



## Ralph E. Douglas

November 26, 1940 - January 28, 2015

Ralph E. Douglas, a resident of Cherry Hill for 22 years, passed away peacefully on January 28, 2015 at the age of 74 years.

Ralph was the beloved husband of Thelma J. (nee Upshaw) for 50 years. Loving father of Michiel D. (Shon) Burnett of Park Forest, IL, and Sheila L. Douglas of Chicago, IL. Dear grandfather of Destiny D. Burnett. Survived by a host of nieces and nephews and friends.

Ralph's first career began as a classroom teacher, and soon after that he became one of the youngest senior public schools administrators in U.S. history, at age 25. His second career was in the federal civilian service, where he spent 24 years, and rose to the position of regional administrator for a new federal agency. Following his retirement from the federal service, he returned to the classroom, after a 30-year absence. Three years later, he received the teacher of the year award for his unique classroom and school-wide contributions. He retired from education after 10 years in the classroom.

As the owner and President of Douglas & Associates, he focused his attention on the development of 4 separate programs: mentoring, advocate services, empowerment coaching, and homebound instruction. He has also developed leadership and business seminars for adults, and seminars on coping skills for youth. He is also a motivational speaker and a speaker on such topics as individual and organizational change and empowerment.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend a life celebration service for Ralph on Monday, February 2, at 11 am, at Kingsway Church, 2701 Chapel Ave.

West, Cherry Hill.

# Previous Events

## Life Celebration service

FEB 2. 11:00 AM (ET)

Kingsway Community Church  
2701 Chapel Ave. Wst  
Cherry Hill, NJ

# Tribute Wall



“ *Givnish Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Ralph E. Douglas*



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**Givnish Funeral Home** - February 05, 2015 at 01:23 PM



“ *Ralph E. Douglas*

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September 09, 2022 at 01:27 AM



“ *I have just learned that Ralph passed away. I am grieved. We had lost touch with each other several years after leaving Chicago. We first met when he came to a Civil Rights conference in 1969 in Washington, DC. Ralph was a young school administrator from Cincinnati at that time. We became close friends and later, in the early 1970s, I was able to hire him in a Federal agency in Chicago. It was a big decision to leave his job in Ohio. He became my closest and most loyal friend during those stormy days. We loved each other; shared the same values; and both missed being back in the classroom. Ralph was a master teacher. I am happy to see that he closed out his life teaching students. I pray that Thelma and his family are doing well. God bless all of you. Ralph left a great legacy for all the follow.*

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**Wilmer L. Kerns** - March 04, 2016 at 10:09 AM

SH

“ I always enjoyed when Ralph and Thelma visited Cincinnati, Ohio. They always brought a loving spirit that I will always cherish. Thelma, Michele and Sheila, I love you very much,

Your cousin,  
Sherry (Vanessa's Daughter)

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**Sherry** - March 28, 2015 at 09:27 AM

MB

“ Daddy, wow this is real! Boy do I miss you! It seems so unreal that you are not here. As soon as your grand daughter got all A's you were the first person I called. Then I knew that she would receive a Captain Can Do Recognition Card and some money! As I am here at your house and I read the folders of information on the patents, trade and service marks, business ideas, seminars and more. I get excited that your legacy is on the written page and is explosive and we will insure that Every Vizion will come to pass!! Miss you and love u always!

Thanks for being the best dad a girl could ask for!  
Love Michiel

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**Michiel D. Burnett** - February 07, 2015 at 12:21 AM

AC

“ Our 2nd service at Kingsway won't be quite the same without Bro. Ralph as one of the ushers. The last time I was in the Douglas home, Ralph said to me, "What Captain Can Do can't do, God can do." I'm sad for his absence from our world but grateful that he is healthy and whole with Jesus. God gave Ralph the greatest gift of eternal life. I'm sure he's busy encouraging the residents of heaven. My prayers and thoughts are with you, Thelma, Michiel & Shon, Sheila & Destiny and all of the your family. Love & blessings, Pastor Arlena

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**Arlena Corzine** - February 05, 2015 at 01:07 PM

MM

“Poppa Douglas carried himself with such dignity and respect, that I seldom recall anyone calling him only by first name. (Except for by Momma Thelma, of course.) I will always remember him as such: Exceptional.

*Poppa always had such loving and powerful words of wisdom, guidance, focus and direction. He embodied integrity and excellence, and gave me a standard to live up to. He would always tell me: "Don't sweat the small stuff". And like always, he was right.*

*I love you Poppa Douglas, and will carry your advice with me always. I thank the Lord, for allowing me to become a "Douglas". I love you Momma Thelma, and will cherish the times I got to share with you and Poppa. I also look forward to future visits, where we'll share good times with memories of Poppa Douglas.*

*Michelle, may the Lord be the lifter of your head and grace you with the strength to be weak, and then free and unhindered in His presence.*

*And Sheila, it's hard for now, and will be for a while. "Trouble may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning." Let us make Poppa proud, and live our lives to the fullest until we meet Him again.*

*Thank you Lord, for all the amazing things you did in Poppa Ralph E. Douglas's life. May he be one in which You can stand and proclaim "Well done, good and faithful servant."*

*Love,  
Melissa M.*

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**Melissa Montgomery** - February 04, 2015 at 10:52 PM

SB

“ My father in law was very special man always had wisdom to share and a story to tell. I will never forget him and his life lessons he taught me. Now he gone to a better place where it no more pain, no more suffering. He now in peace with The Lord our God and His spirit is with The Lord and its also lives inside of us let us all learn from him and let his legacy live on. I glad I had known him, he always say it not "quantity of time but quality of time ". and I can still here him say " how my favorite son in law " and then he laugh and say "get that your my only son in law". I can truly say we all will miss him! He was not just a farther in-law to me, he was like a farther to me. I love you dad  
Shon D. Burnett

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**Shon D. Burnett** - February 01, 2015 at 07:24 PM

ES

“ Dear; Sister Thelma, Michele and Sheila. I'm so sorry for your loss. Brother Ralph was great man of God, who share great wisdom. I was bless to call hem friend my thoughts and prayer are with you.  
Eliana DaSilva

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**Eliana Silva** - February 01, 2015 at 03:37 PM

TS

“ Dear Sister Thelma, we are so sorry for your loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. May the comfort of the Holy Spirit be your peace, the light of Christ guide your steps, and the love of God hold your hand. Tommy, Allie, and children

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**Tommy Santo** - February 01, 2015 at 08:45 AM

DD

“ Aunt Thelma, Michele, and Sheila, may the God of peace comfort you. Uncle Ralph was a Great Man of God that exhibited the love of our Heavenly Father to you all, as a husband and a father. He will be greatly missed and never forgotten. You will always have to read, "The Book of Ralph Douglas", that's engrained in your memories forever. We are living epistles, and our books are being written as well. We will see him again on that Great Day, when we are caught up to meet Jesus in the air! I love you all, and be encouraged and let's celebrate the life that Uncle Ralph lived.  
Love Always,  
Devita Douglas

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**Devita Douglas** - February 01, 2015 at 12:07 AM

MB

*Amen!  
Thx cuz.  
Love u  
Michiel*

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**Michiel D. Burnett** - February 01, 2015 at 07:37 AM

SD

*Wow that was so beautiful. Thankyou Doll .Love u . Sheila*

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**Sheila Lynn Douglas** - February 01, 2015 at 09:18 AM

MC

*To the Douglas Family,  
  
I am so sorry for your loss. I had the pleasure of working with Ralph at Phifer Middle School. He was truly a kind and gentle man. Heaven has gained a angel. With my deepest sympathy, Maria Chambers*

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**Maria Chambers** - February 03, 2015 at 08:36 AM

DD

“ Devita Douglas sent a virtual gift in memory of Ralph E. Douglas



Devita Douglas - January 31, 2015 at 11:46 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Ralph E. Douglas.



January 31, 2015 at 05:13 PM

GC

“ Gregory, Darnita, Davita, Fred and Justin Costella purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Ralph E. Douglas.



Gregory, Darnita, Davita, Fred and Justin Costella - January 31, 2015 at 02:38 PM

SD

“ Sheila Lynn Douglas lit a candle in memory of Ralph E. Douglas



Sheila Lynn Douglas - January 31, 2015 at 01:27 PM

SD

“ I love and miss you so much Daddy. You will always be my first love. You were the best father I could have ever have . I am so sad and lost without you. I feel like a part of me has died forever. I just want my daddy back.

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**Sheila Lynn Douglas** - January 31, 2015 at 11:46 AM

ER

“ A wonderful man who always had a kind word for me when I bumped into him at church. I enjoyed listening to what wisdom he shared with me of his life and experiences and loved his humor and wit. He will be missed. Prayers for your family in this time of mourning and I am encouraged to know as my father, that Brother Ralph is with the Lord now and for always.

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**Erik Ryan** - January 31, 2015 at 09:02 AM

SW

“ Dear Thelma, Michelle & Shiela,

So sorry to hear about Ralph's passing. Sincere condolences to 'his girls'. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers during this tough time. I will always cherish the times we spent together. Ralph always imparted good conversation and wisdom. Praying for peace & comfort only God can give. Luv u all!!

Yours cousin,  
Denise Whigham



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**SD Whigham** - January 31, 2015 at 08:48 AM

SG

“ Dear family of Ralph Douglas:

*I was sorry to hear that you lost your husband and father in death. Losing a loved one in death is one of the hardest things that any of us will ever deal with. I wanted to share my condolences. I would like to share a Bible thought that is found at Revelation chapter 21 and verses 3 and 4 where it says: "With that I heard a loud voice from the throne say: "Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his people. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." This scripture makes it very clear that God does not want us to grow old, sick and die because he promises to wipe out those very things as you can see in those verses. God's purpose is to restore the dead to life by means of a resurrection to a paradise earth, where sickness and death will be no more. You have the hope to see your husband and father in God's new world where he will be in perfect health. That is something we all can look forward to because death affects us all. I hope this brief Bible message has brought you a measure of comfort in this difficult time.*

*She Grear*

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**She Grear** - January 31, 2015 at 07:46 AM

CD

“ My beloved Pop-Pop. The grandfather God gave me, because I never knew my grandparents. He and Mom-Mom adopted me, my mother and my father when we first moved to Cherry Hill 25 years ago. Our chance meeting at Kingsway became the beginning of a family full of love and tradition. His daughters, Michiel and Sheila are my sisters. They have loved us through everything. Pop-Pop has been there for every major milestone in my life--- from my middle school graduation to my wedding day. And everything in between. First jobs. First loves. First heartbreaks. First failures. He counseled, mentored and advocated for me each and every way. Pop-pop was keen on family and tradition. Every 4th of July. Every New Years Day and every Super Bowl Sunday, we would gather at the house for family and fellowship.

*Its hard to believe he is no longer with us. That I won't see a call from him on my phone anymore. That he won't tell me that my name is "in the pot" for a Sunday afternoon meal and i should come by.*

*So many lives touched and blessed. So much love poured into the world. So much generosity of spirit.*

*You are resting peacefully now. And while we miss your presence here, we have the assurance we will see you again.*

*Love Always,  
Christina*

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**Christina Dogbey-Smith** - January 31, 2015 at 12:02 AM



“ He was a great man who shared great wisdom to those he came in contact with along his life journey. Now that his journey has ended, it's his legacy we're left to live and fulfill on our life travels.  
"CAPTAIN CAN DO" lives on!

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**Amin Smith** - January 30, 2015 at 11:53 PM

JM

“ A wonderful man ... I love the picture of him with the hat that states, "Mr. Can Do," as it describes him well. I know my life was made richer in knowing him (& Thelma) from the time we spent worshipping at Kingsway. Blessed to have known him. Heartfelt prayers to his family ... Joy Messner

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**Joy Messner** - January 30, 2015 at 10:08 PM

BI

“ We've only known Brother Ralph for a couple years but I remember running into him at the Mr. Softee in Pennsauken last summer and how captivating he is to listen to. Always warm & inviting & takes time to talk to you. We have missed him & will continue to miss him. Our prayers are with you.  
Iwano Family. Kingsway Church.

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**Brian Iwano** - January 30, 2015 at 09:32 PM

MO

“ Oh Brother Ralph, we know you are teaching Heaven your dance moves! Will miss you dearly for now. Sister Thelma I love you!

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**Mary Olivo** - January 30, 2015 at 09:29 PM

SD

“ *Mr Ralph was my youngest daughter Rhyenne's adopted grandfather. We have so many memories with him. Glad we had the opportunity to visit with him when we did. He will be truly missed(and his banana bread). Our prayers go out to his beautiful wife Ms Thelma. We love you and are a phone call away.*

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**Sonya Dandy** - January 30, 2015 at 05:28 PM

JG

“ *Ralph was a blessing to know and love, he truly loved the Lord and passed that love to all who knew him. My holidays will not be the same without Ralph at our family table. My prayers are with my "sister" Thelma and the girls.  
Peace and Love  
Janet*



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**Janet Giordano** - January 30, 2015 at 03:04 PM

DO

“ *Thelma,  
I'm saddened to hear that Ralph passed away. I always enjoyed his company and greetings at Kingsway. He was very kind to my son Sante, who was going through some tough times following surgery. He always spoke to my son and gave him encouraging support. If you need anything, I am there for you... call me at 609-314-0954*

*I thank you Brother Ralph for that with all my heart for what you did for my son, and for being so polite and kind to my Family.*

*I will see you again .....*

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**David Opperman** - January 30, 2015 at 02:43 PM

VS

“ *Cousin Thelma:*

*Willard and I send our condolences to you, Michelle and Sheila. We know that cousin Ralph is now at peace & rest. God has healed his physical body and he's not tired any longer and he's now resting. I will miss his long conversations but he'll always have a place in my heart. We love you - stay strong until you meet Ralph again.*

*Cousin Willard & Vanessa*

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**Vanessa Scott** - January 30, 2015 at 02:40 PM

RR

“ *First person to greet me with a BIG hug and kiss on the cheek when I came to Kingsway Church for the first time in Aug. 2007. Never went to church on a regular basses till than. He and Pastor Ray are the reason I j kept coming back. By the way the first person to greet me in the sanctuary was , Sister Thelma. Love these guys.*  
*Deacon Ron*

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**ronald Reiley** - January 30, 2015 at 01:38 PM

JM

*Truly the best ... Ralph & Thelma!*

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**Joy Messner** - January 30, 2015 at 10:12 PM



“ 23 files added to the album Memories Album



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**Givnish Funeral Home** - January 30, 2015 at 01:24 PM

MF

“ *Thelma so sorry to hear about Ralph, I would love to talk to you but I cannot find your number. Can you call me 7733738760. Love you all. Marian*

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**Marian Franklin.** - January 30, 2015 at 11:39 AM

BB

*Thelma, I send you a big hug. I know how you feel and want you to know that I hope to see you back at the food pantry. You are a most loving and courageous woman. Time is a great healer. Love, Bobbie Bordner*

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**Bobbie Bordner** - January 30, 2015 at 03:33 PM



“ *Sister Thelma and Family,*

*Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this time. Brother Ralph was like a Grandfather to Liz and Matt and will be sorely missed.*

*Love,*

*Lou, Jan, Liz and Matt Schopfer*

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**Lou Schopfer** - January 30, 2015 at 11:13 AM



“ *3 files added to the album Celebrating Liz's Graduation with Brother Ralph*



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**Lou Schopfer** - January 30, 2015 at 11:10 AM