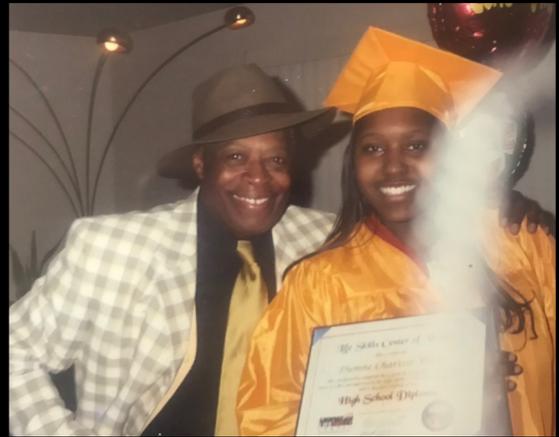
A photograph of a man in a dark suit and white shirt, playing a harmonica. He is looking directly at the camera with a focused expression. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color. The text of the poem is overlaid on the image.

He held an old, worn--out harmonica in his rough hand. Kept in a duster pocket, to play music at his command. To breathe out music that rises and floats gently aloft. Then settles down on the tree limbs and leaves so soft. To draw still treasured melodies from his sensitive soul. The emotions – joys and sorrows – that he from life stole. He looked it over, as if remembering some long lost friend. Such happy and sad memories will stay with him to the end. Then raises the beloved instrument to his puckered lips. To drink from the silver chalice of music with tender sips. Sober notes flew forth from the depths of his solitude. Like timid birds greeting the dawn light in all its quietude. In going about his business, he was just another anybody. But when he played his harmonica, he become somebody. Someone who sees light when all others see only shadows. Who searches storms clouds to find emerging rainbows. Out of a profound silence, a sound of rushing filled the air. A cry of joy, a wail of sadness, finally turning into a prayer. If the music had words, they'd be written in calligraphy. Echoing notes as beautiful letters relating such mystery. Melancholy music made with wind of breath into a moan. Reaching depths of heaven and earth to melt a heart of stone. Silence once again, with the quiet air waiting to be filled. The harmonica back in a duster pocket, its own heart stilled.





DAVE AND THE BLUES EXPRESS





## Articles of "Crazy" Marvin Braxton

Cleveland Bluesman "Crazy Marvin" Braxton Celebrates His 75th Birthday at the Beachland

Sun 5/27 @ noon-4PM

"Crazy Marvin" Braxton has been a fixture in the Cleveland blues scene for decades. The singer/harmonica player became known throughout his 50-plus-year career for his wild stage antics which often found him out in the middle of the audience or in the audience or cavorting on a bar top. He's played at every blues venue in town, all the way back to the legendary Leo's Casino in the 60s.

He's had some health problems in recent years that have slowed him down somewhat but he's still alive and kicking to celebrate his 75th birthday, which he'll do this week at the Beachland Ballroom. The Eddie Baccus Band and special guests will be on hand to celebrate with him. It's free but donations will be accepted for Braxton.



### Hall of Fame 2013

### "Crazy" Marvin Braxton

Oh he's crazy all right, just not in a bad way. He's Crazy Marvin and he's just crazy enough to make you laugh and show you a good time. He plays the harmonica, sings, cracks jokes, lets loose a wild, cackling laugh that would make a hyena blush.

Braxton had been singing and blowing the blues over the course of a 60-year career, all the way back to the days of Cleveland's legendary Leo's Casino which all the legendary blues and soul performers



**CRAZY MARVIN a.k.a Marvin Braxton, is the leader and harmonica player extraordinaire for the "BLUES EXPRESS BAND". His zany personality, wild imagination, uncontrollable musical ability, on-stage antics and costumes have made him a well loved character to blues lovers all over Northeast Ohio and beyond. Marvin has performed in Harlem at the Apollo Theater with Ray Charles, toured the country with Sly and the Family Stone, and recorded with Jimi Hendrix in Los Angeles. These days you can find him dancin' on top of the tables in all the blues clubs around the greater Cleveland area.**



Crazy Marvin's band, "THE BLUES EXPRESS", is one of the hottest blues bands around. Blues fans everywhere say "These guys make me want to get up and dance and shake in places I never knew I had. They really smoke"



Crazy Marvin has that special ability to turn a roomful of people into a party, where everybody is smilin' and having a good time. "Playin' good blues make me want to holler !!!" says Marvin, and he and the band intend to keep hollerin' and goin' strong playin good blues for many years to come ! ..... Catch "Crazy Marvin and the Blues Express" show now and do some hollerin' yourself.







**"I love performing. When you get the people in your hands and the people that love music, you get the story out of their faces of what you're doing. And they're happy."  
*Marvin Braxton***

***Love and Gratitude***

*The Family of Marvin Braxton wishes to express our heartfelt appreciation to the many friends who have shown their kindness and consideration to us during our time of loss. In honor of our beloved Marvin, we thank you for your support for we know how much he meant to you all as well.*

***Thank you and God Bless ~ The Family***