

In loving memory of



Olie McMillian Jr.
August 8, 1963 - December 13, 2024

Saturday, December 28, 2024

Funeral Service at 11:00 am

*Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church
13651 Dequindre Street, Detroit, MI 48212*

Dr. Louis Forsythe II, Pastor, Officiating

His Story

A deep love of family, a commitment to his city, and a passion for baseball help tell the story of the life of Olie McMillian Jr.

DD, Junior, Junebug, Little Mack, and Big O — that's what many family and friends called this man who, for more than a third of his life, faithfully served the city of Detroit as a police officer, working many years in the homicide and narcotics units.

After his father was brutally assaulted and nearly killed, Olie felt a calling to become a police officer. He wanted to help serve and protect the city he loved, always called home and in which he took great pride.

"For him, being a police officer wasn't a job but a passion," said Francine Knowles, one of his sisters.

"There's a verse in the Bible that says no greater love is there than to lay down one's life for his friends," brother-in-law Michael Knowles paraphrased and reflected. As a police officer, Olie was prepared to lay down his life for strangers as well as family and friends if necessary.

Mentorship is a part of his legacy. For many years, he volunteered with the Detroit PAL (Police Athletic League). The nonprofit partners with the Detroit Police Department to help youth through athletic, academic, and leadership development programs. Olie was a volunteer with the organization years before he began his career with the Detroit Police Department. He served as an assistant coach and worked with hundreds of youth who looked up to Olie.

Retired educator Marcia Hawthorne-Bonds, whom Olie called his sister, often reached out to him to participate in annual career days. "There was never a time I called on my brother that he didn't show up," she said. "He talked about his work and encouraged students to pursue their dreams."

He also helped mentor other police officers, including Essence Faith, who called him "One of God's finest."

"You were instrumental in my decision to become a police officer," she said in a social media post after learning of Olie's passing. "Your unwavering support has been a constant source of inspiration. I'll never forget the times you checked in on me during my most challenging days, offering a listening ear and a comforting presence. Your kindness has been a beacon of hope."

Olie was born August 8, 1963, in Detroit, Michigan, the youngest of three children to Olie and Yvonne McMillian. In their adult years, his older sisters Cynthia McMillian-Green Suell and Francine would joke that Junior got away with everything. Yes, as the baby of the family, he was spoiled, but with love. His parents, like many others, learned lessons in raising their older children on when to let things slide and not to trip over the little things.

Olie graduated from Murray Wright High School and attended Wayne State University, where he studied criminal justice. He worked for more than 10 years at Delta Air Lines as a customer service agent, but the bulk of his professional work was as a police officer. He graduated from the Detroit Police Department Recruiting Academy in 1985 and became a police officer that same year. He retired 25 years later in 2010.

Olie met the woman who would become his wife, Lynette "Nettie" McMillian, one day while riding through her neighborhood. He spotted her seated on the porch and requested that she come over to him. When she did, he asked her out.

"It shocked me so much because I had been on the porch with another guy," Nettie said. But she was intrigued and said yes, and their love story began. A few years later, Olie popped the question at dinner one evening. Nettie teased him over the years because he didn't get down on one knee. But that didn't stop her from saying yes. She knew he was the one. He cherished and adored her along with her daughter, LeTari DeShields, to whom he became a devoted and loving father.

During the couple's more than 34 years of marriage, he found great pleasure in the times they spent together with family and friends and loved sharing a home with his grandchildren, Brandon DeShields and Shai-Anne DeShields.

In his grandkids' younger years, on Thanksgiving Day, while Olie's mom, Yvonne McMillian, and sisters would be busy preparing Thanksgiving dinner for the full clan, he would take them and his niece, Olivionne Dinah McMillian-Green, to the annual parade. The afternoon and evening would be spent at his mom's. There everyone enjoyed dinner, especially his mom's macaroni and cheese. That was Olie's and Brandon's favorite side dish. In fact, each Thanksgiving and Christmas, Yvonne would make a big dish for the family gathering and a separate dish for him to take home. But one year, she told him he needed to learn to make it. She passed the recipe down to him, and he learned to do just that, as did Brandon.

For many years, relatives gathered at Olie's and Nettie's home each Christmas Eve to celebrate his late mother-in-law Mozelle DeShields' birthday. It became the annual kickoff to the holiday season.

Olie loved sports and was a fan of the Detroit Pistons, Detroit Tigers, and Detroit Lions. For more than four decades, he was a part of an annual Super Bowl viewing party with friends.

He was in his element when playing for the Detroit Police Softball Team. He played first base, catcher and also served as an umpire traveling to tournaments in Florida, Tennessee, Ohio, Las Vegas and other cities.

"He was the cooler head of the team," said Steve Perry, who played on teams with him for more than 15 years. "Things might not go our way. We might not get a call. Someone might get upset. He'd be that person with his little chuckle to say that's okay, our time would come."

And it did; the team won numerous championships. Win or lose, Olie enjoyed the camaraderie and taking the family with him to the tournaments. "Those were some of the best times," Nettie reflected. She treasures the many times they spent together laughing.

A gentle giant with a big heart is how family and friends remember Olie. His legacy was looking out for others, said long-time friend T.J. Jackson, noting, "He'd go out of his way and put himself behind to make sure somebody else was okay."

"He was always giving, always concerned about others before himself," Steve said.

Friends and family recalled a time when Olie paid for the hotel room of a teammate who was struggling. Long before he became a police officer when at Wendy's, Olie observed a man physically abusing a woman, he intervened to help stop it. When a family member died suddenly, and there was no insurance to pay for the funeral, Olie paid for it all. When he learned his elderly mother-in-law Mozelle had never been to the UniverSoul Circus and wanted to go, he gathered up the family and took her. "That was shortly before she died," Nettie said of the circus trip. "It is one of my fondest memories. That's just the kind of man he was."

For many years, Olie attended Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church, a place he called his church home. He departed this life on Friday, December 13, 2024. Among those cherishing Olie's memory and celebrating his life are his wife Lynette McMillian; daughter LeTari DeShields; grandson Brandon DeShields (Ruth); granddaughter Shai-Anne DeShields; great-grandsons Jayce Elias DeShields and Jeremiah Leevi DeShields; sisters Cynthia McMillian-Green Suell (Larry, deceased), Francine Knowles (Michael), Brenda Ray (Hurley); adopted sister Marcia Hawthorne-Bonds; nieces Olivionne Dinah McMillian-Green and Monique Graves; goddaughter, Lynné Griggs; uncles Jerome McKinney and Charles Gouthier; aunts Myrna McMillan and Mattie McKinney Hatchett; cousins who he viewed as siblings; and a host of other relatives and friends. Olie was preceeded in death by his parents, Olie and Yvonne McMillian.

Order of Service

Processional.

Dr. Louis Forsythe II

Scripture Reading ~ II Timothy 4:6-8

Jonathan Lightfoot

Prayer of Comfort

Rev. Angelo Kyle

Musical Selection

Michael Knowles

Acknowledgments

Cynthia McMillian-Green Suell

Reading of the Obituary

Francine Knowles

Musical Selection

Michael Knowles

Memories (2 minutes, please)

Family and Friends

Eulogy

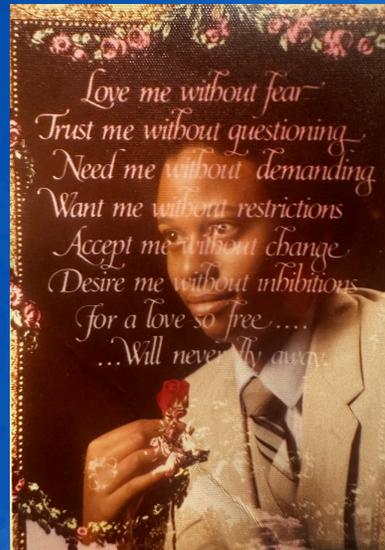
Rev. Marcia L. Hawthorne-Bonds

Recessional

Dr. Louis Forsythe II

Reflections

I miss you.
I miss your smile.
I miss your voice.
I especially miss your hug.
I miss your jokes.
I miss your everything.
Your Loving Wife, Nettie



Jr. - My Big Baby Brother! You are gone too soon! You were the first to retire and now you're gone! I'll miss you and I have no words to express my pain and sorrow! But, I know you and all of our guardian angels will watch over us and continue to help and keep us strong, in order to move forward!

J - Just hold on be strong.
U - Our Union can never be broken!
N - Never forget what we shared.
I - I will always be near and in your heart.
O - Our Only Big Baby Brother.
R - Remember it's not goodbye it's see you later till we meet again.

Love, Cynthia

DD was my best friend. He was more than my grandfather. He was the person who made me feel like I was most important in the world. He was there for me through everything, and I'll appreciate that forever. He was truly the best grandfather anyone could ask for, and I don't think anyone could replace him and his loving spirit. I'm gonna miss him. Rest well DD. I love you. **Shai-Anne**

Thank you DD for everything. Thank you for making me the person I am today. I will forever appreciate the memories we had.

Love, Brandon

Jr., I am so proud of you. Your life's legacy is reflected in the many positive ways you committed to family, friends and the city we both love. But I can't believe my baby brother is gone! There is a piece of my heart missing that will never be filled until we're together again. When I close my eyes, I see you now, standing tall with a smile on your face, and that along with my faith in God is what comforts me. I'm telling myself and our loved ones what I told you these past five months, something you already knew: God's got us. He is with us 24/7, and I won't let anyone tell me any different. He answered my prayers. He healed you in all the ways you needed to be healed. I miss and love you more than any words can say, but I'm so thankful you are at peace and that you are forever my brother.

Francine

Uncle Jr., I'm going to miss you deeply. Thank you for being a beacon of kindness and strength, always ready with a warm hug. I'll cherish the countless weekends we spent at the baseball park and road trips to watch you play. You were an extra father in my life and I'll never be able to express how much that means to me.

Love always, Olivionne

Reflections

Jun, it will be really quiet not getting your “Hey Sis” calls. Those reassurances “just because, you know...” to make sure I was okay. You are the best big little brother and I love you much. **Marcia**

From the time you were born I used to have fun with you coming over to the house. I remember when you were about three years old you liked to play with a ball. You’d say, “tatch” trying to say catch, and I’d say, “Why do you always want me to tatch?” You’d say, “because we know what we are doing. They don’t.” Leftie, leftie, leftie, I’m going to hold the left fort down. I miss the times when we really got to know each other as you got older when I moved back to Detroit. You’d come over to Auntie Mary’s and your mom’s house to see me. You’d sneak some of those messed up cakes I made that tasted good but didn’t look pretty. I miss the laughter. I love you and I’ll see you later. **Cordy**

Junior, we’re going to miss you. You’re not suffering anymore. We all love you. **Bernard**

Most of the family called you Junior, but you were always Little Mac to me. Ironically, there was absolutely nothing little about you! Your presence was big, and the love for your family and friends was big. I am so grateful you’re not suffering anymore but know that a big part of the family is missing. I know you’re with our loved ones who have passed on, and you’re being big time spoiled!

Love forever, Nina

Junebug, you were a large man with a beautiful heart. You were just so kind to everyone. Right now, all I can remember is you hugging me. I miss you so much. **Sharon**

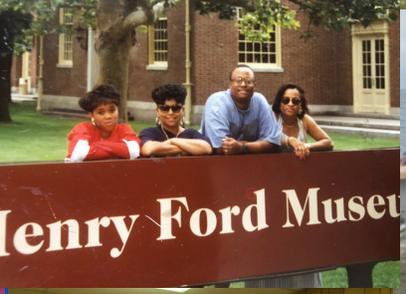
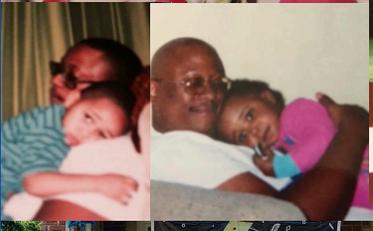
Junior, you were a receptive, gentle, loving soul. I was so nervous when my cousin connected us. You were so kind that nervousness went away. The conversations we had were never strained. They were precious to me. I’m just sorry that we didn’t have more time together.

Your sister, Brenda.

Acknowledgement

Words fall short in conveying the deep gratitude and appreciation the family of the late Olie McMillian Jr. want to express to all who provided prayers, words of comfort, hugs, shared memories, and other expressions of love and support these past several months. Your kindness and love and our faith in God are what has and will continue to sustain us.

Please know that we are eternally grateful. A more formal acknowledgement will be forthcoming. God bless you all.







Pallbearers

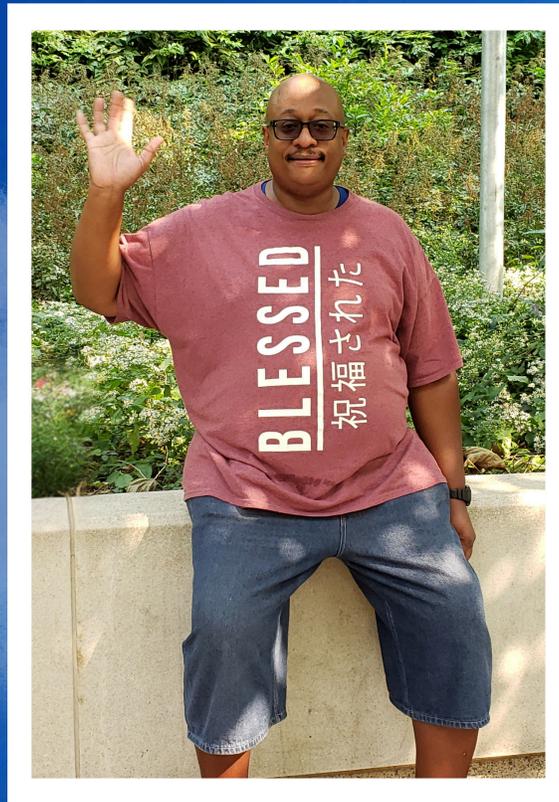
Steve Perry Dennis Cook
Charles Crump Terence Jackson
Randall Craig Derrick Gouthier

Honorary Pallbearers

Brandon DeShields Stanley McKinney
Eric McKinney Jonathan Lightfoot
Delano McKinney Jimmy McMillan
William Lewis Reggie McMillan

Flower Bearers

Friends of the Family



Final Arrangements Entrusted to

James H. Cole Home for Funerals
16100 Schaefer Hwy. Detroit, MI 48235

Interment

Woodlawn Cemetery
19975 Woodlawn Ave, Detroit, MI 48203