

*In Loving  
Memory Of*

*Honorable Judge  
Shirley A. Tolentino*

*Sunrise*  
February 2, 1943

*Sunset*  
October 31, 2010

*Service of Remembrance*  
Friday, November 5, 2010 - 10:00 a.m.

*St. Aloysius Church*

691 West Side Avenue

Jersey City, New Jersey

Father Thomas Thottungal, Priest  
Reverend Dr. Pearly Hayes, Eulogist

## *Obituary*

*Shirley Ann Hayes Tolentino was the second daughter born to Mattie Theresa Hayes and Elijah "Jack" Hayes on February 2, 1943. She was absolutely adored by her mother Mattie, who was a lover of education and of the arts and thus Shirley and her elder sister, Barbara were both encouraged to nurture their own love of reading, music, poetry and art from an early age. Shirley carried this love with her throughout her life and no doubt, her love of education and of reading informed her appreciation of justice - which would influence the entire direction of her life.*

*As a young child, Shirley attended Public School #14 in Jersey City, where she was an honor student and graduated as valedictorian of her class. She went on to attend Henry H. Snyder High School where she graduated with honors and was a member of the National Honor Society, The Glee Club, and the School Spirit Committee, amongst many other activities. Also notable, she was the only female student in her high school trigonometry class, already blazing trails and deconstructing barriers to pave a new road of opportunity for others. She was an active member of the NAACP youth group, participating in Civil Rights marches and various other influential civil rights efforts. She attended the NAACP cotillion in 1959 with her then high school sweetheart, Ernesto Tolentino. In 1960, she attended her first opera, "Don Giovanni" in New York City with her best friend, Rosemary Sideboard (Hughes) and hence, her love of opera and all things born from New York.*

*Shirley received a scholarship to attend the College of Saint Elizabeth and graduated an honor student with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Latin. After graduating, she married her childhood sweetheart, Ernesto Tolentino, soon to be Dr. Ernesto Tolentino. She taught Latin and English and became the first African American teacher to teach in Highlands, NJ, while simultaneously attending Seton Hall University School of Law. Once again, she blazed a trail as the only African American female in her class when she received her Juris Doctorate degree in 1971.*

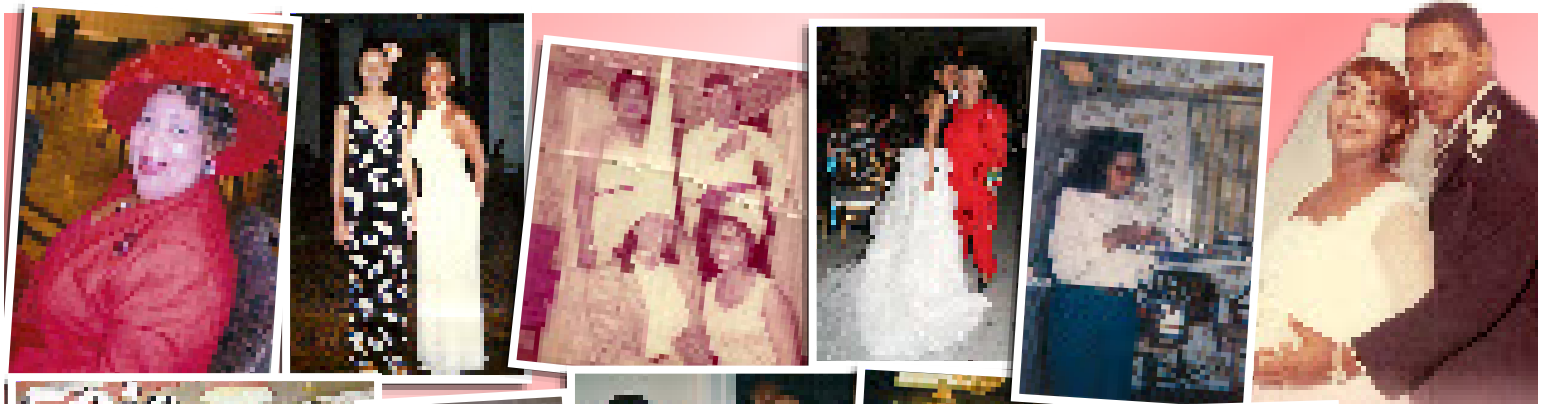
*In January of 1973, she was appointed as a Deputy Attorney General of the State of New Jersey where she remained until her appointment to the Jersey City Municipal Court in July of 1976.*

*During these years, Shirley gave birth to two daughters, Ana Ramona Tolentino, an attorney (named for Ernesto's sister, the late "Anita" Tolentino) and Candida Francesca Tolentino, an actress and founder of the healthy foods company, Earth Cafe, (also named for two aunts/cousins on Ernesto's side, Francine and Candida). Shirley's girls were her passion and she truly endowed them with every opportunity she could muster. She encouraged them to embrace learning (ensuring Catholic education from nursery school to college)! She also enrolled them in dance, music, voice, sports, acting and helped them to develop an understanding and appreciation of the world around them.*

*While nurturing those around her, Shirley continued to further her own education and accomplishments. She went on to receive a specialized Master of Laws Degree in Criminal Justice from NYU Graduate School of Law in 1980.*

*Shirley regarded as one of her major accomplishments as a Judge the fact that she was appointed to the Original Coleman Commission, which later became the New Jersey Supreme Court TASK Force on Minorities appointed by Chief Justice Wilentz. She served on that Commission for about ten years and was Chair of its Sub-Committee on Juvenile Justice, all while juggling her home life as mother, wife, daughter, friend and even mentor to many many people whom she adored. She was also Chair of the Committee on Criminal Justice and the Minority Defendants. Shirley was extremely proud of the monumental changes that have benefited not only minorities but also everyone who participated in the Justice System as a result of the major efforts of the task force on which she sat. She also served on the Supreme Court Committee on Criminal Practice.*

*She had been a community activist since her early days as a lawyer and has served on many boards including the Jersey City Hudson County Urban League, St. Peter's College, St. Aloysius Academy, Hudson County C.Y.O., the Hudson County Girl Scouts Board and the Visiting Homemakers Board of Hudson County. Her article "The Runaway Train" was published in the National Bar Association magazine, pgs. 20-22, Vol. 12 No.5, November/December 1998.*



# *Today is Ours*

*by anonymous (as recited by Mrs. Ruby Dee)*

Today is ours, let's live it.  
And love is strong, let's give it.  
A song can help, let's sing it.  
And peace is dear, let's bring it.  
The past is gone, don't rue it.  
Our work is here, let's do it.  
The world is wrong, let's right it.  
The battle is hard, let's fight it.  
The road is rough, let's clear it.  
The future vast, don't fear it.  
Is faith asleep? Let's wake it.  
Today is ours... Let's take it!

## *Pall Bearers*

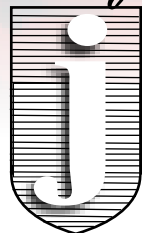
- Dr. Richard Macchia
- Kevin Hennessy
- Luis Maduro
- William Hampton

## *Acknowledgements*

*The family of the late Honorable Judge Shirley A. Tolentino wishes to express their sincere appreciation for the acts of kindness and love shown to them during their time of sorrow.*

\* A charitable foundation has been set up in Shirley Tolentino's name to benefit a scholarship fund for aspiring law students. Donations of any size can be sent to the Hudson County Bar Foundation c/o Patricia Moseley, in honor of Judge Shirley Tolentino.

*jackson funeral residence*



384 Communipaw Avenue  
Jersey City, New Jersey  
Audrey E. Jackson, Owner / Director  
Rosalyn A. Burns Browne, Manager / Director

In 1980, she joined the National Association of Women's Judges and became its President from 1996-1997. She was a member of the Hudson County Bar, the Garden State Bar, and the American Bar Associations. She also served on the Board of Trustees for the College of Saint Elizabeth and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the College in 1980.

Shirley was named amongst "1,000 Successful Blacks" in The Johnson's Publications book. She is also a member of the North Jersey Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and The Girlfriends - New Jersey Chapter. She served as the National Parliamentarian from 1998 to 2002. She then served another term as Parliamentarian from 2004 to 2006. She was elected as their National President in May of 2008 and served as President until May of 2010. Shirley was also a member of The Links, Inc. another national organization whose purposes are friendship and service. She was also the Immediate Past President of the North Jersey Chapter of Links Inc.

Shirley was also a recipient of the Jersey Journal Woman of Achievement Award and received the Whitney M. Young Award from the Hudson County Urban League as well as many other awards from organizations, schools and colleges to numerous to mention. She also served as the Grand Marshall of the Martin Luther King, Jr. parade, amongst multiple other distinctions and accolades.

Shirley presented a program at Seton Hall Law School in December 2001 called the Color of Justice, sponsored by The National Association of Women Judges. This program encourages female high school students of color to pursue legal careers. She presented the same program at Rutgers's Law School in April 2002, and again participated in the presentation of the program at New Jersey City University and Rutgers Law School in 2003.

In addition to all of her legal and professional accomplishments, Shirley enjoyed everyday things such as laughing and story telling, performing "impersonations", talking on the phone, reading books, volunteering and as anyone who knew her would tell you - being the consummate FRIEND.

Shirley is survived by: her husband, Dr. Ernesto Tolentino; her two daughters, Ana-Ramona Tolentino and Candida Tolentino; one grandson, Ramon Tolentino Flowers; a niece, Lisa K. Cohen; nephews, Robert Perry, Edwin and Marvin Maduro; and many family members and cousins including her first cousin, Patricia Roberts and first cousin, Dr. Pearly Hayes; cousins, Dr. Margaret Hayes, Gwendolyn Bivins, Sy Moreland ("Uncle Sy"), Maury Bivins and Matthew Roberts to name a few. She is survived by countless beloved and devoted friends including, Rosemary Hughes, Doris Perry, Theda Bradley, Paulette Bouknight, Josephine Epps, Carol Ward, Diane Whitt, Harriet Washington, Lydia Moore, Audrey Jackson, Rita Pitts, Patricia Moseley, Joan Twine, Jeanette Bryant, Emma McKinnon, Beverly aka "Aunt Chicken", Arlene Hampton, Esther Neals and Theresa Ferguson all of their children; and many additional countless beloved and adored relatives and friends. She was predeceased by many whom she adored including her beloved mother, Theresa Tart; her sister, Barbara Cohen; her grandparents, Rufus and Viola Kelly; her aunt, Alberta Kelly; her aunt, Rosetta Kelly and Uncle Gay; her dear friends, Carlaine and Henry Smith, Dr. Earnest Perry, Bonnie and Albert Lawrence, Lillian and Mel Feintuch, Benita Hayes and Elaine Hunt to name just a few. She is survived by "earth nieces" including, Alva Smith & family, Charnette Blackmon, Christina Bennett, Tiffany Hayes, Timia B. Johnson, Deborah L. Carpenter and Nicole B. Johnson to name a few.

She also loved and admired her law clerks, legal interns and other legal colleagues who are too many to name but remained extremely close and dear to her heart.

Shirley was a member of The Links, The Deltas, The Girlfriends and many groups who she honored and who were also exceedingly dear to her heart.

Shirley was close to countless others whose names may not be mentioned, but are certainly not forgotten and remain in her heart as well as in her family's heart.

Her favorite color was red, her favorite song; Somewhere Over the Rainbow, her favorite perfume; Estee Lauder, her favorite poets; Langston Hughes and Maya Angelou, her favorite hobbies; dancing and traveling, her favorite movie; The Color Purple her favorite vacation spot; Hilton Head, her favorite jewel; diamonds, her most-favored view/landscape; Tahiti, her most prominent trait; Love.

# Order of Service

Organ Prelude .....	"Jesu Joy of Man's Desire"
Processional .....	Clergy, Family & Judiciary
Final Viewing	
Opening Prayer .....	Father Thomas Thottungal
Greeting .....	Mistress of Ceremony Mrs. Felicia Ferguson Best
Hymn of Consolation .....	"I Won't Complain" Ms. Barbara Sharp
Speaker .....	The Honorable Torkwase Sekou
Tribute .....	Deltas - North Jersey Alumnae Chapter
Hymn of Consolation .....	"Great Is Thy Faithfulness" Mr. Rudy Snelling
Speaker .....	Mrs. Rosemary Hughes
Tribute .....	N.J. Chapter of Links, Inc.
Speaker .....	Dr. Margaret Hayes
Hymn of Consolation .....	"His Eye Is On The Sparrow" Ms. Ashley McLean
Tribute .....	N.J. Girl Friends, Inc.
Speaker .....	Mr. Robert Perry Tribute from "Missy"
Hymn of Consolation .....	"I Need Thee Every Hour" Mr. Rudy Snelling
Speaker .....	Mrs. Candida Tolentino "Tribute to Mommy"
Remarks/Reflections .....	Family/Friends/Judiciary/Dignataries
Eulogy .....	Dr. Pearly Hayes
Closing Prayer .....	Father Thomas Thottungal
Final Hymn of Consolation .....	"Somewhere Over The Rainbow" Ms. Barbara Sharp
Benediction/Recessional	

<p><b>Entombment</b> Holy Name Cemetery 823 West Side Avenue Jersey City, New Jersey</p>
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## *To My Darling Mother,*

*Words cannot express the love I've had for you my entire life. In fact, the word love as defined in the dictionary or used on a daily basis cannot describe the feelings I've had for you as my mother.*

*I remember your voice from the very young age of two and I even remember the discussion...I was asking you why I was still sleeping in a crib and other children my age with whom we had visited had their own bed...You replied with a smile on your face that I would always be your little baby (of course within a day or two I was sleeping in my own bed)! These types of surprises and displays of affection continued throughout my life up until the present.*

*As I entered into my childhood we truly became Best Friends!!....You would take me everywhere...and for those who knew my mother, traveling with her on any given day might mean that you could be making SEVERAL stops, even crossing a couple of state lines and back if she was on a mission!*

*Watching your unstoppable dedication in every area of your life left an indelible impression on me even in my young years. I remember we lived between Trenton and Jersey City, NJ for a few years, while you worked for the Attorney General's Office and we would often be in both places on the same day. That would occur even after a full day at school for me and a long day at work for you, no matter what the situation you handled your responsibilities well!*

*In addition to your never ending work ethic, you made time for entertainment as well whether it be educationally based or simply fun. You had me enrolled in everything from piano and dance lessons to sports, always making sure that I had something to keep me busy and never a dull moment!*

*At the age of 4 1/2, you brightened my life further by giving me a little sister. I remember in later years you telling me that when you first found out that you were going to have another child, you were hesitant to tell me for fear that it would break our bond. However, you told me that my youthful response was one of joy and excitement and that I simply said to you with a smile "I want it a girl mommy, I want it a girl"!*

*The birth of Candy certainly did not break our bond but brought us even closer together! For example, another story you would continue to recount my entire life is when you had both Candy and I with you in Newark at Penn Station. We were traveling from Trenton to Jersey City once again and as we were getting on the train, I let go of your hand while you were holding Candy in your arms. The doors closed and the train began to roll away and when you turned around I was still on the platform.*

*Well, you went into true Shirley mode then and screamed and ranted at the top of your lungs for the train to STOP so you could get your BABY, even though your youngest baby was with you! Luckily your roar was loud enough that the conductor stopped the train and although I still got a spanking (smile), you were frightened to death that you would lose me! This story still warms my heart until today!*

*You continued to tell me countless stories throughout my life, not only about me in my young years but also about your growing up and the impression your mother had left on you as well! You were the Greatest Storyteller I've ever known and every time you recounted a story about your own mother or family, you could barely complete it without breaking into tears. You definitely loved her as much as I loved you and always impressed upon me that your accomplishments no matter how big or small you were all due to your mother!*

*Well Mommy, I have a similar feeling for you, just about everything I've accomplished in life thus far I owe to you! You have been my solid rock, never losing faith in me even when I did not have faith in myself! Because of what you have taught me and introduced to me in my life, I'm confident that I can continue to accomplish all that I aspire to achieve. I only pray that my BEST accomplishment in life will be to become a PHENOMENAL woman and mother like you!*

*ALL there is left to do now is to THANK YOU for my life as your "Missy", a nickname you gave to me because you said you wanted me to be a little Miss; THANK YOU for introducing me to all the Best that life has to offer and encouraging me to reach for it; THANK YOU for all the positive role models you placed in my life, whether blood related or not, who have also encouraged me to strive for the best and will continue to have my back in your absence; THANK YOU for being a FABULOUS GRANDMOTHER, I will make sure that Ramon never forgets you and your kindness; THANK YOU for being a strong and dedicated woman who accomplished MAJOR dreams in life despite some obstacles; THANK YOU for being loving, caring, supportive, reliable and a constant friend to so many, because of your graciousness towards others I know I must strive to always live the same way; THANK YOU for your unwavering faith in God, now I know that you are with the Higher Power and are resting with your family in peace; THANK YOU for the way you dealt with your illness, I thought I would crumble and die when I heard the news, but you made me keep it moving even though you couldn't, now because of your braveness I no longer fear death in the same way; THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!!! I will never be able to say it enough when I think of all you've done for me!!!!*

*Until I take my last breath, I will be THANKING YOU and trying to live up to your goodness as simply an Honorable Human Being!!....I will cherish you in my Heart forever and will always be anxiously awaiting to see you again!!! I know you will continue to walk with me until then!!!!*

***I LOVE YOU MOMMY ..... Forever, Your Daughter, Ana Ramona aka "Missy"***

