



Abdullahi Ibrahim Bin-Yahya

August 10, 1941 - August 23, 2024

Abdullahi Ibrahim Bin-Yahya, servant of God from the spiritual lineage of Abraham, son of John, and Lillie Sneed, was born on August 10, 1941 in Toledo, Ohio. He departed this life at age 83 in Toledo on August 23, 2024.

At an early age, Ibrahim displayed a child's inquisitive and eagerness to learn. Inside an early grade school report card, showing all passing grades, his teacher had written: "He talks too much." In the 1940s and '50s, neither inflated grading nor social passing were options for promotion. In social settings with adults, "children were to be seen, not heard". The old adage about "it takes a village..." was the modus operandi of the day. Adults would admonish children about inappropriate public social behavior and language. If they were family friends, a telephone call home to parents was not unusual.

The written report card remark, by Ibrahim's elementary school teacher, may have been or may not have been instrumental in the subsequent years of relative quietness. Ibrahim had a Toledo Blade newspaper delivery route from his fourth to seventh grade years. He continued to do well in academics and in extracurricular activities. He was in grade school plays; the 1959 Senior Play at Scott High School playing Constable Warren in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. The director of the play, English language teacher James Eppstein, was impressed by Ibrahim's portrayal. He suggested that Ibrahim should go to Hollywood for a career. He did go to Los Angeles twenty-five years later to be

a social science teacher, not an actor. However, Ibrahim is an extra in the Warren Beatty-Halle Berry movie *Bulworth*. So, if one missed his Hollywood acting career, all five seconds, check out the Warren Beatty church scene. That's Ibrahim, as a choir member, sitting to the right rear of the Beatty character, Senator Bulworth, standing at the podium.

Ibrahim was a percussionist in the Scott High School marching band and a reporter for the high school newspaper *The Scott Thistle*. He was a published poet. He received The National Library of Poetry "Editor's Choice Award" in 1996.

Ibrahim was a 1959 Jesup W. Scott High School graduate. He earned a Bachelor of Education in Intensive Social Science degree from the University of Toledo. He held a Master of Arts in Behavioral Science degree from the California State University at Dominguez Hills. During his college years, Ibrahim was a postal clerk/ carrier in the New York City U.S. Post Office and the Toledo U.S. Postal Service. In addition, he was a Resident Teacher in the New York City branch of the National Urban League's Street Academy program.

Ibrahim initially learned about his Prophets of God at Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church under the pastorate of the late Reverend Elijah Benton. He left home in his eighteenth year as Leonard James Sneed. He returned years later with a new spiritual reference, a world perspective, and a deeper understanding that he said enriched his soul.

While living in New York City, Ibrahim met Malik Ash-Shabazz (Malcolm X). He became a member of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) and the Muslim Mosque, Inc., both founded by Malcolm X. Ibrahim was a writer for the OAAU newsletter *Blacklash*.

On February 21, 1965 Ibrahim witnessed the public assassination of Malcolm

X at the Audubon Ballroom. He and three other men apprehended one of the assassins, Thomas Hagan, as he attempted to flee. Months after the murder, Ibrahim left New York City for Cairo, Egypt, UAR. He received a scholarship to study at the University of Al-Azhar School of Islamic Studies for Foreign Students. He was a student in Cairo until his studies were interrupted by unrest leading to the Six-Day War between the Arabs and Israel.

After returning to New York City in 1967, Ibrahim met with a group of Muslim brothers; some had been the closest aides and confidants of the late Al-Hajj Malik Ash-Shabazz (Malcolm X). Together, they established the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood, Inc. Ibrahim became head of the economic and finance department. He was a writer and IBM Selectric Composer typist for the mosque newspaper The Western Sunrise.

When the mosque opened a restaurant, Banu-Hilal, serving halal (lawful) curry meats and foods, Ibrahim became the main chef. He recalled one Saturday morning, after having struggled with the spices and the chicken curry recipe, a West Indian woman entered the restaurant. She ordered chicken curry. After eating a few morsels, she called a waiter to her table. With a blend of question and statement she said, "You got a 'coolie' in the kitchen?" "Chicken is delicious!"

Ibrahim received The Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood's Al-Hajj Malik Ash-Shabazz Award of Merit for his "dedication in the cause of Allah" in 1971.

For twenty years, Ibrahim taught high school social science classes in the Los Angeles Unified School District in California, retiring in 2004. Most of those teaching years were at George Washington Preparatory High School. The high school is the focus of the 1986 CBS television movie The George McKenna Story. The movie stars Denzel Washington as Mr. McKenna the

principal. One of the school's student groups, Sister to Sister, named Mr. Bin-Yahya the "Best Social Science Teacher" in 2003. During his tenure, he was honored three times (2000, 2002 and 2004) by Who's Who Among America's Teachers. Ibrahim was a member of the United Teachers of Los Angeles-Retired until his passing, and a member of the National Education Association (NEA).

Abdullahi, servant of God as his first name translates, was an introspective man, stern but compassionate. He thought of himself as a champion for the marginalized. He was critical of families whose households contained multiple entertainment systems, but no educational tools for their children. He was saddened and angered by the young people who had been bamboozled into accepting a life of banality and "malnutrition of the soul." He decried a culture which paid adults millions of dollars to play childhood games while allowing its public school systems to decay, become unsafe, and then offer political fixes as solutions. During Ibrahim's tenure at Washington Prep, he had a modest grant and scholarship fund. He awarded seniors who had been underclassmen in his classes and had shown academic promise. Some had to overcome social obstacles and developed social skills on their way to graduation.

Ibrahim loved the Religion of Islam which he said freed him from mental bondage to a neo-slavery culture... from a possible life of "wonderment in time". Ibrahim cherished the years being dad to his son Sean in Los Angeles. He loved the years with his brother in the M.I.B. economic and finance department. Their dedicated service was inspirational and worthy of praise. They served in the mosque's halal restaurant, health/natural food store (a first for Harlem), and tearoom where all were welcomed in socializing in an Islamic environment.

Ibrahim understood our common humanity, with dignity and respect being

paramount. He shunned arrogant behavior, especially arrogance of ignorance, and the profane. Often he would say, "Allah loves humility in a human being". Ibrahim petitioned Allah for mercy, forgiveness, for strength against his imperfections, and for wisdom in his actions.

Ibrahim didn't travel to "the gates of China" but he did travel "half-way around the world" seeking ancestral and religious historical truth. He loved being a student in Egypt with his African and Asian Sunni Muslim brothers and sisters.

Ibrahim intensely believed that when the tides of human history cease to ebb and flow... in the end, "those who had submitted to the Will of God" shall be among the triumphant.

Ibrahim was predeceased by both parents, John and Lillie Sneed; brother Melvin Sneed; sisters, Margie G.J. Graham and Jean E. Sneed; nephew Robert H. Jordan, Jr., and niece, Tonyia JorDan. He is survived by son Sean Holmes; grandsons, JeChon Amir and Jaelyn Holmes, Inglewood, CA; sister Janis Deahl, Toledo, OH; nieces Tar'a and Leah Sneed, Washington, DC other relatives and family friends.

Cemetery Details

Historic Woodlawn Cemetery

1502 West Central Avenue
Toledo, OH

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

SEP 6. 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

Dale-Riggs Funeral Home & Cremation Services
572 Nebraska Avenue
Toledo, OH 43604
(419) 248-4254
info@dalefh.com

Funeral Service

SEP 6. 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

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info@dalefh.com

Tribute Wall

GJ

“ *May your heart find comfort knowing that your love one is at home with the Lord*
Love Gwendolyn E.March Jones and Family



Gwendolyn E.March Jones - September 06, 2024 at 11:03 PM