



Charles C. Releford

October 29, 1923 - October 22, 2013

Charles Cain Releford, M.D. Charles Cain Releford was born in Griffin, Georgia on October 29, 1923. He departed this life on Tuesday, October 25, 2013 one week shy of his 90th birthday. He attended the public schools in Griffin and graduated from Vocational High School. Upon graduating from High School, he served in the United States Navy from 1943-45. This experience allowed him to attend college through the G.I. Bill and he graduated with a Major in Biology from Morehouse College in 1949. Dr. Releford saw his maternal grandmother, who raised him, gradually die from what we now know as Congestive Heart failure. This experience motivated him to want to help the sick. After graduating from Morehouse many of his contemporaries encouraged him to take a job in the U.S. Postal Service as they were hiring African Americans and it was a “good” job. He decided not to take that advice and applied to Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee. His initial application was denied. Driven to reach his goal, he applied to their Medical Technology program. He was accepted and ultimately graduated in 1952 from Meharry’s program and got a job at Hughes Spalding Medical Pavilion in Atlanta as the first Black Medical Technologist on staff. While this was a great accomplishment – he still had a desire to become a medical doctor. He re-applied to Meharry in Nashville and was ultimately accepted and graduated in 1959. He was the recipient of the Georgia Scholarship for Medical Studies which allowed him to study. As a young man growing up in the segregated South, he always wanted to return to his

hometown of Griffin to set up his medical practice. He was the First African American Physician on Staff at the Griffin Spalding County Hospital (currently Spalding Regional Medical Center). During that time, African Americans who were ill had to be admitted only to the first floor of the multi leveled facility. In other words they were not allowed access to the rest of the building. While the African American Community welcomed him and his young family with open arms, many in the white community did not – he and other African American business owners endured many closed doors and racial slurs. On one particular occasion the Ku Klux Klan, most commonly referred to as the KKK, planned to burn a cross on his front lawn, a tactic that they often used to scare minorities. Fortunately for him, he lived on a one way street, and as the KKK passed in their trucks – they saw that other members of the community had taken up arms to protect his family. They quickly turned their trucks around and disappeared. Through it all, he managed to serve for 45 years as a practicing physician here in Griffin – Georgia. He was a member of numerous social, civic and professional organizations including: Vaughn Blake – Post 8480 – where he served as Post Surgeon, the Caballeros Social Club, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Ancient Free and Accepted Masons (33rd degree) Shriner and the Civic Improvement League. He was a founding member of the Medical Directors Association of Georgia an organization of Medical Directors in long term care facilities. Dr. Releford was preceded in death by his daughter Dr. Michelle Releford and leaves to cherish his memory a son Charles C. Releford, Jr. (Tonga), Alexis Ellison (Michael) and Olga Sanders, grandchildren: Rhett Wescott Dalton, Rahbi Michelle Releford, Charles C. Releford, III, Colin Alexander Releford, Kendal Nicole Releford, Jordan and Erica Ellison, and a host of friends and family. Funeral Services will be held on Monday, October 28, 2013 at 11:00am at Mt. Zion Baptist Church-321 East Taylor St, Griffin GA. Senior Pastor – Reverend Dr. Cleopatrik Lacy. His remains will lie in state from 9am to the hour of service on Monday. His final resting place will be at RestHaven Cemetery-797 Memorial Drive, Griffin GA. Services entrusted to Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Homes, & Crematory,

Inc-4347 Flat Shoals Pkwy, Decatur GA 30034 (404)241-5656

Tribute Wall

RP

“ *It has been years since visiting with dr. Releford. What a fine man he was. I thought about him this morning with the fondest memories. I wanted to pass along warm regards today .*

ronnie martin, pharmacist - April 28 at 10:56 AM

ME

“ *My condolences to the family.Dr. M. L. Ellison North Carolina*

m ellison - October 27, 2013 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ *Lit a candle in memory of Charles C. Releford*

The Foster Family - October 27, 2013 at 12:00 AM

LM

“ *My condolences to the family during this difficult time. May you be comforted by your loving memories, family, and close friends. Know that our Heavenly Father Jehovah is near to us in our time of need. Gods word the Bible assures us a time when sickness and death will be done away with, (Revelations 21:1-4 Isaiah 33:24) and a time when will reunite with our loved ones again (Acts 24:15 , John 5:28,29) Draw close to God in prayer. Philippians 4:7 tells us that God will grant us the mental peace we need by means of Jesus Christ. May this peace be with you now, and the days ahead. For reliable Christian information on how to deal with the loss of a loved one visit www.jw.org*

LM - October 26, 2013 at 12:00 AM

EL

“ I send my deepest condolences to the family. This must be a hard time but we can always gather hope from God's word the Bible, in 2 Corinthians 1:3,4 it explains to us how God comforts us in all tribulations. I hope this has helped the family in finding hope and comfort thru God and the Bible.

ellie - October 26, 2013 at 12:00 AM

YB

“ May that which laid heavy on your heart now be lifted and feel like a single rose.

Yvonne Lyons Brown - October 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

YB

“ Sent a gift in memory of Charles C. Releford

Yvonne Lyons Brown - October 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM