



Rita Marie Johnson

June 11, 1956 - April 16, 2025

On June 11, 1956, Calvin and Betty (Luckey) Johnson of Youngstown, Ohio, welcomed a beautiful baby girl, and they named her Rita Marie. Later, her mother Betty married William Wilson (Tom), and she and her sister Paula were raised in Detroit. The family attended Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church under the pastorship of Dr. Reverend Frederick G. Sampson. She was a shy, quiet child, and a reserved teenager. Rita attended Detroit Public Schools and graduated from Cass Technical High in 1974.

As a young adult, Rita established a small circle of intimate friends. Together they enjoyed playing cards, dancing, shooting pool, horseback riding, and bowling. An intelligent, methodical thinker, Rita was an avid chess player. A genuine homebody, she purchased her first house at age 25, and took pleasure in gardening and doing yard work. She relished spending time with her family. From time to time, she traveled to visit friends.

During her career of more than twenty years at the Detroit Police Department, Rita served as a police officer, a court liaison officer at 36th District Court, and an investigator at the 7th Precinct. Rotating work schedules interfered with her plans to take classes to become a veterinarian. She retired from DPD in 2005 due to health reasons. Later, as a part-time hobby, she became a successful dog groomer, establishing “Pampered Pooches” at her home.

Anyone who knew Rita knows that she absolutely LOVED dogs! Throughout her lifetime, she owned dozens of them – from 8-pound poodles and little terriers – to 150-pound Rottweilers, Pitt Bulls, and Borzois – plus every size and shape in between. She adopted several rescue dogs, stray pets found their way to her door, and the neighbors knew her as the “dog lady.” Cold noses and wagging tails brought happiness to Rita’s heart and a smile to her face.

She leaves to cherish her memory two sisters, Patricia El-Amin and Paula Johnson Williams; a nephew, Anthony Lisbon (Jenaye) and two nieces, Terri Towns (Vincent) and Tracie Lisbon-Hamilton; a great-niece Simone Sharp (Antwon), three great-nephews Anthony Lisbon, Marc Lincoln, Jr. (Tamara), and Michael Davis (Teneasha); plus 9 great-great nephews and nieces, and a host of cousins and friends.

Previous Events

Family Hour

JUN 7. 2:30 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Kemp Funeral Home & Cremation Services
24585 Evergreen Rd
Southfield, MI 48075
(248) 702-5367
info@kempfh.com
<https://www.kempfuneralhome.com>

Memorial Service

JUN 7. 3:00 PM (ET)

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Tribute Wall



“ *Kemp Funeral Home & Cremation Services created a Webcast in memory of Rita Marie Johnson*



Kemp Funeral Home & Cremation Services - June 07, 2025 at 02:47 PM

ZG

I didn't know Rita that well and only met her a few times, but I always remember that smile which was infectious and she was always a kind person. Rest in easy Rita and at peace. For the family know she's at rest. Love you all.

Zaneta Goosby - June 07, 2025 at 05:06 PM

MM

“ *Rita was my partner at 36th District Court. In between our workloads in Felony Files, we always had time to share a funny story or have a laugh. Rita never cease to amaze me. Even though she had a very quiet nature, she could be absolutely hilarious. She had many hidden talents. Especially a flair for comedy. I would often tell her that she missed her calling as a comedian. I still live by many of her wise words and the wonderful advice she often gave me. I will always consider Rita my very close friend. Sending my love and prayers of comfort and condolences to her friends and family. My moments with Rita will always be cherished. Blessings to all of you.*

Malinda Madison - June 07, 2025 at 06:55 PM

GB

“ Condolences and love to you family. Rita, the baby sister, I always remember her giggles and sense of humor. I was also aware of the challenges she faced with her health. We always had good conversations, even one that lasted hours, while we watched a ball game. I am grateful for our final conversation weeks prior to her transition, but more grateful for knowing her as a person. Rest well Rita. Love to you and family and Gods Blessings.

Gloria Cherry Badejo - June 07, 2025 at 04:09 PM

MH

“ I will always treasure her kindness, welcoming me to share a meal with her when I was a woman traveling for work alone in Detroit. She showed me around, took me to the Motown house "where it all started", and to her favorite Greek restaurant where she taught me to say "Opa!" at the end of the meal. It made me feel so good when I would speak with her, recount that story and tell her how much that gesture meant. Rita will be missed.



Michele A Higgs - June 07, 2025 at 03:04 PM



“ Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rita Marie Johnson.



June 04, 2025 at 11:01 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Rita Marie Johnson.

June 04, 2025 at 11:01 PM