

Obituaries/Faith Directory

Charles A. Gill Sr., who shared a big lottery win to help the Richmond community, succumbs at 63

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

Struggling to make ends meet for his family, Charles Allen Gill Sr. sought to change his luck and became an instant millionaire in the process.

His stroke of good fortune came when he drove with a brother to Washington, D.C., three days before Christmas in 1993 to play the lottery.

The Chesterfield County resident split a \$90 million jackpot with another person who also beat long odds and, like Mr. Gill, picked the six numbers drawn in the Powerball game on Wednesday, Dec. 22, 1993.

Among other things, the big win enabled Mr. Gill and his wife, Wanda E. Gill, to join with Richmond City Hall and Richmond Public Schools to build the first indoor recreation center in the Fairfield Court public housing community where Mr. Gill grew up.

The Charles and Wanda Gill Community Center stands adjacent to Fairfield Court Elementary School on Phaup Street and is an enduring memorial to Mr. Gill following his death on Thursday, Aug. 19, 2021.

He reportedly succumbed to COVID-19. He was 63. "He was the best," said a grief-stricken Mrs. Gill.

Final tributes are to be paid to the Richmond native 11 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 28, at the United Nations Church, 214 Cowardin



Mr. Gill

He was in bed watching the late news when he saw the winning numbers come up — 1, 3, 13, 15, 29 and the Powerball, 12. He said his wife didn't believe him when he told her they had won, so he said he just turned over and went to sleep.

But it was all true, and resulted in the Gills receiving a check, after taxes, for more than \$1.2 million each year for 20 years. (There was no lump sum opportunity at the time.)

Mr. Gill was able to fulfill a dream of taking his family to Paris and building a dream home in Powhatan County. He also operated for years a limousine company that is now closed.

Ave. The Rev. Angelo Chatmon is to officiate. The U.S. Army veteran is to be interred in Quantico National Cemetery.

Mr. Gill, who had been a barber and worked at the Defense General Supply Center, said he was in between jobs when he made the drive to Washington. He said at the time that he bought \$15 worth of tickets using a combination of numbers from his birthday and that of his 4-year-old daughter, Tionna M. "Tee" Gill.

The Gills, who regularly contributed to youth-serving charities, also provided \$750,000 to build the new center in Fairfield Court that he hoped would provide programs to halt youth violence.

"I want to do something," he explained. "Those young kids are killing each other. They've got to wake up. I'm going to do what I can to stop it."

Despite making the contribution, the Gills were frustrated that the center did not open until late May 1999 due to city-created delays, budget shortfalls and other snafus.

Today, the building serves as classroom and recreation space for students at the elementary school and as an indoor recreation space during the winter and spring for Luck Field Playground, a nearby outdoor-only recreation area.

Richmond School Board Chair Cheryl L. Burke called the building "an important element of this community." She said that during the past year when both the elementary school and public recreation were shut down, the building was temporarily used for storage.

But the building is being cleaned out as the school prepares to reopen for in-person classes next month, she said.

Along with his wife of 28 years and his daughter, Mr. Gill's survivors include his son, Charles A. "L.G." Gill Jr.; his parents, Junious and Helen Gill; a brother, Edward Gill; a sister, Mary Glo Taylor; and a granddaughter.

Former Richmond businessman Jon C. King Sr. dies at 75

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

Jon C. "Sugar" King Sr. was an influential force in Richmond in opening doors to ensure Black participation in business and the arts.

A creator of Exclusive Staffing, a niche provider of engineers, computer techs and other temporary specialists to big companies, Mr. King also became a key figure in building bridges with Richmond's white business community.

Without holding public office, he ranked among the most connected Black men in the city, an insider who was frequently consulted during policy making. His ability to deal with people was unrivaled. In a world of quick tempers and sound bites, Mr. King was regarded as the consummate, unflappable professional who never spoke an angry word, used profanity or took offense.

But the outward calm and restraint he displayed was known to mask a seething passion for ensuring that Richmond fairly shared opportunities across racial lines and a determination to persist to make it happen.

Along with his business, he promoted equity by building relationships and serving on the boards of multiple organizations, ranging from the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce whose board he chaired, to the Black History Museum & Cultural Center and the Downtown booster group Venture Richmond.

As chair of the city's Economic Development Authority, for example, he

spearheaded the creation of the first public business incubator in Downtown to help fledgling Black and minority entrepreneurs to get their businesses off the ground.

At the chamber, he was involved in bringing low-cost airlines to Richmond, supporting the change to a "strong mayor" form of city government and developing the HYPE program to enable young creatives in Richmond to interact socially.

Mr. King died Wednesday, Aug. 11, 2021, at his retirement home in New Orleans. His family said his death was due to cancer. He was 75.

Family and friends will gather Saturday, Aug. 28, at the Free People of Color Museum in New Orleans to celebrate his life.

Born in South Bend, Ind., in 1946, Mr. King planned to spend his life working for the U.S. Postal Service after graduating from high school. He credited his military service for changing his life. Instead of accepting the Army draft during the Vietnam War, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force, trained as a mechanic and had eye-opening experiences fixing airplanes at bases in Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, England and the Philippines.

He later earned assignments to the National Security Agency and to the White House, where he worked in a supervisory post in a new division involving computer systems analysis, his family said.

Finding his education deficient, he left the military and earned a business degree from Howard University, shifted gears and began a career in banking. He started out with Bankers Trust in New York, became a

vice president for Hibernia National Bank and came to Richmond to be a vice president of trust operations at Crestar Bank, which later merged into SunTrust.

In 1990, he left to start Exclusive Staffing of Virginia with his wife, LaVerne, to fill some of the professional staffing needs that he found at the bank and at other companies. The Kings operated the business that had 10 full-time employees and sent more than 200 people to corporate assignments weekly. Mrs. King mostly ran the day-to-day operations while he was out creating connections.

His busy schedule included service on the boards of the Virginia Tourism Corporation and the Virginia Council for Economic Education. He also was involved with the Richmond Performing Arts Alliance and served on the boards of First Market Bank and the Bon Secours Virginia Health System. He also was a member of the Management Round Table.

In 2000, Mr. King was recognized with the Distinguished Leadership Award from the National Association for Community Leadership for his work to create the business incubator at 5th and Franklin streets in a formerly vacant eight-story office building.

Along with his wife of 46 years, Mr. King's survivors include his son, Jon C. King Jr.; daughters, Cherrie King and Courtney King; mother, Inez Mildred King; brothers, Brian King, Eugene King, Jimmy King, Larry King, LeRoy King and Ricky King; sister, Leslie King; two grandchildren; and a great-grandson.

The family requests that memorial contributions be made either to the Black History Museum & Cultural Center of Virginia in Richmond or the Free People of Color Museum in New Orleans.



Mr. King

Armstrong coach, educator, counselor Moses Norrell dies at 83

By Jeremy M. Lazarus



Mr. Norrell

Moses Alphonso "Sporty" Norrell III, a football coach, educator and guidance counselor for 42 years at his alma mater Armstrong High School, has died.

Mr. Norrell died Sunday, Aug. 1, 2021, eight months after his wife, Laura Yvonne "Lolly" Norrell, succumbed to illness, the family said. He was 83.

The couple's lives were celebrated at a joint funeral service on Friday, Aug. 20, at Rising Mount Zion Baptist Church. The pastor, Dr. Roscoe D. Cooper III, officiated and delivered the eulogy for the couple, for whom final tributes were delayed because of the pandemic.

A star quarterback for Armstrong High and at Virginia State University, Mr. Norrell began his career with Richmond Public Schools around 1960 after graduating from VSU with a degree in physical education. He later earned a master's in guidance counseling from the University of Akron in Ohio.

At Armstrong, he returned to the gridiron as a coach and served as the offensive coordinator for the Wildcats while also holding full-time positions at the school. He retired in 2002. His family noted in the program that "countless young men and women shared the sentiment that without his influence and assistance, they would not be who they are today."

Mr. Norrell also was an avid tennis player. He also was a former president and member of Club 533.

Survivors include a son, Mark A. Norrell; a daughter, Dr. Lavdena A. Orr; and three grandchildren.

St. Peter Baptist Church
Dr. Kirkland R. Walton, Pastor

Worship Opportunities

Join us for live worship service (No RSVP required) or live streaming each Sunday at 10 AM. Visit our [website](#), look under "Online Services," and access the "Pastor's Message."

Bible Study Opportunities
Thursdays: Virtual Bible Study session via Zoom, every Thursday at 7 PM. Email request to spbcoffice@stpeterbaptist.net; A new Meeting ID and password will be emailed weekly.

Tithing Opportunities
Download the Tithe.ly giving app for Apple and Android devices. Your gift is safe/secure and goes directly to our church.

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Visit <https://youtu.be/qqzhnIEQyQc> for inspirational messages from Pastor Smith

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www.sharonbaptistchurchrichmond.org
(804) 643-3825

Rev. Dr. Paul A. Coles, Pastor

Sundays Morning Worship 10:00 A.M.

Back Inside

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SUNDAY SCHOOL (FOR ALL AGES) — 9:00 A.M.

TUESDAY MID-DAY BIBLE STUDY — 12 NOON

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Sunday Morning Worship
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