

ACTIVE PALLBEARERS

Phillip Garrett
Dennis Evans
Roderick Mitchell, M.D.

Bertram Brown
Victor Young
William Curtis Jones

HONORARY PALLBEARERS

Darrel Bruce
Derrick Jones
Arthur L. Bryan, II
Monte Bruce
Brandon Bruce
Charles Evans, Jr.
Tyke Bruce
Gabriel Juhlke

Jerry Bruce
Daryl Jones
Jonathan L. Bryan
Eric Bruce
Bobby Bruce, Jr.
Eric Alexander
William Bryan Juhlke
Patrick Neal

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are truly overwhelmed and overjoyed by the love and support you have shown us. Thank you all for loving Charlesetta Bruce as much as she loved each of you. Words cannot express the gratitude we feel in our hearts. We are thankful for your donations and contributions.

Daingerfield High School classes of 1974 and 1994, PineyWoods Civic Club, Morris County Collaborative, TSA Group, Terry Williams, East Texas Choppers, and the City of Daingerfield we appreciate you so much. Special thanks to Linda Traylor, Linda Rhymes, and Mae Chism. You did everything right!

Nisha, Bri & Family

INTERMENT

DAINGERFIELD CEMETERY, DAINGERFIELD, TEXAS



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CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF

Charlesetta
BRUCE

FEBRUARY 3, 1956
JANUARY 13, 2021



Aspire to Inspire Before You Expire

ORDER OF SERVICE

SATURDAY, JANUARY TWENTY -THIRD, TWENTY - TWENTY ONE
One O’Clock PM

DAINGERFIELD CITY PARK, DAINGERFIELD, TX

OFFICIANT
PASTOR C.D. TRAYLOR, II
Shiloh Temple of Faith

MISTRESS OF CEREMONY
BRIONI “BRI” JONES

Processional	“Celebration”
Scripture	Reverend Benjamin Horne 2 Corinthians 9:6-7
Prayer	Reverend Benjamin Horne
Expressions from Clergy	Father Francis O’Dowd
Expressions from J.J. Rhodes Heights Community	Roderick Mitchell, M.D.
Expressions from Classmates	Victor Young & Jeanette Dodd DHS Class of 1974 JCC Class of 1978
Continuing a Legacy	Arthur L. Bryan, II
Expressions from Clubs and Organizations	Lesia Lewis PineyWoods Civic Club Martha Baker Morris County Collaborative
Expressions from Friends	Rhonda Carson Linda Traylor and Huff Family Robert Peoples
Expressions from Colleagues	Judy Pollan Retired Superintendent D-LS ISD





Family Tribute

Expressions from Family

Special Tribute

Eulogy

Final Viewing

Recessional

“Isn’t She Lovely”

Arthur L. Bryan

Jonathan L. Bryan
& Extended Family

Sonya Roberts-Woods

Pastor C.D. Traylor, II

Harmon & Harmon Funeral Associates

“Purple Rain”



CHARLESETTA BRUCE

FEBRUARY 3, 1956 - JANUARY 13, 2021

A STORY OF A LIFETIME

This story began in Hughes Springs, Texas on Friday, February 3, 1956, when my mom, Charlesetta Bruce, was born. My granny, Arthur “Tannie” L. Bruce, told me that my mom was born at home and delivered by a midwife. She said she was a good baby and did not require much attention. Boy, did that change!

My mom came from a rather large family. Norman L. Bruce, who I call “Daddy Bruce,” and Granny (both deceased) had a total of 10 children. My mom has two living brothers, Darrel (Angela) Bruce of Temple and Jerry (Marilyn) Bruce of Hughes Springs; three sisters, Debbie (Timothy) Juhlke of Round Rock, Norma Elaine Evans of Daingerfield, and Rosie Neal of Hughes Springs. Four of her siblings, Debra Wilson, Bobby Bruce, Sr., Ricky Bruce, Sr. and Mary (Leonard) Hatcher preceded her in death. She still has two living aunts and uncles, Vickie and Larry Smith, Sr. of Daingerfield and Norris and Carlenta Bruce of Dallas.

My mom grew up in Daingerfield, Texas in the J.J. Rhodes Heights community. She attended J.J. Rhodes Elementary School until schools were required to integrate with Daingerfield in the mid-1960s. My mom recalls people being angry, scared, and apprehensive about this integration thing. She and her classmates were considered the guinea pigs of this experiment, but in the end, they got the last laugh. The little experiment was successful. It made history and changed how we live and interact today.

Mom went on to attend Daingerfield High School where she described it to be some of her best years. She had many friends, which she loved. She was in several clubs and organizations, a cheerleader, a band member—she played the clarinet. Her favorite songs in the marching band were “Black Saddle” and “Hail to the Daingerfield.” She is literally showing me the routines right now. Hilarious! She graduated from Daingerfield High School in 1974 and received the opportunity of a lifetime to attend a summer program at Jarvis Christian College.

The Advanced Summer Enrichment Program (ASEP) was a 6-week program at Jarvis Christian College, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Hawkins, Texas. She and six of her Daingerfield High School classmates and friends attended this program. They were known as “The Daingerfield Girls”. She successfully completed this summer program and continued her education at Jarvis in the fall semester. Her friends described her as fun, the life of the party, yet incredibly wise beyond her years...an old soul. My mom said she did not get much schooling done because she had way too much fun. Then, there was Charles E. Stern.

Charles Stern, my daddy, was something. He was very handsome, well-dressed, charismatic, and brilliant. He drove fast cars and all the ladies loved him, and he loved the ladies. My mom said she just knew it was meant to be. They were Charles and Charlesetta. Both were born on February 3rd. This happens to be my favorite part of my mom’s story because this is where I arrive. My mom and dad were unorthodox parents. They did not follow rules and traditions. They were fun and exciting, and everybody loved them. Our house was everyone’s house. They loved people and had many friends. They never locked their doors, people just came

in. If families or individuals needed a place to stay, they stayed at our house. Yes, our two-bedroom one-bathroom house.

My parents were tough on me when it came to two things, education and spirituality. They did not play. Chelsea Lawson, my half-sister, came to live with us when I was younger. She was gorgeous, tall, and spoke like a jazz singer. She was in high school and drew quite a bit of attention to our house with the fellas. I remember being so excited when she came. Finally, someone could help me get Charles and Charlesetta under control.

Ms. Etta (that’s what some of her students and my friends called her) worked for Hughes Springs, Linden-Kildare, and Daingerfield-Lone Star school districts in the computer lab and counseling office. I was lucky that she didn’t teach at my school until I was away in college. She told me that was on purpose. In my mom’s earlier years, she worked at Lone Star Steel and local nursing homes. She was an active member of Civitan International and was a member of the Rosette and Stem Civitan Club in Tyler. Also, she was one of the charter members of Piney Woods Civitan Club in Daingerfield.

After my parent’s marriage ended, my mom began to focus more on creating new chapters for her life story. She eventually moved to Silver Spring, Maryland with me for a while and helped look after my daughter, the apple of her eye, Brioni “Bri” Jones. She found a job very quickly in true Charlesetta fashion—never meeting a stranger! My mom was the Program Director at Kids Adventures. It was the before and after school program at my daughter’s elementary school, Rock Creek Forest. It could not have been more perfect. Bri is all grown up now and serves in the United States Navy. She is stationed in Honolulu, Hawaii. My mom said when Bri puts on that uniform and flashes that beautiful smile, her heart just melts. Trust me. In my mom’s eyes, it doesn’t get any better than Bri Bri.

Mom decided she had enough of the big city after five years and returned to Daingerfield. She got a job as an Office Manager with Health Assistance Team (HAT) in Hughes Springs. She loved that job. She said she loved all her jobs, but that one was special. She decided to return to college and get a degree in social work. This was rough on her family and friends. My mom wore us out. Thankfully, she received her bachelor’s degree in social work from Texas A&M University-Commerce in 2015. We celebrated like it was 1999.

She continued her service to the community helping friends and family with starting businesses, funeral arrangements, social services, cooking and baking, legal services, college admissions, speech writing, financial services, voting registration, etc. The list goes on and on. There was not much my mom did not know how to do; and if she didn’t know, she knew exactly who to call. She was a charter member of the PineyWoods Civic Club and served as its president. She also served as parliamentarian of the Morris County Collaborative (MCC) executive committee and chaired the organization’s governance committee. She carried the torch of my granny’s legacy and continued to organize the annual Clergy Banquet and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

My mom had a huge heart with the most explosive laughter. I have yet to meet anyone with a laugh that powerful and infectious. She was so much fun, a hot mess, and will be missed by so many. She had a special relationship with each one of her nephews, nieces, cousins, and friends. Her larger-than-life personality will live on in our hearts and minds forever. It is difficult not to be able to finish writing this story with her. We spent the last three months of her life documenting our family’s history, and she loved every minute of it. You see, she and my daddy always wanted me to write a book about my life with them. For some reason, they believed it would be a best seller.

~Nisha