



## Mr. Robert Lee Charleston Sr.

November 6, 1927 - January 8, 2015

Celebrating The Life Of Robert Lee Charleston, Sr.:

Robert Lee Charleston was born on November 6, 1927 in Monroe, Louisiana to Lillie Bell Sims Nelson and Fred Charleston Jr. He was the eldest of five children.

Reverend J. Hargarty, Pastor of Pleasant Green Baptist Church christened Robert at an early age and the baptismal pool was the Quachita River in Monroe, Louisiana.

In 1940 Robert moved to the Detroit area. He graduated from Cass Technical High School and attended classes at Wayne State University. Later he enlisted in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and served as a tank instructor. He was honorably discharged in 1953.

While Reverend Louis Johnson was pastor of Friendship Baptist Church Robert became a member and committed himself to the work of the Lord and the church. He was a dedicated member of the church for over sixty four years and served in numerous capacities. He was chairperson for the Men's Day celebration. He also sat on the Boards of Friendship Manor Nursing Home, Friendship Meadows and Forest Park Villa. He was an emeritus member of the Pastor's Aid and generously contributed financially wherever needed throughout the years.

From 1960 - 1975 he was employed at Chrysler. During this time he had a vision of supplying industrial cleaning products to the factories, businesses and homes. In 1975 Robert founded and was CEO of Caravan Technologies, Inc. The company's goals and objectives were to manufacture the best cleaning products on the market and at a economical cost. Because of Robert's progressive ideas, prudence and sound business practices he earned the respect and trust of some of the nation's largest manufacturing firms such as Chrysler, General Motors and Ford Motor Company.

This business feat has allowed him to be a part of some of the most prestigious business groups. He was a member of the National Association of Black Automotive Suppliers (NAB AS), member of the Michigan Minority Supplier Development Council (MMSDC), member of the Michigan Minority Business Development Council (MMBDC), Michigan Minority Chemical Association (MMCA) which is 100% minority owned. He is also a life member of the NAACP.

During the seventeen plus years in business, Caravan grew from a very small company producing approximately (1,000) gallons per month to in excess of (15,000) gallons per day with a capacity of (125,000) gallons per week.

Caravan Technologies is one of the leading suppliers of all purpose detergents, degreasers and coolants to the local Detroit based auto industries. Personnel and staff grew from only two people to a total of thirty employees company wide. Through product and business diversification, Caravan is currently expanding nationally and internationally.

Robert met Beatrice Harry at the carnival celebration in Toronto, Canada. After dating one year they united in holy matrimony on March 30, 1985. Beatrice is formerly from Mombasa, Kenya, East Africa. During their marriage

business travel took them to Europe, Africa and other wonderful and exciting places.

Bob, as some close friends called him, loved automobiles and at one time he owned one car from each of the "Big Three" companies.

Because of his Louisiana background he truly enjoyed spicy foods and some may know he carried a small bottle of Louisiana very hot sauce in his pocket at all times to enjoy.

Robert was an avid Michigan sports fan and spent many Sundays in the private clubs and boxes at the University of Michigan games with close friends and neighbors.

His son Eric was mentored by his father at an early age to work in the business at Caravan Technologies, Inc.

One of Robert's most gifted traits was being a good listener. He was always ready to hear his employees' problems and try to help to solve them. This gave him a sense of helping others and was also a wonderful advantage for the company. He realized that a happy employee is a good employee. All people have problems and he tried to help all who asked. He leaves a legacy of love, caring, and helping.

# Cemetery Details

## Woodlawn Cemetery

19975 Woodward Ave.  
Detroit, MI 48203

# Previous Events

## Visitation

Thursday, Jan. **15**. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

O. H. Pye, III Funeral Home  
17600 Plymouth Road  
Detroit, MI 48227  
(313) 838-9770  
info@pyefuneralhome.com

## Family Hour

Friday, Jan. **16**. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Friendship Baptist Church  
3900 Beubian  
Detroit, MI 48201

## Funeral Service

Friday, Jan. **16**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Friendship Baptist Church  
3900 Beubian  
Detroit, MI 48201



# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Robert Lee Charleston Sr.*

January 21, 2023 at 09:34 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Robert Lee Charleston Sr..*



January 15, 2015 at 06:30 PM

AM

“ *A WONDERFUL MAN, BOB,  
A GREAT COUPLE, BEA AND BOB,*

*MY SINCERE SYMPATHY TO BEA, BOB'S FAMILY, BEA'S  
FAMILY,  
FRIENDS, AND TO ALL WHO KNEW HIM.....*

*I FEEL VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE MET THEM THROUGH  
CHESTER AND  
TONI TRICE. MAY TIME GIVE YOU PEACE IN YOUR HEARTS.*

*BEA, YOU ARE SO WONDERFUL, WERE WONDERFUL AND  
PROTECTIVE OF BOB WITH YOUR LOVING CARE, THINKING  
OF YOU, AND SENDING LOVE,*

*ARLENE MARTIN*

**Arlene Martin** - January 15, 2015 at 05:38 PM



“ *Enduring Grace was purchased for the family of Mr. Robert Lee Charleston Sr..*



---

January 14, 2015 at 10:20 AM