



Celebrating the Life of

Doretta House Nelson

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Her Wonderful Life



Doretta House Nelson passed away peacefully on January 28, 2020 in Plano, Texas at the age of 67.

Born on August 11, 1952, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to Jonas and Mary House, Doretta was the third of seven siblings. Doretta was a 1970 graduate of Douglass High School where, true to her outgoing nature, she participated in many high school activities including basketball, Debate Club, Y-teen, Honor Society, Pep Club, Teen Democrats, Future Teachers of America, and Girls Scouts. These activities had an indelible impact on her as evidenced by the universal motto she adopted from her days as a Girl Scout, to “always be prepared.”

After graduating from high school, Doretta attended Austin College in Sherman, Texas, where she studied psychology. In her sophomore year, she was blessed with her first child “Toni” and married her high school sweetheart Michael Nelson who joined her at Austin College. Doretta brought her active spirit to college where she played intramural basketball and volleyball. In the spirit of her father, a man deeply committed to Black progress, Doretta was also a key social and cultural contributor at her college, having been a founder of B.L.A.C.K. (Blacks Looking for Awareness and Cooperation), an organization geared towards providing an outlet for the small population of blacks at Austin College. Doretta’s passion for community service and civic duty was steadfast. Well into her retirement, she donated her time to assisting others to register to vote. A faithful woman from a very early age, in her time in Sherman she was a member of Harmony Baptist Church where she worshipped and sang in the church choir.



After graduating college, Doretta and her family moved to Boulder, Colorado, where she had her second child Michael Nelson Jr. There, she began her career at Great West Life Insurance Company. In 1982, the family relocated to Plano, Texas where Doretta remained for the duration of her life. After 30 years of service, she retired from Great West Life Insurance Company in 2008.

Doretta was known for her zest for life, fashion and enthusiasm for learning. She was a voracious reader and conversationalist; a go to person for anyone who wanted to know the specifics regarding the latest local, regional or international current event. She would engage you for hours on the phone on any topic from the arts to science, politics or the economy. You had to prepare yourself for a debate with Doretta Nelson!

Doretta's sense of fashion was unsurpassed. She could find a nice outfit in any clothing store, and seemed to have the patience to look as long as it took to find it. Like most aspects of her life, Doretta gave the act of shopping her all and seemed to find joy in the small victory of a good buy. She could find a deal wherever there was a cash register, and every so often, had a coupon to buy whatever was on offer.

While Doretta was an expert shopper, cooking was not her forte. Growing up, when it was her turn to cook, her siblings would cringe because her chosen meal was sauerkraut and weenies. Although she did not enjoy cooking, she made sure Toni and Michael had a solid home cooked meal every day. And later in life she even mastered a few specialties such as meat loaf, corn bread dressing, and smothered chicken, all favorite dishes of hers. Still, her favorite food may, in fact, have been Hershey's Hugs and Kisses with almonds which she was known to have ready on every movie outing.

To all who knew her, Doretta was generous and loyal. She considered her greatest accomplishment raising her two children and she took joy in her two grandsons, Tre and Donovan, whom she treasured dearly. She will be remembered by all for her warm enveloping smile!