

Jack Browand

From: James Spengler
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2013 3:42 PM
To: Jack Browand
Subject: Fwd: renaming Buchanan Street Park
Attachments: Leatrice Byrd.pdf; ATT00001.htm

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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Director Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
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Begin forwarded message:

From: "Porter-Gruel, Beatrice CTR OSD ATL" <Beatrice.Porter-Gruel.ctr@osd.mil>
Date: March 21, 2013, 3:35:46 PM EDT
To: ""james.spengler@alexandriava.gov"" <james.spengler@alexandriava.gov>
Cc: "david.butler2@cox.net" <david.butler2@cox.net>
Subject: renaming Buchanan Street Park

Hello, Mr. Spengler. I was given your name by Jack Browand. With the upcoming Jefferson-Houston School project, our wonderful little pocket park will be moved from the Buchanan Street location. I am hoping our park can be named after a woman that watched over the park for more than 40 years. Her children, grandchildren, and now great grandchildren all use the park. I have lived at the end of the alley for 17 years now and had become friends with Mrs. Leatrice Byrd as our children played together at this park. She had a great view from her porch and was always there for the children. Her family still lives in the house and the view will be changed as the park is moved. Mrs. Byrd died tragically in an accident last year, this would be a wonderful thing to name the park for her. I am attaching a copy of her handout from her memorial service as it gives more information on the life she had while in Alexandria. I am not sure what the process is, but Jack said to start by sending a formal request to you. I hope you will give this request the consideration it deserves, and once the park is relocated, rename it for the woman that loved it and the children so much. Thank you. Bea Porter, 1727 Cameron Street

Leatrice Byrd she lived her life as devoted mother always putting her children as well as other children first in everything she did. The legacy of her family, children and the many children of the neighborhood of Buchanan, Cameron, Boyle, Princess Streets she baby sat, cared for, gave advice to or even welcomed into her home for many years were her proudest accomplishment. She lived a selfless life receiving the most happiness and joy by doing for others and doing so with great pleasure.

Anyone could knock on her door in need of child care, help, advice or whatever and she would always try to help in any way she could. By having the city playground, basketball court, swimming pool, recreation center and elementary school right behind her home made it even more easier for her to know the many children, and people of the community. Leatrice Byrd moved on Buchanan Street when her oldest child was 6 years old and that child is now 54 years old. Leatrice loved the City of Alexandria, knew many of the City employees and was very happy living in her home for many years on Buchanan Street. Numerous children and people she cared for never lost contact with her; they were an extension to her family. All her neighbors loved her and she loved them equally the same.

Leatrice Byrd as a child was taught by Ms. Penn when she was growing up on South Gibbon Street. Ms. Byrd and Ms. Penn's paths crossed again later when Ms. Penn worked for the Recreation Center when it was called the Cameron Street Center. Ms. Byrd would walk over to see Ms. Penn and so many others that worked at Cameron Street Center and the City Swimming Pool over the years; would observe the neighborhood kids and she would always let them know to behave and play together and to get along with one another. Ms. Byrd on a few occasions had to get help from others when she would see the kids were not playing together properly, having disagreements and misbehaving.

Other employees of the Recreation Center that Mrs. Byrd knew over the years were Paula Haskins, Roger Anderson, and some of the swimming pool employees such as Bobbie Lee (Bobbie knew Ms. Byrd from growing up with her as a child), Ronnie Hilton was a life guard (lived four houses over in the same connected row houses), Ronnie Galloway also was a life guard (a neighbor of Mrs. Byrd for many years), Gary Anderson also a life guard, Sonny Armstrong (also a long time neighbor of Mrs. Byrd's and was employed by the City of Alexandria). Sharon Veeney currently works for the City of Alexandria has been Mrs. Byrd's neighbor for all the years Mrs. Byrd resided on Buchanan definitely knows the compassion, care and concern Mrs. Byrd had for all in their neighborhood, especially the children.

Ms. Byrd even knew the current Chief of Police Earl Cook when his family lived in Jefferson Village (she always loved his sister Pearl & would see her as she walked through the neighborhood) when Earl was younger.

Leatrice Byrd had no official connection to the City as for what she did for the children, but what she did came from her heart and for the love of the children!

In 2003 Leatrice Byrd became a double amputee and that did not stop her from doing any of the things that she had done in the past, especially caring for others and nurturing them. It did not matter who you were, she would try to help and would give her last to help anyone. She would sit on her back porch or at the back door right where the current play ground is located on Buchanan Street and would still laugh with and discipline children. The children would be surprised because she would be in the house and see them, but they did not see her, and when she would call out to correct them they would say Ms. Byrd you are still the same. Some referred to Leatrice Byrd as the "Best" when it came to caring for the neighborhood, the children and others. All of her neighbors on Buchanan, Cameron, and Boyle Streets and all over Alexandria loved her and knew she had the most caring, loving heart.

Leatrice Byrd is deeply missed by her family and all who knew her.

Thank you.

Cecilia Butler, Daughter of Leatrice Byrd

Monday, May 13, 2013

*In Loving Memory
of
Leatrice
Byrd*



January 28, 1940 - May 10, 2012

Leatrice Byrd departed this life to live another in eternity on Thursday, May 10, 2012.

Leatrice was born January 28, 1940, in Chesterfield, South Carolina. The first of nine children born to the late Beatrice and Richard Malloy. She was preceded into eternity by one sister, Geraldine Smith, and two brothers, James and Richard Malloy.

Leatrice's family settled in the Northern Virginia area in the early 1940's on the Old Fort Belvoir Base. She grew up in Arlington, VA and attended Luther Jackson in Merrifield, VA. As a child she was baptized by the late Rev. Winters at Woodlawn United Methodist Church in Alexandria, VA.

On December 31, 1958 Leatrice married Bernard Byrd. In this union four children were born.

Leatrice was kind and had the most beautiful smile. She was always pleasant even through some of the most challenging times of her life. She was a very strong woman that always did what was right and believed in "Paying It Forward." She was so well loved by all her neighbors and previous neighbors that moved away from the area. Even those out of the state or country would always come back to visit her. She was an avid animal lover, especially of her cats.

She was a loving mother, grandmother and sister. She raised her grandson Nigel Jumah, who also was her caregiver.

Leatrice is survived by her four children: Cecilia (David), Bernard Kenneth (devoted friend Sheila), Bernadette (Carlton) and Brian (Tammie); two sisters: Cassandra Malloy and Torri Honesty; three brothers: Kevin, Creighton and Ricardo Malloy; seven aunts; seven sisters-in-law: Barbara Malloy, Desiree Malloy, Jennifer Malloy, Corine Whitehead, Francis Cook, Earlene Byrd and Hilda Byrd; four brothers-in-law: Gary Honesty, Reginald Byrd, Amos Byrd and Edward Byrd; seven grandchildren: Nigel Jumah, Sade, Brittany, Bernard Kenneth, Jr., Paris, Brian Michael and Kanyjah; four great grandchildren: Nigel Keon, Corde, Jumah Caron and Mahasyn; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.