
Carl Russell Long

Carl Russell Long KINSTON, N.C. - On Monday, January 12, 2015, the legendary Carl Russell Long transitioned from his earthly home into his eternal heavenly rest with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Carl was one of eight children born to the late William and Ella Long on May 9, 1935, in Rock Hill, South Carolina. He was formally educated by schools in York County, South Carolina, but credited the Negro League with teaching him about life. Baseball was not just a game Carl played, it was the blood running through his veins. At just 15 years old, Carl was one of the youngest baseball players recruited to the Negro League in 1951. He never shied away from an opportunity to share historical accounts of playing with greats such as Willie Mays, 'Uncle Satch' (Satchell Page), Charlie Pride, Hank Aaron and Buck O'Neal, to name a few. He considered himself blessed to have played the sport he loved during segregation while making history as the first African American to integrate the Carolina League. Although Carl's baseball career is the thread in his life's journey, he has several other quilt squares. He was the first black Deputy Sheriff in Lenoir County and the first black detective for the City of Kinston. He was also the first black Trailways bus driver in Eastern, N.C. Aside from all of his professional accomplishments, it was his volunteer work as a youth advocate that he treasured in his later years. He was dedicated to sharing his story with all who would listen in hopes of illuminating past struggles to eradicate future regrets. Carl married his first and forever love, Mrs. Ella Long from Kinston, N.C. on September 8, 1956, while playing in the Carolina League. He describes their meeting as love at first sight and gladly made Kinston his permanent home when she agreed to be his better half. To their union three children were born, one son and two daughters. Carl's life exemplified his true love for people and his overwhelming desire to treat everyone kind. He never met a stranger and never left home without a smile. His affiliations and community involvement included the Negro League Baseball Association and the Carolina Pit Bulls CB (Citizen's Band) Club. Carl was preceded in death by one daughter, Teresa Long Whitfield; two brothers, James Long and William Long; one sister, Evelyn Long and both his wife's parents, James and Carrie Mae Smith as well as his own parents, William and Ella Long. Mr. Long leaves to celebrate his life and cherish his memory one son, Sotello Long ('Dee') of Summerville, South Carolina; one daughter, Cynthia Long Hightower (Rafael) of Kinston, North Carolina; two grandchildren, LaToyha Polk Washington (Demetrise) of Greenville, North Carolina and John Polk of Kinston, North Carolina and one great-grandson, Breylan E. Polk of Cary, North Carolina. He also leaves seven siblings, Gloria Long Robinson of Baltimore, Maryland, Robert Lee Brice (Cathy) of Las Vegas, Nevada, David Long (Maggie), Clyde Long (Almetha), Charles Long (Eyvette), Bob Long and Charles Dunlap, all of Rock Hill, South Carolina and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. Mills Funeral Home at 1300 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Kinston is handling the arrangements. A public viewing will be from 3 to 8 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015. Mr. Long's funeral will be at 11 a.m. on Monday, January 19, 2015, at United America Free Will Baptist Church located at 1011 Dr. J. E. Reddick Rd., Kinston, NC 28501. The family is grateful for expressions of love and also encourage people to make a tax-deductible donation in Carl's name to the Boys and Girls Club of Lenoir County at 1804 Old Snow Hill Rd., Kinston, NC 28501.

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