



Helen Varolyn Cohen

February 6, 1926 - April 6, 2024

Helen Varolyn (Jordan) Cohen began her earthly journey on February 6, 1926, in Hope, Arkansas. She was born the youngest of two children in a close-knit family to Henry Roosevelt Jordan and Robbie Green Jordan. Helen's older sister, Juanita affectionately called her "Baby Helen" her entire lifetime. This was the name she was also called by her parents. Helen's parents were the greatest influence in her life. They were dedicated Christians and educationally oriented. They made sure she and her sister, Juanita had all the necessary tools for school.

Helen confessed Christ as her Lord and Savior at the age of seven and was baptized at the Morning Star Baptist Church in Hope, Arkansas. When the family relocated to Monroe, Louisiana they joined Mount Nebo Baptist Church. She and her sister were very active in Sunday School and B. T. U. "Baptist Training Youth Group. When the family relocated to Toledo, Ohio they became members of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church. Helen was a Founding Charter Member of United Missionary Baptist Church (1983). She served on several committees and was a Trustee. She was an avid fundraiser.

Helen's family was very loving, caring and helpful to one another. Family above all else was instilled in all of the descendants of Roosevelt and Robbie. Terran, Helen's only child was the baby of the entire Jordan clan. After the death of her sister Juanita, she became the surrogate mother to her niece

Helen and her nephew James.

Helen's parents stressed education. That foundation created a desire for academic achievement throughout her life. When Helen was entering middle school her father's job caused the family to relocate to Monroe, Louisiana from Hope Arkansas. At the beginning of her senior year of high school her father moved to Toledo, Ohio for a better job opportunity. The family remained in Louisiana until Helen's graduation. She graduated from Monroe Colored High School in 1942 at the age of sixteen with top academic honors.

Helen entered Tennessee State University in the fall of 1942 as a nursing student. She changed her major to education her sophomore year. Living in the dormitory was quite an experience for her. The Greek organizations were helpful and encouraging. She was acquainted with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated from a relative Cora Woodward who resided in Monroe, Louisiana who was also one of her high school instructors. Helen was only interested in the A.K.A.'s. However, since her schoolwork was so demanding she decided to wait until later to join.

Helen graduated from Tennessee State University in 1946 with a High School Teaching Certification. She worked for one year in McKenzie, Tennessee. Returning home to Toledo, she took odd jobs because there were no teaching positions open in her field of certification. In 1948 she was married and became a stay-at-home wife and mother. During that time, she worked in her church, Mount Zion with auxiliaries, teaching Sunday School and supporting community organizations and youth activities.

In 1951 several A.K.A.'s approached her after church activity and asked why she had delayed following up on her pledge to the sorority. Now that her daughter was older, she decided this was the perfect time. In 1951 she entered Mary Manse College to earn her certification in Elementary

Education. Greek organizations were not allowed there. Alpha Lambda Chapter was a City Chapter represented by several colleges in the area. They accepted students from Mary Manse. In January 1952 Helen was initiated into Alpha Lambda Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. The chapter was made up with under-graduate and graduate Sorority members.

On April 25, 1952, the Zeta Alpha Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated was chartered and Helen became a Charter Member. She served as the first Treasurer. She has held every office in the chapter except Graduate Adviser. As Chapter President she had the opportunity to assist in getting Iota Iota Chapter chartered at Bowling Green State University.

When Zeta Alpha Omega voted to establish a foundation, Helen was appointed as the Chairman by the chapter president, Margaret Huntley. She served as Chairman for 17 years and the Committee raised enough money to make a down payment on a building. She gave up the Chairmanship due to health reasons.

Helen's teaching career began at Roosevelt Elementary School as a first-grade teacher. She continued her education at the University of Toledo earning a (M.Ed.) Master of Education and Educational Specialist. Her leadership abilities were recognized by her principal and the Toledo Board of Education. The positions she had were Unit Leader, Curriculum Specialist, Consultant for Multi-Unit Schools, Assistant Principal, and Principal. She was also employed by the University of Toledo working with Student Teachers. Helen co-authored "The King School Story", "The Classroom Teacher as a Teacher Educator", and the University of Toledo Educational Comment 1972.

Helen was active with many professional organizations including Delta Kappa Gamma, Pi Lambda Theta, and Toledo Association of Administrative

Personnel. Helen was also a member of Top Ladies of Distinction.

Helen's greatest joy was her family. When Terran and Robert blessed her with her first grandchild she began making plans for all of the values she wanted to share with them. All three, Cohen, Brandon, and Brandolyn, did not disappoint. The twins graduated from her alma mater Tennessee State University and Cohen from Oakland University.

On Friday, April 5, 2024, Helen's earthly journey ended. She was preceded in death by her father Henry Roosevelt Jordan, mother Robbie Jordan, and sister Juanita Jordan Lyons. She leaves to cherish her memories, daughter Terran (Robert) Johnson, grandchildren Cohen LaMarr Johnson, Brandon Johnson and Brandolyn Johnson, niece Helen Hart and nephew James Lyons, grand nieces Tanya Lyonsford and Tanisha Lyons as well as three God sent daughters Essie Haynes, Sondra Talbert, and Kim Duszynski. She will also be remembered and loved by a host of other family members and friends.

Cemetery Details

Historic Woodlawn Cemetery

1502 West Central Avenue
Toledo, OH

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 16. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

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

Wake Service

APR 17. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

United Missionary Baptist Church
2705 Monroe Street
Toledo, OH 43606

Ceremonial Rites

APR 17. 10:30 AM - 10:50 AM (ET)

United Missionary Baptist Church
2705 Monroe Street
Toledo, OH 43606

Funeral Service

APR 17. 11:00 AM (ET)

United Missionary Baptist Church
2705 Monroe Street
Toledo, OH 43606

Tribute Wall

TO

“Greetings Terran and to the Family of Mrs. Helen Cohen, Although I lived across the street for much of my life, it wasn't until these recent years that I had the pleasure of becoming one of Mrs. Cohen “younger friends”. We both are teachers at heart and I learned that we both spent time at Lincoln Elementary School. I enjoyed hearing her share her life with me. I am trusting God to bless and comfort you with peace of mind and heart. I am trusting God to help you to focus on precious memories. I am praying that God will bless and keep you as you walk through this transition. Put your hand in His hand and never let go!

Toni from Mackow Drive
(Chicago)

Toni - April 17, 2024 at 08:06 AM

BC

“To The Family of Helen Cohen,
I was a young teacher at Lincoln Elementary school serving under the leadership of Mrs Cohen. She was very supportive to me in my educational journey offering wisdom, knowledge and advice. She was a amazing principal and a loving caring leader to the students, parents, teachers and Lincoln community. May God's love and grace fill your hearts and bring you peace in this time of sorrow. -
Brenda Cooper

Brenda Cooper - April 16, 2024 at 11:49 PM

TJ

“Mrs. Cohen was my principal at Lincoln elementary, she was nice, sweet, kind, and stern when she needed to be, but always show you love never less than that. May God keep her family wrapped in his loving arms during this difficult time.

Tonya (Elliott) Jones - April 16, 2024 at 04:56 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Helen Varolyn Cohen.*



April 15, 2024 at 07:09 PM



“ *Uncle Ben and the Lyons Broadnax famy planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Helen Varolyn Cohen.*

Uncle Ben and the Lyons Broadnax famy - April 15, 2024 at 12:09 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Helen Varolyn Cohen.*



April 15, 2024 at 12:09 PM



“ *Mrs. Cohen was my first grade teacher at Roosevelt Elementary School. Arriving from Hawaii as a military kid, she made me feel safe in an unfamiliar environment. I've thought of her often, she was far more than a first grade teacher to me. I pray comfort and peace for the family, today and always.*

Tanya Seldon - April 15, 2024 at 12:45 AM

AJ

“ My Lincoln elementary principal she was a sweet lady gave me my first paddle ever 💔💔💔💔

Anthony Jordan - April 13, 2024 at 05:33 PM

LD

“ I had the pleasure of teaching with Helen when she was Principle at Warren Elementary In TPS. She was truly one of the finest principles in my 35 years of teaching. My sincere thoughts to her family.

Lois E Donahue

Lois E Donahue - April 12, 2024 at 02:31 PM

F(

“ From Barbara (Nelson) and Chris (Arnold) purchased the Love's Journey for the family of Helen Varolyn Cohen.



From Barbara (Nelson) and Chris (Arnold) - April 12, 2024 at 01:39 PM

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 - April 10, 2024 at 07:05 PM