

**CELEBRATING THE LIFE
OF**

Robert King

Sunrise: May 30, 1934 - Sunset: January 11, 2017



Service:

Tuesday, January 17, 2017 - 5:00 pm

COTTON FUNERAL SERVICE

130 Main Street • Orange, New Jersey

Obituary

Robert Eugene King was born in Conroe, Texas, the second son of Ollie and Earl King. His only sibling, Verily, died in childhood. The family migrated to Newark, New Jersey when Robert was 10 years old. After high school, Robert enlisted in the US Air Force where he was stationed in Japan as an Airman Second Class during the Korean War. Mr. King was an active member of VFW Post 7923 under the leadership of Commander Ronald Riddick.

Robert graduated from Tyler Barber College in New York City and worked as a barber at Essex County Hospital where he retired after 20 years. He began his second career as a City of East Orange Housing Inspector. In 1986, he was given the Year of Pride Award for rescuing two children from a fire escape.

Robert moved his family to East Orange in 1977. Robert would become a solid force in politics and community activism in the City—a tireless individual who would never say no. From making his famous barbecued ribs for Men Who Cook fundraiser's to helping to elect local politicians and volunteering for his son's Young Father's Program at UMDNJ, Robert's devotion to his community in East Orange, Newark and far beyond—earned him the honorific “Brother Robert” to many. If you were starting a business—he had advice for you. If you were struggling in sports—he had advice for you. A young neighbor, Jeffery, told Robert he was convinced that he would never grow tall enough to make it to the NBA. Robert told Jeffery: You have to think positive. Tonight, when you go to bed: Think tall! Think of growing taller and taller. This will work! It didn't work. But the idea that he was committed to helping this young man is a prime example of Robert King's ethics.

Akbar Muhammad, a classmate of Robert's daughter, developed an interest in boxing as a young man. The practices were brutal, especially since he was determined to keep his grades up as well. He told Robert that he just would not be able to do it. Robert told Akbar that it was simple. He told him he was strong enough to do both boxing and classwork—case closed. It would work. It worked. Not only did Akbar collect his own accomplishments in boxing, he was recently certified as a Level 3 Official for USA Boxing.

It didn't matter how old you were. It didn't matter how committed you were. It actually didn't matter who you were. It didn't matter if you struggled with education or you were a Rhodes scholar. If Robert King saw promise in you, he was going to make sure you saw it in yourself.

Robert King, born into a Baptist family, converted to Islam as a young adult. His parents preceded him in death and he leaves many behind to mourn, honor and continue his Legacy.

In his birth state of Texas, Robert leaves behind several close relatives, including Verline, Willie V, Mildred, Patrick, Joe Bean, Sam and many more. Robert King's circle of friends was very large including his Madison Avenue neighbors, two life-long friends Robert Slade and Shirley Dunson. He also was blessed to have two devoted sisters-in-law, Janet and Penny and a caring son-in-law, Erik Parker.

If you ever had a conversation with Robert King, you know how much he cared about his three children. They absolutely meant the world to him. His oldest son, Al-Tariq—who suffered through his father's military haircuts when all he wanted was a high-top fade like his friends. His oldest daughter Aliya—who was not allowed to date boys who wore baseball caps. Aliya still doesn't understand this rule. And his baby girl Ashanti. Robert would never let anyone forget that Ashanti was the best birthday present he could have ever received way back in 1978. His children blessed him with six grandchildren: Sharif, Zania, Tariq, Skye, Robert and Mason, along with two great grand children, Princeton and Emerson.

Rita King was the love of Robert's life. Through 45 years of marriage, he was the rock of their family and let it be known in large and small ways how important she was to him. From cooking every meal, (including all holidays), to warming her car up every winter morning before she left for her work, Robert put no one and nothing before his beloved Wife.

In life, Robert King stood up for many causes. In death, his spirit will continue to do so.

“A man who stands for nothing will fall for anything” –Malcolm X

Order of Service

Musical Selection
“Smile” by Nat King Cole

Obituary
Aliya S. King

Family Tribute
Allison Brown
Community Servant Kevin Taylor
VFW Servant Ronald Riddick

Words of Reflection
[2 minutes please]

Acknowledgments

Eulogy

Recessional

CREMATION

Rosedale Crematory
Orange, New Jersey

Robert King's Grandchildren: I Will Always Remember...

“...His warm hugs. –Zania Dunson Black

“...How his face would light up when we talked about my track career. And driving him to the store to get peanut chews.” –Sharif Webb

“...His firm handshakes and how he always cared for others...” –Altariq Dunson, Jr.

“...His amazing cooking. Mama King makes some great dishes too. But if it was really good, Granddad made it.
–Skye Volmar

“...He always gave me great advice. Every day he said, put some socks on your feet!” –Robert Tariq King

“...his love for me was strong and he showed every bit of it.”
–Mazy King Parker

Acknowledgement

Perhaps you sent a lovely card or sat quietly in a chair.

Perhaps you sent a floral piece If so, we saw it there.

Perhaps you spoke the kindest words as any friend could say.

Perhaps you were not there at all just thought of us on that day.

Whatever you did to console our hearts, We Thank You, Whatever the part.

Professional Services Provided By

COTTON FUNERAL SERVICE

130 Main Street
Orange, NJ
973-675-6400

1025 Bergen Street
Newark, NJ
973-926-6400

COTTON-PARKER FUNERAL HOME

37 Clinton Avenue
Jersey City, NJ
201-433-1000

