



## Mr. Kenneth "Kenny" Erving Williams

June 20, 1926 - April 15, 2016

Kenneth "Kenny" Erving Williams, 89, passed away on April 15th, 2016 after a long struggle with cancer, with his family by his side in Atlanta, GA.

He was born on June 26, 1926 in Peoria Illinois to M G Williams and Lacy Irving. He is a man who was truly ahead of his time, achieving a number of accomplishments throughout his career with much humility and grace.

Kenneth was many things throughout his life—a World War II Navy veteran, engineer, businessman, entrepreneur, but most importantly a family man.

Kenneth enlisted into the Navy at the age of 17 and earned the ranking of Electrician's Mate (EM) 3rd class. He was able to travel the world, proudly serving our country, and his impact is still felt by many today. Part of his service was spent on board the USS Mason (DE-529), the first warship manned by a predominantly African- American crew and served as a role model for the integration of U.S. Navy ships.

After the Navy, Kenneth went on to Bradley University where he would earn a B.S. in Electrical Engineering. He needed help typing a paper for one of his classes and was introduced to Ruby Moore through a mutual friend. He had no idea that this encounter through an inconsequential class assignment, would lead to him meeting the love of his life.

Kenneth broke through a number of barriers throughout his career. He was one of the first African-American proving ground engineers at WABCO. After his time with WABCO, he worked at the Peoria Housing Authority where he retired as one of their lead electricians. He also started his own business,

Williams Electric where he continued to work until his early 80's.

When Kenneth wasn't working, you could find him in a few different places: in his garden, on the golf course, at the poker table, or playing Keno.

Kenneth was always fond of sharing laughs with friends and family over a good drink. So in remembrance of him, share a toast with your loved ones and celebrate all of the joy and laughter he has brought to our lives throughout the years.

Kenneth loved his family with all of his heart. He was married to his wife Ruby Williams for 58 years. They had four children together: Kay Alexander, Andre Williams (deceased), Angela (Gil) Williams Johnson and Stevie Williams. He also had five grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and a number of extended relatives who he loved dearly.

Special acknowledgements to his niece Michele Davis who took care of Kenneth and Ruby during their later years prior to their move to Atlanta, the staff at Summerset Assistant Living and Crossroads who grew to love Kenneth as if he were their own blood, and to his daughters Kay and Angela who have worked tirelessly over the years to ensure he received everything that he needed.

We would like to leave you with the words of wisdom that Kenneth shared with his family on his 89th birthday. "Wait upon the Lord and He shall renew your strength, guide you and take care of you. So put all your faith in God and follow His word, and you will make it in life."

His home going celebration will be held at 11 am, Saturday April 23th at St. Paul Baptist Church with a visitation at 10 am. Pastor Deveraux Hubbard will officiate. Entombment will be held at American Mausoleum where Navy Military Honors will be rendered. Simons Mortuary has been entrusted with arrangements. Online condolences may be made at [simonsmortuary.com](http://simonsmortuary.com).

# Cemetery Details

## American Mausoleum

7911 N. Allen Rd  
Peoria, IL 61615

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR **23**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Paul Peoria  
114 W. Forrest Hill Avenue  
Peoria, IL 61604

## Funeral Service

APR **23**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

St. Paul Peoria  
114 W. Forrest Hill Avenue  
Peoria, IL 61604

# Tribute Wall



“ *Simons Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Kenneth "Kenny" Erving Williams*



-----  
**Simons Mortuary** - April 22, 2016 at 12:53 PM



“ *Mr. Kenneth "Kenny" Erving Williams*

-----  
January 29, 2023 at 06:10 AM



“ *Mr. Kenneth "Kenny" Erving Williams*

-----  
January 29, 2023 at 03:12 AM



“ *Linda Hoskins lit a candle in memory of Mr. Kenneth "Kenny" Erving Williams*



-----  
**Linda Hoskins** - April 26, 2016 at 08:59 PM

LH

“ *To the Williams family, we are so sorry for your loss. From the Hoskins Family*

---

**Linda Hoskins** - April 26, 2016 at 08:58 PM



“ *14 files added to the album Life Tributes*



---

**Simons Mortuary** - April 22, 2016 at 12:31 PM

DW

“ *My heartfelt sympathy goes out to the family! Kenny & Ruby were good friends of my parents ("Bebop" & Mildred Williams)*

*Sincerely,  
Darryl Williams*

---

**Darryl Williams** - April 22, 2016 at 12:16 PM



“ 31 files added to the album LifeTributes



---

**Simons Mortuary** - April 21, 2016 at 06:09 PM