



## Mrs. Della Ruth Smith

June 25, 1933 - January 10, 2017

Mrs. Della Ruth Smith passed away Tuesday, January 10, 2017 at the age of 83 years. She was born June 25, 1933 to Laura and Sanford Vaughn in Prichard, Alabama. She graduated from Mobile Training School. She aspired to go to college and to become a school teacher.

Della attended Alabama State College in Mobile, Alabama for 2 years. She then moved to Saginaw, Michigan where she lived with her mother's sister, aunt Amanda McArn. She attended Eastern Michigan University and graduated with a BS degree in Education in 1953. She went on to get her Master's degree at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She supervised teachers and then became a fourth grade teacher. She taught in Saginaw Public Schools for 20 years and then became a principal for 19 years and during that time she was over 3 schools. Della Vaughn married Willie D. Smith of Longview, Texas on December 26, 1954. They had three children, Annette Renee, Eric Bernard and William Errol (Billy).

One of her passions in life was to instill the importance of getting the highest education possible for all family members and others. Mrs. Smith wanted to see all three of her children succeed in life. She made sure that they did their homework and stayed focused on school. Each one of them graduated from college and became successful in their own individual careers. This includes all of her grandchildren who have pursued their college degrees.

Mrs. Smith was known as a "strong disciplinarian" when she was principal. Her students would often come back and see her after they had become

adults and comment on how glad they were that she had pushed them to stay focused on their education. During her career, Mrs. Smith was a member of several organizations including the Saginaw Education Association, Michigan Education Association; National Education Association and the Saginaw County Association of Retired School Personnel. She was a chartered member of Eta Upsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and a member of the Top Ladies of Distinction.

She decided to retire in 1996 and enjoyed golfing with her husband, Willie. They toured the country, played golf and socialized with many friends. They especially enjoyed traveling to Aruba, other islands and going on cruises. She enjoyed retirement until his untimely demise on August 24, 2008. Mrs. Smith enjoyed good music and loved to dance. She was an avid gardener who could grow beautiful flowers. She loved beautiful clothes and would never turn down an opportunity to go shopping. Family was very important to her.

Her memories will be cherished by her daughter, Annette Renee VanDevere (Craig) of Marietta, GA; two sons, Eric Bernard Smith (Sherry) of San Diego, CA, William Errol Smith (Jessica) of Eastpointe, MI.; three grandchildren, Christopher M. VanDevere, Lauren A. Smith, and Jared N. Smith; one sister, Vella Ellis Wilson of Cincinnati, OH.; five sisters-in-law, Margaret Smith of San Diego, CA., Gwendolyn Maxey and Esther Smith, both of Los Angeles, CA., Juanita Smith of Saginaw, MI, Melba Smith of Longview, TX.; a host of cousins, nieces and nephews.

Funeral service will take place at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 21, 2017 at Mt. Olive Inst. Missionary Baptist Church, 1114 North 6th Street. Dr. Marvin T. Smith will officiate with interment in Forest Lawn Cemetery. Friends may call at the Evans & Browne's Funeral Home, 441 North Jefferson Avenue on Friday from 2:00 until 8:00 p.m. The family will be present to greet friends from 6:-00 until 8:00 p.m.

<http://act.alz.org/goto/dellavsmith> This is a donation Alzheimer's tribute page

that was made in her memory. We would like to offer this to people as an additional gift option.

# Cemetery Details

## Forest Lawn Cemetery

3210 S. Washington Avenue  
Saginaw, MI

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 20. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Evans & Browne's Funeral Home  
441 N. Jefferson Avenue  
Saginaw, MI 48607  
(989) 754-0481  
evansbrownes@gmail.com  
<https://www.evansbrownesfuneralhome.com>

## Funeral Service

JAN 21. 11:00 AM (ET)

Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church  
1114 North 6th Street  
Saginaw, MI 48601

# Tribute Wall



“ *Evans & Browne's Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Browne's Mortuary** - January 25, 2017 at 02:06 PM

CH

“ *Cynthia Hamilton sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Cynthia Hamilton** - January 25, 2017 at 07:33 PM

TC

“ *Oh, my Mrs. Smith she as my Principle, So many memories of Mrs. Smith she was a very nice person and soft spoken & loving person, To her Family my Heart felt Prayers go out to you All, Rest In Peace \*Mrs. Smith\* love you... Gone but never forgotten....*

---

**Theresa Cooper** - January 25, 2017 at 06:55 PM

PP

“ *The Smith family is such an integral part of my childhood. I am deeply saddened by the passing of Mrs. Smith. She literally helped "make" my childhood. I have such fond memories of being at their house, walking to the grocery store on 23rd and Janes, (there really was a big grocery store located on the lot at 23'rd and Janes St.) baking cookies with Renee, playing house, and running around with Eric and Billie. I don't know why this remains on my mind, but I remember Renee taking me around the corner from her house, on Lapeer St., to "see" her neighbor's Siamese cat. I was a little girl and I was in awe of the cat---I had never seen a Siamese cat up close...to this day, I think about that day; I will always cherish that memory..*

---

**Patty Pinner** - January 23, 2017 at 08:41 AM

TF

“ *Tyler & Tucker Families lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Tyler & Tucker families** - January 21, 2017 at 08:14 AM

MP

“ *Praying for comfort and strength for the family. Mildred Gladney Peteet*

---

**Mildred Peteet** - January 21, 2017 at 07:13 AM

TT

“ *Tierra Tivis lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Tierra Tivis** - January 20, 2017 at 04:08 PM

TT

“ *Renee, Eric & Billy,*

*Sorry for your loss. You are in my thoughts and prayers.*

---

**Tierra Tivis** - January 20, 2017 at 04:07 PM

KB

“ *Kathryn Bothuel lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Kathryn Bothuel** - January 20, 2017 at 12:45 PM

KB

*To the family of Mrs. Della Smith,*

*The days ahead will present many challenges but thru prayer you will be able to weather the storm. Mrs. Smith has been with my family and I during both the good times and bad and we will always cherish the memories we shared. Unfortunately, all of us cannot be with you but we can light a candle for you and keep you in our prayers.*

*Kathy Bothuel, (Georgia Guster's Niece)*

---

**Kathryn Bothuel** - January 20, 2017 at 01:22 PM

VS

“ *Vermell Sangster lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



Vermell Sangster - January 19, 2017 at 08:24 PM

CM

“ *Charlotte McMillan-Harper lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



Charlotte McMillan-Harper - January 19, 2017 at 05:30 PM



“ *67 files added to the album Life Tributes*



Browne's Mortuary - January 19, 2017 at 01:09 PM

TH

“ Tina Houze lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith



Tina Houze - January 19, 2017 at 08:52 AM

T5

“ Tina 5 lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith



Tina 5 - January 19, 2017 at 08:52 AM

LC

“ Lisa Coney lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith



Lisa Coney - January 18, 2017 at 10:58 PM



Raymond Parker

“ Mom's are so special and your mom was so very special. She was so warm and caring, and opened her home to your friends with open arms. She had such a nice smile that was so peaceful. Know that she is now with your dad and the two of them with God, but in every day that you go forward that she will shine through you!  
Raymond Parker

Raymond Parker - January 18, 2017 at 07:58 PM

SP

“ *Shelaine Parrish lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Shelaine Parrish** - January 18, 2017 at 03:25 PM

CS

“ *Cyncera Smith lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Cyncera Smith** - January 18, 2017 at 01:00 PM

CS

“ *Cathie Stephens lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Cathie Stephens** - January 18, 2017 at 11:55 AM

JW

“ *Juanita Witherspoon and Elizabeth Baker*



---

**Juanita N Witherspoon** - January 18, 2017 at 10:01 AM

RF

“ *Rita M Williams And Donavon Flemings lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



Rita M Williams and Donavon Flemings - January 18, 2017 at 08:02 AM

BP

“ *Betty Pruitt-Daily lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



Betty Pruitt-Daily - January 17, 2017 at 10:23 PM

CW

“ *Carolle Walker lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



Carolle Walker - January 17, 2017 at 12:04 PM

PM

“ *Pamela Monroe lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



Pamela Monroe - January 17, 2017 at 08:30 AM

PT

“ Mrs. Smith was my fourth grade teacher at Edith Bailey elementary school in the late fifties, early sixties...she was by far my favorite teacher! I remember finding out I was not a singer but a good reader when we lined up for a school presentation..and I went to the left and not to the right...sensing my disappointment, she assured me that a good reader was every bit as good as a good singer. First time in my life I was told I was good at something. Thank you Mrs. Della Smith, I'll never forget you!

---

**Phyllis Thorne** - January 16, 2017 at 04:35 PM

CH

“ My prayers and thoughts are with you during this time. Your mother was a special lady and was always very kind to me and my family. May God Bless you always.

---

**Carolyn Spencer Harris** - January 16, 2017 at 02:54 PM

FF

“ Dear family and friends,  
"Can a woman forget her nursing child Or have no compassion for the son of her womb? Even if these women forget her nursing child Or have no compassion for the son of her womb? Even if these women forget, I would never forget you. " Isaiah 49:15 To be remembered by our Creator is to be remembered by He who can restore life to those in His memory. Isaiah 26:19  
May this sincere condolences give you comfort and hope.

---

**Ferguson Family** - January 16, 2017 at 11:39 AM

RW

“ *Rev. And Mrs. Jodie Williams lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Rev. and Mrs. Jodie Williams** - January 15, 2017 at 10:20 PM

MH

“ *Mary Hannibal lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Mary Hannibal** - January 15, 2017 at 06:03 PM

JG

“ *Jocelyn Gordon lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Jocelyn Gordon** - January 15, 2017 at 05:45 PM

SD

“ *Stacy Duran-Shells lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Stacy Duran-Shells** - January 15, 2017 at 04:47 PM

MJ

“ My prayers are with you and your entire family. Your mother was a wonderful lady. I remember going to Edith Bailey school back in the 50's. She was a good person inside and out. Your mother will always be in your heart. Thank God that you were able to have your mother with you after your father made his transtition. God is going truly going to bless you for honoring the bible.

---

**Mattie Johnson** - January 15, 2017 at 03:33 PM

IB

“ Dear Smith Family, May God give you strength, love and peace in your heart at what seems like a very trying time. Mrs. Smith was one of my favorite teachers and she was so nice to me. Thank you Mrs. Smith for being a wonderful influence in my life, you'll always be remembered. Rest in peace. My sincerest condolences. Ingrid Barkley



---

**Ingrid Barkley** - January 15, 2017 at 10:26 AM

WB

“ Walsezetta Bennett sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith



---

**Walsezetta Bennett** - January 14, 2017 at 08:03 PM



“ *Joselyn Jordan lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Joselyn Jordan** - January 14, 2017 at 10:45 AM

CJ

“ *Chris Jernigan sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Chris Jernigan** - January 14, 2017 at 10:45 AM

MW

“ *I am so sorry for your loss. My condolences family.*

---

**Mary (Houston) Welch** - January 14, 2017 at 05:05 AM

DW

“ *Deborah Williams lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Deborah Williams** - January 13, 2017 at 10:38 PM

JG

“ JoEllen Gaddis-McElhaney lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith



JoEllen Gaddis-McElhaney - January 13, 2017 at 09:57 PM

JT

“ To the Family of Mrs. Della Smith, it was wonderful having her as a friend and neighbor. She and her husband welcomed us to the neighborhood. We will always remember the good times and the friendship we enjoyed. She is now in the arms of God.



John and Lillian Thomas - January 13, 2017 at 07:23 PM

JN

God bless Mrs. Della's children.It's been a blessing having her as a neighbor and a friend.  
Rev James H Nelson

James Nelson - January 13, 2017 at 10:58 PM

CP

Sending prayers and condolences to the Smith family ....

Christopher Powe - January 17, 2017 at 09:42 AM

VS

“ Vermell Sangster lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith



Vermell Sangster - January 13, 2017 at 05:46 PM

MF

“ *Ms. Brenda Bryant-Reynolds & Family sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Ms. Brenda Bryant-Reynolds & Family** - January 13, 2017 at 03:14 PM

DC

“ *Deborah Champion lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Deborah Champion** - January 13, 2017 at 11:28 AM

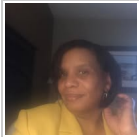
TG

“ *The Guster's lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**The Guster's** - January 13, 2017 at 05:41 AM



“ *Cheryl Walker lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Della Ruth Smith*



---

**Cheryl Walker** - January 12, 2017 at 11:32 PM

CB

“ *Sincere Condolences to the Family of Della Smith . May you find comfort in the memories of the good times you shared and remember the lessons she taught you!*

*Carol Walker Bouldin  
Cincinnati, Ohio*



---

**Carol Walker Bouldin** - January 12, 2017 at 06:45 PM