



## Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower

January 13, 1931 - August 26, 2020

Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower, 89, of Irving, TX; formerly of Peoria, Illinois, transitioned to her heavenly home at 9:27 pm on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 at Avalon Memory Care Assisted Living in Irving, TX.

Mother Carmelita was born on January 13, 1931 in a small town called Lovejoy, Illinois to proud parents Clarence and Lula Mae (Ross) Crutcher. She was educated in the Lovejoy public school system earning a High School Diploma; yet held a Doctoral Degree in the school of life raising three sons with her husband James. Her home town name epitomized Carmelita, the person. She spread love and joy to her family, friends and all who knew her.

Carmelita married James Gower, II, the love of her life, on December 8, 1948. They were married 65 years prior to his passing on November 5, 2013.

Carmelita accepted Christ at an early age. She continued to demonstrate her faith as a faithful long-time member of Zion Baptist Church of Peoria, IL.

Recognizing the disparities and discrimination faced by people of color, she and her late husband were pillars of the Peoria, IL community and active participants in the civil rights struggle; lending their financial support, time and talents to the local NAACP chapter. Carmelita retired from the Greater Peoria Mass Transit after many years of service.

Carmelita leaves to cherish her most precious memories her loving children, Roland "Tony" A. (TaKisha) Gower, George W. (Sheila) Gower and James C. (Diana) Gower; a host of grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. She is also preceded in death by her

parents and siblings; George Crutcher, Meache Crutcher, Elijah Crutcher, Robert Crutcher, Dorothy Murdock, Maxine Parker and Hortense Jackson. A private funeral service will be held at 10 am, Saturday, September 5, 2020 at Simons Mortuary Chapel with a visitation at 9 am. Rev. Hosea Winters, Pastor of Holy Spirit Christian Church of Burlington, IA, will bring words of comfort to the family. Carmelita will be laid to rest beside her beloved husband at Parkview Cemetery.

Simons Mortuary has been entrusted with arrangements. Online condolences may be made at [SimonsMortuary.com](https://www.SimonsMortuary.com).

The funeral service will be live streamed on Simons Mortuary's Website or Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Simons-Mortuary-232095303487150> promptly at time of the service. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, social distancing and attendance limits will be observed.

As the States begin re-opening in response to the Global Coronavirus Pandemic, some people are returning to their previous normal living standards. Unfortunately, we are now in our new normal as unreal and sometimes uncomfortable as the socially distancing and continuous use of protective masks may feel. \*In an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, we ask that everyone in attendance: wear a face mask and refrain from hugging, kissing and shaking hands (as hard as it is to see someone you care about and not touch them). Thanks in advance for your cooperation! \*It is our responsibility as a Funeral Directors, to do everything we can to advise families in order to honor our beloved Families and to keep everyone as safe as possible. The chapel can socially distance and seat a limit of 50 or less people. All others will be able to flow through and view prior to beginning the Celebration of Life Ceremony.

# Cemetery Details

## Parkview Cemetery

2001 N University St  
Peoria, IL 61604  
(309) 688-0733

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 5. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Simons Mortuary Chapel  
912 W. John H. Gwynn, Jr. Ave.  
Peoria, IL 61605  
(309) 674-2638  
info@simonsmortuary.com  
<https://simonsmortuary.com>

## Celebration of Life

SEP 5. 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

Simons Mortuary Chapel  
912 W. John H. Gwynn, Jr. Ave.  
Peoria, IL 61605  
(309) 674-2638  
info@simonsmortuary.com  
<https://simonsmortuary.com>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Simons Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower*



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**Simons Mortuary** - September 07, 2020 at 08:32 PM



“ *Simons Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower*



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**Simons Mortuary** - September 04, 2020 at 03:49 PM



“ *Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower*

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January 29, 2023 at 06:10 AM



“ *Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower*

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January 29, 2023 at 03:12 AM

CP

“ *My prayers are with you James, Tony and the Gower Family. May God give you all the strength and peace at this time.*

*Cynthia A. Parker-Ferguson, Dallas, Texas*

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**Cynthia A. Parker-Ferguson** - September 09, 2020 at 01:54 PM

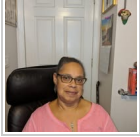


“ *1 file added to the album Burial at Parkview Cemetery*



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**Simons Mortuary** - September 07, 2020 at 08:45 PM



“ Mrs. Gower, Carm, Grandma, Midget, Mom, Mother -In-Law – you had a lot of names and they were all filled with love. This is a sad moment and what makes it so hard was not being able to speak to you because of a “code” that we were never given. I was praying we would get a chance to speak to you again. I just wanted to hear your voice once more it didn’t matter if you remembered me. It was just the fact of hearing your voice, having a conversation about whatever. The excitement we had on that one day over a year ago, we had no code but we were able to speak to you. We called all the kids and said call now because we they are letting us speak to grandma, little did we know it would be our last time to hear your voice. I learned from you that it is the wife/mother who keeps the family close - Family trips, holiday dinners, birthday celebrations. We try to keep those traditions going. Not a Christmas, Thanksgiving or special occasion goes by that we don’t talk about you and Aunt Fat cooking dinner for that date. You cooking greens, dressing and turkey with Aunt Fat cooking spaghetti, slaw and chitlins because Grandpa didn’t want that smell in his house. Holidays always meant a house full of family. You would be very proud of your grandchildren they are truly a tight knit group. They protect each other– James IV, Jameel and Jarad have become strong minded respectful, hard- working loving men. De’ janelle is a very strong- willed woman with a heart of gold. A lot of you rubbed off on her. You would love seeing her interacting with her son, Anthony. Your great-grandchildren are amazing, loving and affectionate. The world is at their fingertips and they will do amazing things. You are missed, I have a lifetime of memories that make me smile. I am sad but also happy for you. You are at peace. You are back with Lil’ Willie your number 1 love and all your siblings. Love and Miss you forever and a day. Your Daughter-In- Law, Dee Dee Gower

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**Diane Gower** - September 05, 2020 at 08:29 AM

GG

“ *LIFE ISN'T MEASURED BY THE NUMBER OF BREATHS YOU TAKE BUT BY THE*

*MOMENTS*

*THAT TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY!*

*THIS IS THAT MOMENT!*

*SEPTEMBER 5, 2020*

*LOVE YOU!*

*GOWERS IN CHICAGO*

*GOWERS IN ATLANTA*

*GOWERS IN ORLANDO*

*GOWERS IN TAMPA*

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**GEORGE W GOWER** - September 05, 2020 at 08:02 AM

DW

“ *Darryl Williams lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower*



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**Darryl Williams** - September 04, 2020 at 10:41 PM

JP

“ *The circle of life has been completed for one of my best friend's wife. This is one thing that is guaranteed to every living being. Mrs. Gower and I met in our participation in the NAACP under the leadership of John H. Gwynn Jr. Mrs. Gower was quite a fighter for the advancement of colored people. She picketed the grocery store across from Taft Homes, she sat on the sidewalks of CilCO in her beautiful white linen outfit, and she would stop work on Sheridan Road in front of Carver Center because there were no black workers there. She would picket in front of Pere' Marquette Hotel along with Mrs. Gywnn, .and Mrs Sue Taylor. She was part of the city bus boycott which resulted in the bus company hiring many minorities including her. She went to the famous march on Washington in 1963, and she was a person behind the scenes who help to raise money by having cake sales for the NAACP. Our friendship with JC and Carmelita extended to Brooklyn, Illinois, where We met many of the friends of the Gowers. I learned so much from both Mr. and Mrs. Gower, and that has continued today. Mrs. Gower was a true fighter for rights of people..*

*Sam Polk, Peoria, IL*

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**Jean & Sam Polk** - September 04, 2020 at 07:15 PM

“ Heavenly Father,

*We come to you right now with a heavy heart, full of love for a woman who touched the lives of many. She was a mother of strength and nobility, she was a grandmother full of lessons and love, she was a wife who gave all of herself to her family. She was your child and her fruits shined in all that she did...We ask for your peace and your guidance through the pain of broken hearts, through the loss and through the understanding.*

*Wrap your arms around this family, fill their minds, their bodies and their souls with your grace. Give them the understanding they need as you welcome one of your children home. Give them your strength to fight any fouts, give them your love so they rest in your happiness, give them your solace, because we know she is safe with you.*

*Let them bare all their pain and their troubles onto you, for you will lift that weight and carry it for them. Let your blessings rain down on our family. Ignite strength for forgiveness and clarity for you to guide us all. For you to watch over us all....for YOU it is because grandma is safe and secure within your arms, filled with your undeniable Holy Spirit.*

*She can finally breathe, live once again and love with her best friend...*

*And as she passes through to your gates in Heaven, let us all exhale....knowing she watches from above.*

*Her live still pours down with your goodness and with your protection. We lift her up to you dear Jesus, our sole protector and thank you for covering her in your joy, your grace, for YOU have given her life again.*

*Amen*

**James Gower IV** - September 04, 2020 at 12:42 PM

KP

“ *Kathy Parker* ❤️🌻❤️🌻😭



**Kayretha Parker** - September 03, 2020 at 07:40 PM

AI

“ *Annette Irby lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower*



**Annette Irby** - September 03, 2020 at 04:28 PM

DH

“ *You'll ALWAYS be with me Grandma... no matter what! I love you!!!*



**Dé janelle N. Harris** - September 03, 2020 at 10:40 AM

AF

“ *My sincerest condolences to the entire family on your loss . She and I were neighbors for over 17 years on Nebraska Ave . May you be comforted.*

**Antwine Freeman** - September 03, 2020 at 06:31 AM

TW

“ Theresa Smith Walker lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower



Theresa Smith Walker - September 02, 2020 at 05:18 PM



“ May her love & memories sustain you during this difficult time. Hold on to God's unchanging hand. Praying & hugs for the family

Evelyn Tate-Clayton - September 02, 2020 at 04:20 PM

TF

“ The Cornish Family lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower



The Cornish Family - September 02, 2020 at 04:02 PM

KC

“ Kathy Collins lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower



Kathy Collins - September 02, 2020 at 11:48 AM

DG

“ I want to send my deepest heart felt condolences for Ms. Gower's passing. We all go back many many years, it just doesn't seem like we've all come to this point in life. We all grow up and went to high school together and our parents followed all of are accomplishments through the years. We can all be proud to have had parents that supported us as we know it could have been much different if our parents weren't the kind of people they have been for us. Both our families raised 3 boys all athletes and intelligent. We can all be proud of that and know our parents are as well and we can take that upbringing forward. Ms. Gower was a very supportive Mother I know she will rest happily in the lord embrace. R. I. P!  
Danny Goodwin  
God Bless!

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**Danny Goodwin** - September 01, 2020 at 10:29 PM

LE

“ My condolences to tony and the family toot Risby and family

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**Leroy** - September 01, 2020 at 10:07 PM

PG

“ It saddens my to learn of Mrs. Gowers passing. I have known the Gower family for many years. Tony and I met back in the sixth grade so learning of her passing is almost like loosing a family member. Tony I witnessed the love and care you gave to your mother in her golden years and want you to know, job well done! Thank for being a great example of a loving son. In the times that I was able to share with you and your mother I know that her was very happy. Keep your head up my brother and God Bless You! Love you brother. Friends for life!  
- Phillip Goodwin



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**Phillip Goodwin** - September 01, 2020 at 09:56 PM

MG

“ To my sweet sweet grandma who I love dearly,

*We developed a special bond as I spent majority of my summers with you and grandpa. You got me my first job at Carver center. I remember being mad that I had to clean toilets on my first day and you reminded me to be always be appreciative of opportunities presented to me and to always work hard.*

*Each summer I spent with you was pivotal for each stage of my life because you made sure my summer was full of activities, lessons learned, and travel. You exposed me to traveling at an early age and instilled the importance of family. Each summer we would visit Uncle Babay and the boys and we would talk to DJ regularly. You would spend time throughout the year at our house, DJ's, and Uncle Babay's. You and my dad would get up early and you would fix him breakfast and drink your coffee. You loved your grandchildren beyond infinity and everyone who knew you knew about your kids and grandkids because family was so important to you.*

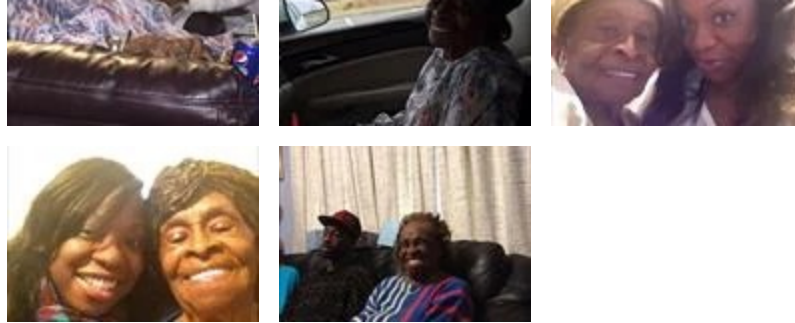
*You never missed a beat when it came to supporting me. You would drive 2 and a half hours to watch me play basketball for 30 minutes but you just had to be there. I remember one summer you made me pay rent so I had to give you \$50 per pay period and at the end of the summer you gave it all back to me and bought me a pair of Jordan's. You were teaching me the importance of saving.*

*I could go on and on about the countless memories we shared but I find solocise I know that you would be proud of the woman I've become. Traveling and living life on my own terms! I hope to continue to make you proud.*

*Love you beyond words!*

*Your granddaughter,  
Monique Nicole Gower*





**Monique Gower** - August 31, 2020 at 11:21 PM

YD

“ I met this young in spirit vibrant lady over 10 yrs ago I was her adopt daughter/Med :aide/chauffeur/caregiver/hairdresser if I tell ya you had to get your rest to keep up with her she loved caring for others when she needed caring for her self and she would tell you plain and simple what she thought and that's that but I tell you she had a heart of gold and meet no stranger she was beautiful to everybody my heart is heavy but I'm reassured that I know she knew the Lord we would have church all the time and tony you were a angel sent son to your mother and Kecia beautiful she left a impact in all of our heart my lita she will be try missed

**Yolanda Dixon** - August 31, 2020 at 02:25 PM

DH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall

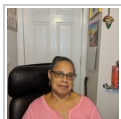


**Dé janelle N. Harris** - August 30, 2020 at 04:53 PM

DH

*My Day 1!*

**Dé janelle N. Harris** - August 30, 2020 at 08:02 PM



*Carmelita Gower & Granddaughter De'janelle N. Gower*

**Diane Gower** - August 31, 2020 at 08:16 AM

DH

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



**Dé janelle N. Harris** - August 30, 2020 at 04:51 PM

DH

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



**Dé janelle N. Harris** - August 30, 2020 at 04:45 PM

DH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Dé janelle N. Harris** - August 30, 2020 at 04:36 PM

BA

*Diane I Gower & James Charles Gower III  
Carmelita & James Charles Gower II*

**Baba** - September 03, 2020 at 12:50 AM

DH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Dé janelle N. Harris** - August 30, 2020 at 04:29 PM

DH

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



**Dé janelle N. Harris** - August 30, 2020 at 04:28 PM

DH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Dé janelle N. Harris** - August 30, 2020 at 04:25 PM

DH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Dé janelle N. Harris - August 30, 2020 at 04:17 PM

DH

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Dé janelle N. Harris - August 30, 2020 at 04:13 PM

DG

“ It is well knowing you and Grandpa are back together again we will continue to honor you both and uphold Gower Family Legacy you have touched the hearts of many people and truly missed yet you left us all with many memories we will cherish forever and always

Derek Gower - August 30, 2020 at 12:56 PM

DG

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Derek Gower - August 30, 2020 at 12:52 PM

NC

*Love you all!*

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**Nicholas Crutcher** - August 30, 2020 at 05:05 PM

MC

“ *Our deepest condolences and prayers go out to the Gower Family  
In this time of their grief. May she Rest in Power and walk in the  
light of Jesus Christ  
Maurice, Marcel , Michael and Pamela Calhoun*

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**Maurice Calhoun** - August 29, 2020 at 09:56 PM

MJ

“ *Margaret Johnson lit a candle in memory of  
Mrs. Carmelita Artis Mae Gower*



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**Margaret Johnson** - August 29, 2020 at 05:36 PM

JG

“ Hey Grandma!

*I wouldn't think in a million years I would writing this so soon; saying goodbye to you like this. It hurts me to the core but, I know you're looking down smiling with Grandpa, your Lil Willie, saying "Everything is going to be ok."*

*I'm going to miss all of our phone calls, especially when our Birthday's were coming around. We would call each other 3 days before asking the same question. "What are you going to do on your Birthday?" You always said you were going to cook a nice meal and watch your stories with Grandpa.*

*I can't lie Grandma I wish I had one more chance just to hear your voice or hug you tight again. I know you're at peace and in a better place with Grandpa, Aunt Ruby, and all of your siblings living life again.*

*I love you ALWAYS and FOREVER Grandma!*

*Your Grandson,  
Jarad C. Gower*

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**Jarad C. Gower** - August 29, 2020 at 04:34 PM

JG

“ Hey Grandma,  
I knew this day would come but I'm not ready for it. I always thought I would be able to see you again. To let you know that I am okay and that you could see how well your grandkids were doing.

I'm hurt that we lost so much time that we'll never get back, but I know you're up in Heaven with Grandpa, Aunt Ruby and all of your siblings.

Even though we haven't spoken in years, I have enough memories to last a lifetime and I take comfort in knowing that.

I will always love and miss you Grandma.

Rest easy.

Your loving grandson,

Jameel C.

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**Jameel C. Gower** - August 29, 2020 at 03:07 PM

Jl

“ Hey Grandma,

*It's hard to begin writing this but I take solace in knowing that you are with the love of your life right now; my Grandpa, your Lil' Willy. You 2 were a match made in heaven and now you get to be together again. What I loved most about you was your fierceness. You protected those you love with a ferocity like I have never seen before. How is all this energy coming from this little woman? I used to ask myself that question all the time. I love hearing the stories my dad would share about you and how you protected he and his brothers. No fear. I didn't get to say goodbye to you properly but that's how life is at times. I want you to know that I am doing well and would like to think I'm becoming a man you would be proud of. I have a beautiful family and will make sure they know all about my fierce redheaded grandmother who may have been small in stature but whose heart was larger than life. I love you now and always.*

*Your grandson,*

*James C. Gower IV*

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**James Gower IV** - August 29, 2020 at 03:00 PM

DH

“ I don't know where to begin Grandma.  
There's so much I want to share with you, but  
I'll be brief.



*My prayer was that I'd be able to speak with  
you again or see you again before this day, but sadly I won't get that  
chance in this lifetime. That was stolen from me.*

*I've gotten married (Brandon A.) and had a baby (Anthony A.)  
Grandma!!! While you weren't physically present, KNOW that you  
were acknowledged in both of those very special moments in my  
life. I wouldn't have had it any other way!*

*I'll always remember the last time that we spoke over a year ago  
though, and I was SO excited because for a few minutes you  
remembered me... and even called me by my name! That made my  
day, but at the same time emphasized how much time had been  
stolen from me, and broke my heart.*

*I just wish we'd had more time. I miss you so much Grandma and I  
love you dearly; TODAY, TOMORROW and ALWAYS! I'll always  
cherish your hugs, kisses, laughter and nuggets of advice.*

*When I catch myself humming or saying something like "I never  
heard of such a thing," I just laugh to myself because that's you all  
day!*

*Please give GRANDPA, Aunt Fat, Uncle Murdock, Uncle Baby,  
Uncle Bunny, Hortense, Aunt Ruby, June, Chrissy & Pooh a hug for  
me!*

*Until we see each other again, REST WELL Grandma!*

*Love Forever -  
Your Granddaughter,  
Dé janelle N. Harris (DJ)*

**Dé janelle N. Harris** - August 29, 2020 at 02:03 PM

GF

“ *Heartfelt Condolences From The Ford Family..  
May Your Fond Memories Guide You Through ‘This Difficult Time*

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**GODFREY FORD** - August 29, 2020 at 11:34 AM

GG

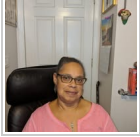
“ *You were loved and will always be a part of our hearts. You missed the birth of your great-granddaughter Ayla Nicole Gower (Derek's) daughter and the entrepreneurial spirit that Monique and Derek have brought forward for financial independence. We will never forget the lessons you taught us about working hard and taking care of your family.*

*We will fill the void in our life with the vivid memories of your laughter and loving embrace when we needed a hug. This is not the end of our journey and we will see each other again.*

*Rest in Peace!  
George W Gower  
Sheila A Gower  
Derek P Gower  
Monique N Gower  
Ayla N Gower*

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**George W Gower** - August 29, 2020 at 10:56 AM



“ From: James C. "Baba" Gower III

*Miss you Mom! But you were Taken away from us nearly 5 years ago, to another state without our consent or knowledge of where you were. In our attempts to find you, we were told by those we thought were friends that they didn't know either, although they knew exactly where you had been taken!! Sorry none of us could be there with you now but I know you understand why! That text message I got Wednesday night saying "your mother passed" landed on me like a ton of bricks. It was an announcement that we had dreaded but knew it would come sooner or later. It's something that you're just not prepared for. Not being able to see you or having the "code" to even speak with you was heartbreaking! Thankfully over a year ago we Finally had the opportunity to talk but had no idea it would be our last conversation.*

*There have been an additional 3 New members of the family you Never had a chance to see or meet. DJ got married to Brandon Harris and they have a handsome 5 months old baby son, Anthony Alexander Harris. Their wedding ceremony was beautiful and DJ left a seat open "reserved for you" in the front row. James IV and his wife Shara have a gorgeous daughter, Solei Nicole Gower, now 3 years old. Londyn has grown into an absolute beauty and is 10 years old. Your 1st Great-Grandchild James C. Gower V is 15 years old and a very handsome young man with a deep voice Mom. He sends his Love and he misses his Great-Grandmother very, very much! You would be so very Proud of the way your Grandkids have All turned out to be handsome young men of integrity and a lovely responsible Granddaughter, Wife and Mother. Jameel and Jarad are both excelling and have grown into respected men. Each one with their own set of principles guided by the way You taught All of us!*

*DJ posted a picture of you and Dad holding hands with the caption "Back Together Again" which was so very appropriate. So to the Mother, Mother-in-law, Grandmother and Great-Grandmother we all want you to know that You are Loved, Never forgotten and Eternally*

*missed.*

*Rest In Peace Mom!!!!*

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**Diane Gower** - August 29, 2020 at 10:16 AM

HN

“ *My you and family have my deepest condolences.*

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**Holland Neal** - August 29, 2020 at 08:42 AM