



## Evelyn S. O'Kelley

April 2, 1922 - June 28, 2020

Evelyn S. O'Kelley 98, passed away Sunday, June 28, 2020, in Beloit surrounded by her loving family.

She was born on April 2, 1922, in Chattanooga, Tennessee, the only child of Henry and Ethel (Cobb) Stanford. Her parents moved to Beloit when Evelyn was 6 months old. She received her religious training at a young age at the former YMCA of Beloit, which was built for black males who came from the south to work at Fairbanks Morse and Company. She continued her Christian journey at New Zion Baptist Church and Emmanuel Baptist Church.

She graduated from Beloit Memorial High School in 1941 and in that same year she married Robert A Johnson, to that union nine children were born. Robert Johnson predeceased her in death in 1966. In 1968, Evelyn met Charles E. O'Kelley and they were married on December 13, 1969. Together they joined Emmanuel Baptist Church where she became an active member serving on the Social Action Committee, Jail, Health and Wellness, and Mission Ministries, Emmanuel Baptist Church Bible Training Institute under the leadership of Dr. Floyd Prude, Jr., served on the Presbytery Self Development of People Committee, and until her death, she served on the Mothers Board.

Evelyn was employed at the Beloit Memorial Hospital, Freeman Shoe Company, and retiring in 1987 from Fairbanks and Morse Company.

She was a devoted member of Rebecca Chapter No. 4 Order of the Eastern Star for over 50 years, having served as Past Worthy Matron, Secretary, Treasurer, Past Worthy Matron of Zorah Administrative Council #1, Order of the Eastern Star, served as Grand CCFC, Grand Marshall in the East, Deputy Grand Lecturer of Unity Grand Chapter OES for Madison/Beloit, and Past Grand Matron. She is Past Loyal Lady Ruler of Madison/Beloit Assembly #70 Order of the Golden Circle, Secretary and Past State Grand Loyal Lady Ruler of the Wisconsin State Grand Assembly Order of the Golden Circle.

She was a past board member of the NAACP having served as membership and fundraising chair, nominating committee chair, executive board secretary, and treasurer. Past board member Blackhawk Technical College, a charter member of the affirmative action advisory committee, past board member and a charter member of Rock County OIC, Past President, of Beloit Inner City Council Board, Past President Women's Culture Club, Past President WI State Association of Colored Women's Clubs and past board member of the YWCA Girl Dynamics.

She was honored by the Angel Museum as one of Beloit's Home Town heroes, presented the Martin Luther King UAW Civil Rights Award, NAACP board member of the year award, Mardella Ship (Beloit Inner City Council) award, and OIC board member of the year award.

She was an active member of the Greater Beloit Community and served on many boards and committees. She was inducted into the Beloit Memorial High School Hall of Fame (1999), Nominated for the Rock County Hall of Fame, the JC Penny Golden Rule Award and by Judy Robson to serve on the Governor's equal rights council, featured in the Janesville Gazette "Hats off" publication, served as a mediator for the Neighborhood Mediation Center, co-chaired the Leon Peterson Brotherhood Scholarship committee, a poll worker

for the Beloit Township, volunteer for Beloit Memorial hospital since 1987, served on the steering committee for the Beloit Town hall meeting, served on the steering committee for the Black Family Summit 1 and 2, participated in the African American Read-In during Black History Month, a member of the Black Star project, was the Beloit Daily news volunteer of the month, Served on the UW extension Juvenile Criminal Justice Board 1979-1981, participated in the AIDS, CROP, and OIC walks was a member of the Volunteer Action Center board where she served as board bank chairperson, African American Infant Mortality Coalition as Historian, the African American Alzheimer and Dementia Advisory Board for Rock County, secretary of Madison/Beloit Assembly, member of the Church Women United, Past President, member of the Church Women United State Board serving as nominating committee chair and formerly as Constitution and By-Laws chairperson, served as an ambassador to the Merrill Community Center, chaperoned Beloit Inner City Council Kids. Second African American to run for the Beloit school board. Believing that 28 days of Black History celebration was not enough she began submitting Black History articles during the year to Chronicle Newspaper. She was a firm believer that "Service to mankind is service to God." Evelyn was very family-oriented and believed in the power of prayer.

She leaves to cherish her memory eight children, Adiyah Hassan, Brandii Dangerfield of Beloit, Afirqah Igbo of Milwaukee, Diallo Sekou of Raleigh NC, Atif Gamal of Denver CO, Charlotte O'Kelley-Pope, Desiree O'Kelley, and Charles O'Kelley all of Chicago, IL. Special niece Alberta Francis, best friend Daisy Smithson, like a son and daughter Walter and Linda Ward of Beloit, twenty-eight grandchildren, forty-three great-grandchildren, twenty-nine great-great-grandchildren, and a host of cousins, nieces, and nephews.

She was predeceased by her parents Henry and Ethel (Cobb) Stanford, husbands, Robert Andrew Johnson, and Charles Edward O' Kelley.

daughters, Estrellita, Anita Louise, October Scott (Gloria) one son Yusuf Bin-Rella. Four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

Friends may visit Monday July 6th, 2020 at Rosman Funeral Home at 11 am. The Funeral Service will be at the same location immediately following. Homegoing services to be officiated by The Rev. Rodney Hayes.

# Cemetery Details

## Eastlawn Cemetery

2200 Milwaukee Road  
Beloit, WI 53511

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN 29. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Brian Mark and Rosman Funeral Homes  
1125 Cranston Rd  
Beloit, WI 53511  
(608) 364-4477  
[jarod@williams-fs.com](mailto:jarod@williams-fs.com)  
<https://rosmanfuneralhome.com>

# Tribute Wall

MM

“ *Monte'A McCoy lit a candle in memory of Evelyn S. O'Kelley*



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**Monte'A McCoy** - July 06, 2020 at 11:09 AM

MB

“ AUNT EVELYN – AN ODE

*Rounded at 100 now 98  
The mid-nineties  
Undeniably you are  
Exactly immaculate!*

*For three scores and ten  
Conditionally and scripturally  
You were promised and learned  
With class and production  
More greatness and gracefulness  
Aunt Evelyn had to share.  
Reflecting the many, many,  
Burdens she did bear.*

*Our historian and librarian  
Our archivist too  
It is unimaginably  
What we would do  
Without a solid soul  
Just like You.  
You Go Girl!*

*C U Soon!*

*Dedicated to: Honorable Aunt Evelyn O'Kelley  
On this day: July 6, 2020  
Written by: Poet Elmer Beard, Hot Springs, Arkansas on March 1,  
2017*

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**Mr. Elmer Beard** - July 05, 2020 at 08:24 PM

TB

“ Tammy Baldwin purchased the Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant for the family of Evelyn S. O'Kelley.



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Tammy Baldwin - July 05, 2020 at 02:56 PM

VW

“ I am so glad we enjoyed the family reunion 2 years ago. I can see that big smile while she was on the dancefloor doing her line. She was such a beautiful woman and I will truly miss her.



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Victoria Williams - July 04, 2020 at 07:29 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Evelyn S. O'Kelley.



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July 03, 2020 at 04:47 PM



“ Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Evelyn S. O'Kelley.



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July 03, 2020 at 04:11 PM

GH

“ Mrs. O’Kelley was an amazing woman!! I got to spend a short time with her during her great-grand daughter/my niece’s college graduation. She was so knowledgeable, funny, loving, just beautiful! I know how much she loved her family and how much you all love her. She will always be with you. Rest in Heaven, lovely lady!

*Gina Harris*

Gina Harris - July 02, 2020 at 05:17 PM

GK

“ Gina & William Harris 4102 e. Linwood Kansas KCMO purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Evelyn S. O’Kelley.



Gina & William Harris 4102 e. Linwood Kansas KCMO - July 02, 2020 at 05:04 PM

CS

“ Carolyn Street lit a candle in memory of Evelyn S. O’Kelley



Carolyn Street - July 01, 2020 at 11:21 PM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Evelyn S. O’Kelley.



July 01, 2020 at 08:41 PM

SJ

“ I simply can't think of just one memory or time during my life that stands out more than others because every moment you were on this earth was beautiful and special. You were a woman of strength and grace that passed down so many life experiences and wisdom to us all. I will cherish the memory of you forever, I am more forgiving, patient, thankful and loving because of what you instilled in me. You are my heart and my world.

Love your Granddaughter Saj

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**Sajida Johnson** - July 01, 2020 at 11:26 AM

AA

“ It is a pleasure to be able to call this woman my family. We enjoyed drinks and shared hot wings just 2 years ago. I would've never imagined having such a wonderful time and great conversation with a 92 year old so full of life and a great spirit. We spent a short amount of time together but it was a blessing and I will cherish the memory always! You're were and will always be an inspiration to me, Aunt Evelyn! Rest well angel.



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**Aaliyah Orr - Birmingham, AL** - July 01, 2020 at 10:38 AM

PM

“ Paul And Lillian Morrow lit a candle in memory of Evelyn S. O'Kelley



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**Paul and Lillian Morrow** - July 01, 2020 at 09:28 AM

SH

“ *Lesli you are in my prayers* 🙏



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**Sandra Harris-Johnson** - June 30, 2020 at 07:43 PM

VS

“ *Valencia Scott lit a candle in memory of Evelyn S. O'Kelley*



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**Valencia Scott** - June 30, 2020 at 06:53 PM

LI

“ *A limb has fallen from the family tree.  
I keep hearing a voice that says, “Grieve not for me. Remember the  
best times, the laughter, the song.  
The good life I lived while I was strong. Continue my heritage, I am  
counting on you.  
Keep smiling and surely the sun will shine through. My mind is at  
ease, my soul is at rest.  
Remembering all, how I truly was blessed. Continue traditions, no  
matter how small.  
Go on with your life, do not worry about falls  
I miss you all dearly, so keep up your chin. Until the day comes,  
when we gather again.*

*I love you Grandma  
Lesli*

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**Lesli Isaac** - June 30, 2020 at 04:36 PM

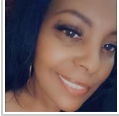
MF

“ *I will always remember Mrs O’Kelley (aka  
Grandma O’Kelley) with a smile & so many  
memories since my childhood. She was  
always there, for advice, good stories, and  
laughs; or even when me & Lesli wanted to  
hide out. Lol. My condolences & prayers go out to the entire family. I  
pray that you find some comfort in your cherished moments  
together & pride in her wonderful legacy. May her light continue to  
shine in your hearts. Love Marcia Farr (and the Farr family)*



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**M. Farr** - June 30, 2020 at 04:19 PM



*Thanks Marcia. We love you. Khai~❤️*

**Khai Davidson** - July 02, 2020 at 04:05 PM

NO

“ *My memories of her is dear to me that beautiful smile will always be a photo in my mind. Be forever blessed family*



**Nadiyah Omar** - June 30, 2020 at 02:51 PM

MW

*Beautiful Queen Mom, role model and perfect example of a woman of GOD. Im just a friend of the family and she made me feel like her grand children. What a Blessing and Beautiful spirit. May heaven rejoice Greatly!*

**Michelle Wingo** - June 30, 2020 at 07:11 PM

MW

*What a Beautiful Warrior for Justice, a magnificent example of an educated woman, mother, grandmother and hero. She made me feel like I was her grand child too. I know heaven is rejoicing and we will always remember you. Queen*

**Michelle Wingo** - June 30, 2020 at 07:18 PM