

In Loving Memory of
Wali "Blood" Muhammad

Sunrise
June 10, 1927

Sunset
January 17, 2012



Service

Saturday, January 21, 2012 - 12:00 Noon

UNITY FUNERAL CHAPELS, INC.

2352 8th Avenue

New York, New York 10027

Imam Yusuf Hassan, Officiating

Obituary

Wali “Blood” Muhammad, loving father and former cornerman for Muhammad Ali, died on January 17, 2012 at Calvary Hospital in the Bronx where he had been in hospice care during a lengthy battle with cancer. A poignant side note to the sad day is that it was Muhammad Ali’s 70th birthday.

“Blood” (born Walter Henegan), son of the late Frank and Mattie Henegan, was born June 10, 1927 in Monroe, Louisiana to a 17-year-old mother nearly eighty-five years ago, but was raised by a loving grandmother. He traveled north when he was just 15, and lived in Harlem for most of his life. His love for boxing began at an early age, but a serious eye injury prevented him from pursuing boxing as a professional career. In 1946, at the age of 19, he enlisted in the United States Army and served for two years. Discharged from the Army and still enamored with boxing, “Blood” found a home and a professional career in the boxing industry as an employee of Sugar Ray Robinson from 1948 through 1964. During that time, he served as Robinson’s personal aide and assumed responsibility for Robinson’s boxing equipment. Because he spent so much time at Sugar Ray’s Café, “Blood” also befriended many entertainers and sports figures: Joe Louis, Dinah Washington, Ella Fitzgerald, Nancy Wilson, Isaac Hayes, The Spinners, and Gail Fisher among them. He also dabbled in acting and played himself in the Muhammad Ali movie biography “The Greatest”.

In the 1950’s, “Blood” converted to Nation of Islam and was a devout follower of the leader Elijah Muhammad until Muhammad’s death in 1975. “Blood’s” devotion to Islam continued under the assumed leadership of Elijah Muhammad’s son, W. Deen Muhammad, the progressive African American Muslim leader and theologian who transformed the original Nation of Islam movement into an orthodox mainstream religion that encouraged closer ties with all Muslim worshippers.

“Blood” joined Muhammad Ali’s camp as a security guard and camp assistant in 1965, shortly before Ali’s rematch with Sonny Liston. By 1971, “Blood” had become Ali’s cornerman and his personal friend. “Blood” worked the corner in almost every one of Ali’s professional bouts from that point on, including the two in which Ali regained his heavyweight title. They often talked about how they would travel the world together after retiring from the ring. However, after Ali’s last fight, he was diagnosed with Parkinson Syndrome and the dream never became reality. They did continue to have long, late night telephone conversations, with Ali calling and disguising his voice. But “Blood” always knew it was Ali. Their friendship continued until “Blood’s” passing, and they would see each other whenever Ali was in town.

Wali was married to Dolores Amalbert and together they had two daughters, Amenah and Daria. Also, a loving son, Frederick (Freddy). He also leaves behind three grandchildren, Justin, Courtney and Quintrese; and a great-grandson, Qumarr; a sister-in-law, Regina Berlowitz; and a host of other relatives, nieces, nephews, cousins and friends who loved him and mourn his passing.

“Blood” strived to be a loving and supportive father to his children. He loved his friends and family and was a loyal friend for life. He had a generous heart for everyone that he met. He truly was a joy to be with. He loved his Harlem community, as well, and after his retirement, he contributed his time and energy to various youth organizations throughout New York City and New Jersey, lending his experience and expertise to underprivileged children who were interested in boxing as a hobby and a career.

“Blood” never lost his love or faith for his Islamic beliefs and Allah. He touched the lives of many people with his smile and generosity, and maintained his trademark sense of humor all the way to the end.

Order of Service

Opening Prayer

Reading of Obituary

Comments- Family & Friends

Explanation of Janazah Prayer

Reading of Quran

Comments from Imam

Janazah Prayer



Interment

Calverton National Cemetery
Calverton, New York

The Glorious Morning Light

*By the Glorious
Morning Light
And by the Night
When it is still ...
The Guardian Lord
Hath not Forsaken thee
Nor is He displeased
And verily the Hereafter
Will be better for thee
Than the present.*



Acknowledgement

The family wishes to express their deep appreciation and sincere thanks for your kindness during a time of sorrow.



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