



## Mr. Leon Philip Gaines

November 16, 1944 - January 8, 2024

And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying.

There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

Revelation 21:4

### His Life

Leon Philip Gaines, 79, was born November 16, 1944, in Shreveport, LA. He entered into rest on January 8, 2024, at 6:51 a.m. at Carle (formerly Methodist) Hospital in Peoria, IL.

Leon was raised by his parents, the late Fleece and Zella Gaines. At an early age, the family moved to Peoria where he accepted Christ as his Savior. He graduated from Manual High School in 1963 and was proud to be a Ram. About 5 years later, he was drafted into the Army where he served in the Vietnam War. He returned home in 1970 with an honorable discharge and a Purple Heart Medal. In pursuit of higher education, he attended Midstate College studying Business Administration/Management. He was employed at

WESCO

(formerly Westinghouse Electric Co.) for many years working in sales and in the warehouse until his retirement in 2005.

Leon was married for 48 years to Monzola, the love of his life, until her death on May 21, 2023.

In his younger years, Leon loved cars and was known for always having a clean ride.

He was an avid bowler and reader. When his children were young, he enjoyed playing

outside with them, attending basketball games, and driving them to Champaign for the IHSA

tournaments to support the Manual Rams. To his family he was a grill master and made his

own delicious barbeque sauce. After retirement, he could be found watching tv in his favorite

recliner, yelling for the Chicago Bears and other sports teams. He was a humble veteran and

generous giver to all, including many charities.

Leon leaves to cherish his loving memory: (2) sons - Everett (Lillie) McKinney of Indianola,

MS and Demetri Gaines of Houston, TX; (2) daughters - LaTonya (Terence) Franklin of

Atlanta, GA and Tisha (Courtney) Anderson of Peoria, IL; (2) sisters - Linda Gaines of

Houston, TX and Gloria Hayes of Pulaski, IL; (11) grandchildren – Marquis Jordan-McKinney,

Brandis Johnson, Brittney Gaines, Brandon Daniels, Darius Williams, Ariel Ivory, Darrion (Kennara) McKinney, Brian Gaines, Arneisha Walls, Mickayla Alexander, and Isaiah Alexander; (27) great grandchildren – Aidan, Alaysia, A'mere, Amiri, Amori, Ariane, Brielle, Da'Layja, Daleah, D'Ari, Jrue, Kingston E., Kingston M., Laedon, Marion, Marleigh, Nazier, Phoenix, Ramani, Rayniah, Royal, Sage, Tasia Treshaun, Tristan, Zaria and Rhamedi; a host of nieces, nephews, and other family and friends.

He was preceded in death by his wife, parents, son Brian L. Gaines, sisters Dorothy Williams and Lois F. Gaines, and great grandson Troy Erving II.

Funeral services will be held at 11 am on Saturday, January 20, 2024 at Church of the Living God of Peoria with a visitation one-hour prior beginning at 10 am. Host Pastor is Vice-Chief Bishop Leroy Smith, Jr. Rev. Alvin Riley, Sr., Pastor of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church will officiate. Leon will be laid to rest beside his wife at Parkview Cemetery.

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

# Cemetery Details

## Parkview Cemetery

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

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 20. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Church of the Living God  
2815 W Lake Ave  
Peoria, IL 61615  
(309) 688-6463

## Celebration of Life

JAN 20. 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM (CT)

Church of the Living God  
2815 W LAKE AVE  
Peoria, IL 61615  
(309) 688-6463  
[bishopsmith@ctlgcwff.org](mailto:bishopsmith@ctlgcwff.org)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Simons Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Leon Philip Gaines*



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**Simons Mortuary** - January 26, 2024 at 11:52 AM



“ *Simons Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Leon Philip Gaines*



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**Simons Mortuary** - January 19, 2024 at 02:23 PM

GS

*Such a wonderful tribute to my cousin.*

*So sorry that physical distance between us prevented our being closer in later years. Please know that you were and are always special in my heart.*

*My fond memories of you when I was a child and looked up to you for guidance.*

*Your example of how a strong, responsible, and compassionate man conducts himself; helped to shape my own interactions throughout my teen years. and beyond.*

*And especially, how you were there to give your love and support to my grandparents, in their later years.*

*Thank you, my cousin, my friend, for all that you brought to your wonderful family and your extended family.*

*I am sure that, your loving wife, Monzola, is smiling that broad and beautiful smile, now that you are again together...*

*Cuz, know that you are forever loved and missed...*

*Gregory*

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**Greg Shelby** - January 20, 2024 at 09:30 AM

VD

*Condolences on the loss of your loved one. Vanessa Johnson DeCristo*

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**Vanessa DeCristo** - January 23, 2024 at 09:19 PM

TF

*Thank you for the beautiful words cuz. Love you!!!*

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**Tonya Franklin** - January 25, 2024 at 08:36 AM



“ 1 file added to the album *Parkview Cemetery*



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**Simons Mortuary** - January 26, 2024 at 11:55 AM

SW

“ *Sandra Weeks sent a virtual gift in memory of Leon Gaines*



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**Sandra Weeks** - January 19, 2024 at 04:39 PM

TF

*Thank you Sandra!!!*

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**Tonya Franklin** - January 25, 2024 at 08:36 AM

JB

“ *Joanie Brown sent a virtual gift in memory of Leon Gaines*



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**Joanie Brown** - January 18, 2024 at 10:22 AM

LF

*Thank you*

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**LaTonya Franklin** - January 18, 2024 at 01:38 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Leon Philip Gaines.



January 18, 2024 at 08:28 AM



“ So, long my best friend We did not get a chance to talk around the Christmas holiday, maybe you didn't get the card neither because you we're making your transition to your heavenly home. I am some grateful for your life, it enriched my own, my children, and their father “Lonnie Donnie” Mr. Bonneville Rest In Peace 🥹🥹🥹🥹🥹❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️



Loretta Ann Simpson (Porch) - January 17, 2024 at 03:07 PM



Thank you Ms. Loretta.

Tonya Franklin - January 25, 2024 at 08:37 AM



“ Chantay Gray lit a candle in memory of Leon Gaines



Chantay Gray - January 16, 2024 at 09:18 PM



Thank you.

Tonya Franklin - January 25, 2024 at 08:37 AM

PG

“ *My condolences to you all. Your parents were awesome people & are flying high with JESUS. May our Lord give yall mighty strength & comfort to your hearts. Love yall*



Pam Gaston - January 16, 2024 at 08:52 AM

TF

*Thank you Pam. Love you too !!*

Tonya Franklin - January 16, 2024 at 10:09 AM

CE

“ *Curtis & Deborah Easley lit a candle in memory of Leon Gaines*



Curtis & Deborah Easley - January 11, 2024 at 04:02 PM

TF

*Thank you*

Tonya Franklin - January 12, 2024 at 01:08 PM

TA

“ *Tafhi lit a candle in memory of Leon Gaines*



Tafhi - January 11, 2024 at 02:58 PM

TF

*Thank you*

**Tonya Franklin** - January 12, 2024 at 01:08 PM

TD

“ *My heart is broken💔 Leon made such a profound impact on my life that I won't ever forget. My mom was crazy about her Leon and Monzola. Oh, what a joyous heavenly reunion! His sense of humor, his warmth and thoughtfulness will truly be missed😭 Keeping my extended family in prayer and in my heart always and forever🙏 Love you all☐❤*



**Tafhi, Pat's daughter** - January 11, 2024 at 02:58 PM

TF

*Thank you ❤*

**Tonya Franklin** - January 12, 2024 at 01:08 PM