



Leola Mendez

February 20, 1944 - March 9, 2022

Leola Mendez was born by a midwife on February 20, 1944, in La Crosse Florida. She was born to parents, Idell Humphreys and Willie Johnson.

She was baptized at an early age at St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church also located in La Crosse, Florida. Leola graduated from A.L. Mebane High School in 1963, where she was a standout basketball player. After graduation, she worked at the University of Florida and at In and Out Burger in Gainesville, Florida.

She was happily married to Joe Mendez in Valdosta, Georgia on November 21, 1968. They moved to Kankakee in 1969. She is the mother of two sons, Yousaf Mendez and Jose Mendez.

She received her cosmetology license in 1968. She also eventually opened her own salon in 1980. Lee's Hair Care was a successful business until she retired in 2003.

She attended Wildwood Church of the Nazarene in Kankakee, IL where she was an active member for many years. She also attended the Harvest Family Church in Tinley Park, IL. She ran a food pantry out of her basement for 8 years. She really loved volunteering with her church and many other nonprofit organizations.

She enjoyed fishing with her family and watching the different species of birds that would come to eat from her birdfeeders. She enjoyed baking cakes (especially for the holidays) and having a house full of family and friends. She liked tending to her garden and playing her two favorite card games, Spades and Bid Whist.

She was a member of the Pentecostal Community Church under Pastor Larry Garcia for 15 years, until her untimely passing on March 9, 2022. She helped with fundraisers and making programs for the church or whenever she felt there was a need.

She will be carried in the hearts of those she loved, and remembered for her kindness and generosity, her dedication and devotion to God and community. Her smile and laughter have warmed the hearts of many. She will be missed and forever loved.

She leaves to cherish her memory, her husband, Joe Mendez of Kankakee, IL; her sons, Yousaf Mendez and Jose Mendez, both of Kankakee, IL; her granddaughter, Yanez Mendez of Kankakee, IL; her brothers and sisters-in-law, David (Cheryl) Johnson of Killen, TX, Frank (Linda) Duncan of Alachua, FL and Tony Duncan of Gainesville, FL; her sisters and brothers-in-law, Mary Horne of Lakeland, FL, Geneva Presley of La Crosse, FL, Linda Harvey of Hainsworth, FL, Ella (Lavern) Hill and Sharon (James) Porter, all of Alachua, FL and Dollie Johnson of Hawthorne, FL, and a host of other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Idell Humphreys; her father, Willie Johnson; a sister, Willeen Johnson and a brother, William Duncan.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 17. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Lax Mortuary
187 S. Greenwood Avenue
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 935-0090
laxmortuary@laxmortuary.com
<http://laxmortuary.com/>

Visitation

MAR 18. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

Lax Mortuary
187 S. Greenwood Avenue
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 935-0090
laxmortuary@laxmortuary.com
<http://laxmortuary.com/>

Service

MAR 18. 4:00 PM (CT)

Lax Mortuary
187 S. Greenwood Avenue
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 935-0090
laxmortuary@laxmortuary.com
<http://laxmortuary.com/>

Tribute Wall

EE

“ *My sincere prayers and condolences to the family, many good memories of Lee and the family for they were my neighbors many years ago, love and blessings* ❤️🙏

Eloise Edwards - March 18, 2022 at 12:25 AM

WJ

“ *With Love Jamila, Jacinta and Jessica purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Leola Mendez.*



With Love Jamila, Jacinta and Jessica - March 17, 2022 at 10:47 AM

JM

“ *Fishing in the Sky:*

*I've heard about the streets of gold
The mansions up on high
A land where you'll never grow old
And no one ever cries
When we get to Heaven
God will know just what we like
He's got a lake just for me
In my sweet by and by
I'll have a silver boat that sparkles
It'll be lined with fleece of white
I'll have a rod and reel that's made of gold
The fish will always bite
I'll have a cabin by the lake
Shade trees will grow so high
There'll be crickets and birds to sing
When I'm fishing, fishing in the sky.*



Jessica Mendez - March 17, 2022 at 09:59 AM

JM

“ *There are no words that could ever express
the joy and love she brought to her family.
I can only imagine her running to His arms
and Rejoicing!!!
I'm so thankful for your peace and comfort
now.
Alhamdulillah for blessing us with Tia Leola.*



Jessica Mendez - March 17, 2022 at 09:35 AM

JA

“ *Thia Leola I will always love you and thank you for showing me how to be a stronger woman. May GOD continue to hold you with his unconditional love. AMEN.*



jacinta - March 17, 2022 at 09:12 AM



“ *Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Leola Mendez.*



March 17, 2022 at 09:11 AM

M.

“ *Lee's love for people and her willingness to give to others is an inspiration to all.
I shall always remember her laughter, joyful spirit, and words of encouragement.*

M.Taborn - March 16, 2022 at 10:02 PM

VG

“ *Velma Green lit a candle in memory of Leola Mendez*



Velma Green - March 16, 2022 at 07:34 PM

MS

“ Lee was a precious lady, always smiling & greeting those who came through the doors at the Bradley Recreation Center for church on Sunday mornings. I loved her dearly and I know she will be missed by her family, church family, as well as the many friends that she is leaving behind. May God comfort each of you, as only He can do.

Mary Shelton - March 16, 2022 at 04:09 PM

SC

“ Beautiful woman of God , always smiling no matter how things look to us , she was a host to the life group meetings. Take your rest Lee you will be missed 🙏

Shelly Covington - March 16, 2022 at 01:02 PM

PJ

“ Patricia Jamison lit a candle in memory of Leola Mendez



Patricia Jamison - March 16, 2022 at 12:45 PM

BP

“ Mrs. Leola, I'm glad I was able to talk to you after many years, and let you know how thankful and appreciative I was for your support and knowledge to me, as a pregnant 16 year old girl in 1971...219 N. Wildwood.
May you rest in love & peace. ❤️
Beverly Pankey-Turner

Beverly Pankey-Turner - March 16, 2022 at 12:33 PM

BP

“ Beverly Pankey-Turner lit a candle in memory of Leola Mendez



Beverly Pankey-Turner - March 16, 2022 at 12:21 PM

JF

“ JOANN FORD-BOX lit a candle in memory of Leola Mendez



JOANN FORD-BOX - March 16, 2022 at 10:44 AM