



Bernice C. (Simms) Smith

December 1, 1925 - March 24, 2021

SHIRLEY: Bernice C. (Simms) Smith, 95, of Shirley, formerly of Missouri, died Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at Nashoba Valley Medical Center, Ayer.

Her husband, Charles Smith died in 1988.

Mrs. Smith was born in St. Louis, MO, December 1, 1925 the daughter of Ralph C. and Ella J. (Hunt) Smith and resided much of her life in Missouri and Minnesota before moving to Shirley in 2007.

Mrs. Smith was a graduate of Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri where she majored in education, Life member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. She went on to a long career of teaching science and home economics at Central High School in Hayti, MO, Southwest High School in Kansas City, MO, South High School and Franklin Middle School both in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She retired from teaching in 2003.

Mrs. Smith leaves her daughter with whom she resided, Jocelyn L. Smith – Farrington; three grandchildren, Joseph Berg of St. Paul, MN, Kimberly Farrington of Boston, Brynna Farrington of London, England.

In 2005 she was predeceased by her daughter, Carmen Hayes of Minneapolis, MN.

Funeral services will be held privately. Burial will be in the Federal Cemetery, Minneapolis, MN.

The Anderson Funeral Home, 25 Fitchburg Road, Ayer is assisting the family with arrangements.

Tribute Wall



“ So sorry to stumble into the obituary of our aunt passing away. She was a great educator with a kind heart, as well as our sorority sister. Sure miss our days of communicating on the phone. May God Bless her soul and allow her to rest well!!
From her Missouri Family
Tamala Dameron-Norfus
Della Dameron-Johnson
Dellanta Dameron-Butler

Tamala Dameron-Norfus - November 07, 2021 at 11:04 AM

NG

“ Nicole A. Green purchased the Peaceful Wishes for the family of Bernice C. (Simms) Smith.



Nicole A. Green - March 30, 2021 at 01:49 PM

DM

“ As a friend of Bernice's daughter, Jocelyn, I can only imagine her as an outstanding teacher, mother, humanitarian, and friend. Jocelyn held her dear mom in the highest esteem and followed her career path. Thank you Bernice for being a shining light in the classroom and in the world. With great respect, Denise Markt

Denise Markt - March 25, 2021 at 05:15 PM

JB

“*Bernice Smith, my dear friend of over 30 years and mentor at Franklin Middle/Junior High School will very much be missed. Bernice was always a strong advocate for all of our students and an especially strong advocate for our African-American males. Her love for them was so obvious by the love and the respect they showed for her! Bernice was a guiding light for me especially in my first years of teaching by allowing me to work with her in her “Young Men’s Group” at Franklin. My teaching career was greatly shaped and improved by observing her and listening to her sage words while creating trusting relationships with our young men. Through all the years since, our friendship has grown. Bernice often reminded me of ways to take of my teacher-self in order to strive for excellence with our students in the long run. Her wisdom I’ve shared with many younger colleagues over the years. Bernice was never one to be a “push over” as she was an intelligent, thoughtful and strong- minded woman. But it was evident if she cared about you by her willingness to help you, even if it took time to absorb her deep understandings in life. I know I am a better person, teacher and friend because of my friendship with Bernice! I’m so blessed to have known her and her beautiful family! My love and condolences to you!*”

Jacqueline Beavens - March 25, 2021 at 03:13 PM

DC

Eloquent, Jackie. Thank you !

Darryl Carter - March 26, 2021 at 04:18 PM

DC

Bernice was a woman who exuded strength, self-assurance and dignity. Not once did I ever hear her raise her voice, yet it was always crystal clear, that this was a person who had high standards for herself, high expectations of others, and no patience with pettiness or trivia. Bernice was a stellar role model, for colleagues and students alike. It was my privilege to know her.

Darryl Carter - March 26, 2021 at 04:25 PM

GW

Bernice and Chuck were wonderful friends and mentors. My closest friend worked with Bernice and I worked with Chuck at Lincoln Junior High in Minneapolis.(We shared November birthdays.)

They welcomed us/me into their home and always encouraged me--a young, new English teacher from South Carolina trying to survive the cold weather and working in the inner city. We shared some great, happy, memorable times as friends and educators.

Thanks be to God for our earthly connection and the promise of Eternal life.

Gracie Hunter White

Gracie H White - March 27, 2021 at 05:42 PM

SP

The news comes as a shock to me. Bernice was my favorite sorority sister. We also taught together at Franklin Middle School. She'd do anything to help students and teachers. I cannot begin to count the many things she did to help me as well as chewed me out along the way. I will always have fond and loving memories of Soror Bernice Smith. Shirley Purvis

Shirley Purvis - March 29, 2021 at 03:03 PM

CS

I was saddened to hear of Bernice's death. I met Bernice in 1972 when I started working at South High as a first year social worker. She was a very dear friend and later years after meeting my mother, they became good friends. Bernice and her husband "Chuck" who was also a social worker were my mentors.

After leaving South High where Bernice and I mentored many students together, we worked together at Franklin Middle School. She was a consummate teacher, just an all around exemplary human being.

Bernice did not raise her voice, but when she gave that "eye", you knew what that meant!

One of my fondest memories is eating many soul food meals at their home. Chuck did the grilling and Bernice cooked the sides. Once a month we had a small group of colleagues that met at her home for a soul food potluck. We had lots of laughter and storytelling from Bernice. She was of course, the wise one in the group.

Up until her death, Bernice and I still had our phone conversations. It was a blessing to have had such a friend.

Carletta Smith

carletta smith - March 29, 2021 at 06:54 PM