



Loretta Shaw Harrison

February 16, 2022

Loretta S. Harrison passed away peacefully surrounded by family and friends on Wednesday, February 16, 2022, following a battle with breast cancer. She was 66.

Loretta, lovingly referred to as the "Praline Queen," was the chef and owner of the historic Loretta's Authentic Pralines, becoming the first African-American woman to own and operate a praline company in New Orleans. She made friends and admirers worldwide through her shop and her long-standing record as a food vendor at the city's biggest festivals, starting with the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival.

Loretta was a faithful steward of God with the belief that if you "put God first, He will grant the wishes of your heart." She shared her unwavering love and dedication for God and the city of New Orleans with everyone she encountered. She was a woman with incredible grace and moral fortitude and was a guiding light who lit up our lives with infinite love.

Loretta grew up in Verrett, LA, one of 12 children. Her mother made pralines after church for family and guests visiting their home. By age 8, Loretta was cooking them alongside her mom, using a recipe that went back to her great grandmother.

After graduating from Southern University at New Orleans, she went to work at the LSU Medical Library, where she sold pralines to students on the side. In 1978 her big break came when she heard that the Jazz & Heritage Festival put out the call for a praline vendor. She won the contract, sold 1,500 pralines

in two weekends, and continued to supply the festival for over 40 years. The success inspired her to leave her job and develop her business full time. Unfortunately, success did not come without a few failures along the way. Yet, she believed in her product and herself.

By 1983, she opened her first shop in Jax Brewery. Later, she moved to the French Market, and in the 1990s, by the grace of God, she opened a second, much larger shop and production kitchen in Faubourg Marigny that serves gumbo, seafood platters, stuffed peppers, and calas, as well as pie, cookies, and king cake.

She was a proud entrepreneur who advocated for local business owners, cultural and culinary arts. After Hurricane Katrina, she quickly returned to the city meeting with national and local officials to voice small business owners' needs. During this difficult time, her business was buoyed by her steadfast belief that anything which can be destroyed can be rebuilt. She took immediate action, changing her business model to include an online storefront and becoming a restaurant for reporters, emergency workers, and volunteers rebuilding the city. She added plate lunches and dishes like gumbo, figuring people needed a place to grab a meal more than sweets.

She would continue to evolve her menu and creations. She added praline filling to traditional beignets and even made beignets into sandwiches filled with crab cakes, eggs and bacon, and hamburger patties.

She was a faithful member of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church.

She is survived by her children, Robert Harrison, III (Ashley), Roddrick Harrison (La'Tekqua), and Kendrick Hills-Harrison; sisters J'Net Warren, Greta S. Tate, and Cynthia S. Villavaso (Lloyd); brothers Cleveland Warren (Paulette), George, Hollis, Jasper, and Edward Shaw; two grandchildren Robert (IV) and Avery Harrison; three godchildren, Latasha Tate Tillman, Kendell Williams and Samaria Gallien; and a host of nieces, nephews, and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents Loretta Louise and George W. Shaw, Sr.; brothers Murdis Arnold and Kester Shaw and her sister Glenda Hills.

Although she is no longer here with us in this realm, her beautiful soul will

continue to guide and inspire us all.

Relatives and friends of the family, pastors, officers and members of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, Willie Chapel Primitive Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of Verrett, LA and Second Zion Baptist Church, also, employees of Loretta's Authentic Pralines, Helen Cox High School, Hampton & Harrison Attorneys at Law, New Orleans Fire Department, Hancock Whitney Bank, Tulane Medical Center, Greta's Beauty Salon, First City Court Section B, Villavaso Investment, Enhanced Capital, Brooklyn Academy of Music and Saint & Essex PR, Municipal & Traffic Court of New Orleans Division C, New Orleans Juvenile Court, New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation, French Market Corporation, Domino Sugar of Chalmette, LA and Ochsner Medical Center are all invited to attend the Memorial Service at Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, 8200 I-10 Service Road on Friday, February 25, 2022 at 10:00 am. Visitation will begin at 8:00 am. Livestream set to begin at 10:00 am by visiting www.franklinabc.com or facebook.com/FABCNOLA or youtube.com/FABCNOLA. Everyone in attendance must wear a mask. Interment will be private. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you make a donation to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital: Loretta S. Harrison Memorial Fund at http://giftfunds.stjude.org/lorettaharrison_godisgood or Louisiana SPCA: note in Memory of Loretta S. Harrison at www.louisianasPCA.org/. Arrangements by D.W. Rhodes Funeral Home, 3933 Washington Avenue. Please visit www.rhodesfuneral.com to sign the guestbook.

Cemetery Details

Private

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **25**. 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Franklin Avenue Baptist Church
8282 I-10 Service Rd
New Orleans, LA 70126
(504) 488-8488

Memorial Service

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Tribute Wall

CS

“ Loretta was a loving thoughtful person. Loretta's friends were an extension of her family. She literally adopted me , bringing me home in Veret during college breaks. Her family embraced me as their own . We lost contact after I left town I stayed in contact with her mom until the early part of 2000. I remember her phone number. 682-7125. I will always remember our time together. RIP

Carol Dash Schweitzer - February 28, 2022 at 02:13 PM

SC

“ I met Loretta in 1984 when I began working for the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. In the early '90's when she and I both had a shop at the Jax Brewery, we bonded a bit more. She then opened up the French Market location and needed a triple sink to pass inspection. We sold her our triple sink and then she began selling my Hot Pepper Jelly and other products. Loretta was a wonderful woman. She always greeted people with a smile, a warm hug and a prayer. She rolled with the punches and never let anything get her down. She was a business savvy, wise beyond her years and a joy to be around. Her pralines were the best and she continued to grow her business adding in great products as needed by the Community. Loretta will be sorely missed by her family, friends, Church groups and customers. She is now with her Lord and Saviour and will watch down on us with love. Rest in Peace, Loretta!

Sally Gates Cobb - February 26, 2022 at 02:43 PM



“ *Such a beautiful special lady. Met her through her sisters. She was down to earth and never showed you anything but love. She had such a beautiful memorial service today, everyone did an outstanding job. Job well done my sister, a life well lived. You are absent from the body, present with the Lord. You have left a beautiful legacy for your family. You will be remembered always. Love and condolences to your family.*



Deborah Hunter - February 25, 2022 at 09:21 PM

EM

“ *Condolences to the family. Loretta was one of the few people in life, who gave more than what was required in her endeavors.*

Earl Mageee - February 25, 2022 at 10:23 AM

MJ

“ *I will always remember her beautiful smile and wonderful personality. My now deceased Wife, Carol Arterberry, and I would always be sure to visit her store when we were in New Orleans and bring "Sweet Goodies", as Carol called them, back to our Friends in California. May her Family, Friends, and Loved Ones be comforted by the Treasured Memories of Times spent with her, as she Lives On thru' those of us who were Blessed to have spent time with her. She is now with the Ancestors.*
Melvin Arterberry Jr.



Melvin Arterberry, Jr. - February 24, 2022 at 10:01 PM

DA

“ *To Ms Jnet and family: you are in my thoughts and prayers. Dayna*

DaynaFinley - February 24, 2022 at 05:30 PM

CW

“ Loretta, Greta, and I went to school together at PGT Beauregard High School. I'll always have great memories of the school and my friends. I've always been proud of Loretta for her accomplishments. I'm sure that she will continue with Jesus. Wish that I could have seen you before you left. God bless you and your family Loretta 🙏



Christy George Wildey - February 24, 2022 at 10:56 AM

EA

“ To the family... "The life of the dead is place in the memory of the living." Marcus Cicero
May the memories of you love and God's love give you comfort and heal your broken heart.
God's peace,
Eugenia



Eugenia Foster Adams - February 23, 2022 at 11:48 PM

CS

“ Carol Schweitzer purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Loretta Shaw Harrison.



Carol Schweitzer - February 23, 2022 at 09:38 PM

SB

“ My deepest condolences to Robert & Ashley and the entire Shaw, Harrison family. Ms. Loretta's light will forever shine through those she touched.
Sunada Brookins

Sunada Brookins - February 23, 2022 at 12:49 PM

ML

“ *Ms. Loretta was a very sweet and giving soul. She was so gracious to send hundreds of pralines for our (Larry and Brenda Williams) daughter, Dana on her wedding day. When Larry requested some of her great food, she put together a special package just for our family. Through the help and updates from First Lady and sister/sister-in-law, Elizabeth, we have been able to stay informed about Ms. Loretta. She will be missed by us all. May The Lord rest her soul, Amen.*

Mrs. Brenda Hicks Williams & Larry - February 23, 2022 at 12:45 PM