

## OBITUARIES 2008



**Isaac Hayes** Age: 65  
Isaac Hayes, the baldheaded, baritone-voiced soul crooner who laid the groundwork for disco and whose "Theme From Shaft" won both Academy and Grammy awards, died 8/10/08 in the afternoon after he collapsed near a treadmill, authorities said. He was 65.



**Gene Upshaw** Age: 63  
Gene Upshaw, the Hall of Fame guard who during a quarter century as union head helped get NFL players free agency and the riches that came with it, died on 8/20/08 at his home near California 's Lake Tahoe , of pancreatic cancer.



**Dwight White** Age: 58  
Dwight White, the Steel Curtain defensive end known as "Mad Dog" who helped lead the Pittsburgh Steelers to four Super Bowl titles in the 1970s, died 6/6/08, following complications from back surgery. He was 58.



**Bernie mac** Age: 50  
Bernie Mac, an Emmy and Golden Globe nominated actor and comedian, died suddenly 8/09/08 at age 50 of complications from pneumonia. The comedian suffered from sarcoidosis, an inflammatory lung disease that produces tiny lumps of cells in the body's organs, but had said the condition went into remission in 2005.



**Al Wilson** Age: 68  
Al Wilson, the soul singer and songwriter who had a number of 1970s hits including "Show and Tell," died 4/21/08. Wilson died of kidney failure at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in Fontana , according to his son, Tony Wilson of Yucaipa .



**Bo Diddley** Age: 79  
Bo Diddley, a founding father of rock 'n' roll whose distinctive "shave and a haircut, two bits" rhythm and innovative guitar effects inspired legions of musicians, died 6/2/08, after months of ill health. He was 79.



**Ivan Dixon** Age: 76  
Ivan Dixon, an actor and director who was best known for playing Sgt. James Kinchloe on the 1960s sitcom "Hogan's Heroes" but whose films included vivid portrayals of black struggles in the American South and insurrectionist inclinations in the North, died 3/16/08 from complications of kidney disease.



**Sean Levert** Age: 39  
Sean Levert, a third of the 1980s R&B trio LeVert and son of lead O'Jays singer Eddie Levert, died 3/30/08 after falling ill while serving a jail term. He was 39. Authorities said Monday that an autopsy was inconclusive but foul play was ruled out.



**Johnnie Carr** Age: 97  
Johnnie Carr, who joined childhood friend Rosa Parks in the historic Montgomery bus boycott and kept a busy schedule of civil rights activism up to her final days, died 2/22/08. She was 97. She had been hospitalized after a stroke Feb. 11.



**Buddy Miles** Age: 60  
Buddy Miles, a drummer who played with Jimi Hendrix and sang in the claymation commercials featuring the California Raisins in the 1980s, died 2/26/08. He was 60. Miles, who had been suffering from congestive heart failure, died in Austin, publicist Duane Lee said.

## OBITUARIES 2007



**Percy Rodrigues** Age: 89  
Percy Rodrigues, an actor who broke ground when he was cast as a neurosurgeon in the series " Peyton Place " in 1968, a time when blacks were just starting to win roles as authority figures on television, died on Sept. 6 at his home in Indio , Calif . . He was 89. The cause was kidney failure, said his wife, Karen Cook-Rodrigues.



**Ike Turner** Age: 76  
Ike Turner, whose role as one of rock's critical architects was overshadowed by his ogrelike image as the man who brutally abused former wife Tina Turner , died Wednesday 12/12/07, at his home in suburban San Diego . Turner died at his San Marcos home, Scott M. Hanover of Thrill Entertainment Group, which managed Turner's career, told The Associated Press.



**Max Roach** Age: 83  
Max Roach got his first musical break at age 16, filling in when Duke Ellington's drummer fell ill in 1940. Those three nights spawned a career that would make the self-taught Roach the first jazz musician ever honored with a MacArthur Fellowship, or "genius grant." The master percussionist died 8/15/07 in a Manhattan hospital after a long illness. He was 83.



**Jon Lucien** Age: 65  
Jazz singer Jon Lucien - known for his deep baritone and soulful love songs has died on 8/18/07. Lucien's wife says the 65-year-old singer died in Poinciana from respiratory complications following surgery.



**Juanita Millender-McDonald** Age: 68  
Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald, a Democrat whose House district encompassed Compton, Carson, much of Long Beach and parts of South Los Angeles, died of cancer 4/22/07. She was 68 and had served in Congress since 1996.



**Bill Pinkney** Age: 81  
Bill Pinkney, the last survivor of the original members of the musical group The Drifters died on 7/4/07. He was 81. Pinkney was found dead Wednesday at the Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort, Daytona Beach Police spokesman Jimmie Flynt said. The death was not considered suspicious, he said.



**Carl Wright** Age: 75  
Actor Carl Wright, who began his career as a tap dancer and comedian and later appeared in movies including Barbershop and Big Momma's House died 5/19/07 of cancer at his home in Chicago, according to his daughter, Kia Wright.



**Zola Taylor** Age: 69  
Zola Taylor, who broke gender barriers as the first female member of the 1950s R&B group The Platters and later became entangled in a public soap opera as one of three women claiming to be pop idol Frankie Lymon's widow died 4/30/2007. She was 69.



**Yolanda Denise King** Age: 51  
Yolanda Denise King, daughter and eldest child of civil rights leader the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., died 5/15/07. A spokesman for the King Center, Steve Klein said the family did not know the cause of death but think it might have been a heart problem.



**Roscoe Lee Brown** Age: 81  
Actor Roscoe Lee Browne, whose rich voice and dignified bearing brought him an Emmy Award and a Tony nomination, died 4/11/07. Browne died early Wednesday at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center after a long battle with cancer, said Alan Nierob, a spokesman for the family.



**Darryl Stingley** Age: 55  
Darryl Stingley, paralyzed after a vicious hit during an NFL exhibition game nearly 30 years ago, died 4/5/07. He was 55. Stingley, a star receiver with the New England Patriots, was left a quadriplegic after he collided with Oakland's Jack Tatum while trying to catch a pass in an exhibition game on Aug. 12, 1978.



**Calvin Lockhart** Age: 72  
Calvin Lockhart, an actor who won acclaim for his roles as underworld figures in 1970s "blaxploitation" films, has died. Lockhart, who was buried in Nassau on 4/7/07, died 3/29/07 of complications from a stroke, his wife Jennifer Miles-Lockhart said.



**Luther Ingram** Age: 68  
Luther Ingram, the man who co-wrote one of pop music's greatest hits, has died at age 68. Ingram, whose recording of "If Loving You Is Wrong (I Don't Want to Be Right)" was a No. 1 hit in 1973, died 3/19/07 in St. Louis. He'd had a kidney transplant several years ago and fought kidney failure for most of the last decade.



**Eddie Robinson** Age: 88  
Eddie Robinson died late 4/4/07 after a long illness. For 55 years, he was synonymous with Grambling football. He was the winningest coach in college football. He coached more than 200 players who went on to play in the NFL.



**Barbara McNair** Age: 72  
Barbara McNair, a cabaret singer, actress and television personality of the 1960s who was noted as much for her stunning appearance as for her versatile voice, died on 2/4/07 in Los Angeles. The cause was throat cancer, Ms. McNair's sister, Jacqueline Gaither, told The Associated Press.



**Dennis Johnson** Age: 52  
Dennis Johnson, the star NBA guard who was part of three championships and teamed with Larry Bird on one of the great postseason plays, died 2/22/07, collapsing after his developmental team's practice. He was 52.



**Billy Henderson** Age: 67  
Singer Billy Henderson, a member of the band the Spinners who sang "I'll Be Around" "Could It Be I'm Falling in Love," "Then Came You" and "The Rubberband Man." died 1/2/07. He was 67. Henderson died of complications from diabetes at a Daytona Beach health care facility, his wife, Barbara, said.



**Joe Hunter** Age: 79  
Musician Joe Hunter, a three-time Grammy winner with the legendary Funk Brothers, has been found dead in his Detroit apartment. Hunter was a diabetic but his cause of death was unknown, The Detroit News reported. His son said it appeared he was trying to take some medicine when he died.

## OBITUARIES 2006



**James Brown** Age: 73  
James Brown, the legendary R&B belter, a singer and songwriter who created a foundation for funk and provided the roots of rap, a man of many nicknames but a talent that can only be described as one of a kind, died 12/25/06 at Atlanta's Emory Crawford Long Hospital of congestive heart failure.



**Mike Evans** Age: 57  
Mike Evans, 57, an actor best known for his role as Lionel Jefferson in the TV sitcoms "All in the Family" and "The Jeffersons," died of throat cancer Dec. 14 at his mother's home in Twentynine Palms, his niece Dr. Chrystal Evans said.



**Tamara Dobson** Age: 59  
 Stood 6 feet 2 inches, eventually became a fashion model for Vogue Magazine. She made a few films in Hollywood but is best known for her roles in the Blaxploitation films, Cleopatra Jones (1973) and Cleopatra Jones and the Casino of Gold (1975). Tamara died October 2, 2006 of complications from pneumonia and multiple sclerosis.



**Bebe Moore** Age: 56  
 Novelist Bebe Moore Campbell, whose best-selling books included Brothers and Sisters, Singing in the Comeback Choir and Your Blues Ain't Like Mine, died 11/27/06 in Los Angeles from complications related to brain cancer. She was 56.



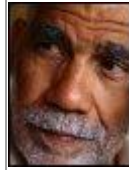
**Gerald Levert** Age: 40  
 Singer Gerald Levert, one of the most popular R&B stars of the '90s as a solo artist and a member of the groups Levert and LSG, died of a heart attack Friday 11/10/06 in Cleveland . He was 40.



**Ruth Brown** Age: 78  
 Singer Ruth Brown, whose recordings of "Teardrops in My Eyes," "5-10-15 Hours" and "(Mama) He Treats Your Daughter Mean" died of complications from a stroke and heart attack at a Las Vegas-area hospital on 11/17/06.



**Billy Preston** Age: 59  
 The great singer-songwriter and performer Billy Preston, the real "Fifth Beatle," died 6/7/06 after a long illness as a result of malignant hypertension that resulted in kidney failure and other complications. He'd been in a deep coma since last November 21, but was still struggling to recover.



**Ed Bradley** Age: 65  
 One of the few African-American journalists in such a high-profile position, legendary CBS journalist Ed Bradley died of leukemia 11/9/06. The 65-year-old correspondent had been reporting for CBS since 1967, and was a key member of the 60 Minutes reporting team.



**Katherine Dunham** Age: 96  
 Famed dancer and choreographer Katherine Dunham died May 21, at the age of 96. She once pressed a cultural crusade that some credited with putting gang leaders in leotards. At the time, she called on everyone to share her love for the arts and "something more constructive than genocide."



**Johnnie Wilder Jr.** Age: 56  
 Johnnie Wilder Jr., the smooth and soulful lead singer of the '70s and '80s R&B sextet Heatwave, and who made a comeback as a gospel singer died on May 13 at his Dayton , Ohio home. A 1979 car accident left him a quadriplegic. The cause of death is unknown.



**June Pointer** Age: 52  
 June Pointer, the youngest of the Pointer Sisters -- known for the '70s and '80s hits "I'm So Excited," "Fire" and "Slow Hand" -- has died of cancer, her family said Wednesday 4/12/06. She was 52.



**Floyd Patterson** Age: 71  
 Floyd Patterson, who came back from an embarrassing loss to become the first boxer to regain the heavyweight title, died 5/11/06. Patterson quote: "They said I was the fighter who got knocked down the most, but I also got up the most."



**Kirby Puckett** Age: 45  
 Kirby Puckett died 3/6/06, a day after the Hall of Fame outfielder had a stroke at his Arizona home, a hospital spokeswoman said. Puckett died at St. Joseph 's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix . He had been in intensive care since having surgery at another hospital following his stroke Sunday morning.



**Gordon Parks** Age: 93  
 Gordon Parks , who captured the struggles and triumphs of black America as a photographer for Life magazine and then became Hollywood 's first major black director with "The Learning Tree" and the hit "Shaft," died 3/7/06.



**Fayard Nicholas** Age: 91  
 Fayard Nicholas, who with his brother Harold wowed the tap dancing world with their astonishing athleticism and who inspired generations of dancers, from Fred Astaire to Savion Glover, has died. Nicholas died 1/24/06 at his home from pneumonia and other complications of a stroke, his son Tony Nicholas said.



**Coretta Scott King** Age: 78  
 Coretta Scott King, who surged to the forefront of the fight for racial equality after her husband Martin Luther King Jr. was murdered in 1968, has died at age 78, U.S. media reported on 1/31/06. She had suffered a stroke and a heart attack in August.



**Lou Rawls** Age: 72  
 Lou Rawls, who earned fame with his glorious voice and respect through his prodigious fundraising for the United Negro College Fund, died 1/6/2006 of cancer. He was 72. Starting as a church choir boy, Rawls ultimately applied those silky tones to a variety of musical genres and more, including movies, TV shows and commercials.



**Wilson Pickett** Age: 64  
 Alabama native and veteran soul singer Wilson Pickett, famed for his trademark screams, flaming delivery and flamboyant costumes, and known for such hits as "Mustang Sally" and "In the Midnight Hour," died on Thursday 1/19/06 of a heart attack in Virginia, his manager said. He was 64.



**Robert McFerrin** Age: 85  
Robert McFerrin Sr., the first black man to sing solo at the New York Metropolitan Opera and the father of Grammy-winning conductor-vocalist Bobby McFerrin, died of a heart attack 11/24/06. He was 85.



**Octavia Butler** Age: 58  
A woman of great intellect, of immense talent, of tremendous passion, and, it seems, so very much alone. Her death after falling and hitting her head outside her home in Seattle has rattled those who loved her work. She was 58.

## OBITUARIES 2005



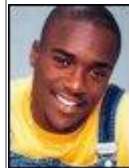
**Richard Pryor** Age: 65  
Richard Pryor, the caustic yet perceptive actor-comedian who lived dangerously close to the edge both on stage and off died 12/10/05. He was 65. Pryor died of a heart attack at his home in the San Fernando Valley . He had been ill for years with multiple sclerosis, a degenerative disease of the nervous system.



**Rosa Parks** Age: 92  
Rosa Lee Parks, whose refusal to give up her bus seat to a white man sparked the modern civil rights movement, died 10/24/05 Monday evening. She was 92. Mrs. Parks died at her home during the evening of natural causes, with close friends by her side, said Gregory Reed, an attorney who represented her for the past 15 years.



**Shirley Horn** Age: 71  
Jazz pianist and vocalist who got her start opening for Miles Davis and became revered as a master interpreter of American standards. Horn died in her native Washington , D.C. , after a long illness. Horn was often compared to Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald and Carmen McRae, and considered one of the last great jazz vocalists of her era.



**Lamont Bentley** Age: 31  
Lamont Bentley, who was a regular in the 1990s sitcom Moesha and appeared frequently in television and movies, was killed in a car crash on 1/18/05. Bentley died when his vehicle plunged off the San Diego Freeway, manager Susan Ferris said. He was the only person in the vehicle.



**Nipsey Russell** Age: 80  
Nipsey Russell, who played the Tin Man alongside Diana Ross and Michael Jackson in "The Wiz" as part of a decades-long career in stage, television and film, died 10/2/05.. He was 80. The actor, who had been suffering from cancer, died Sunday afternoon at Lenox Hill Hospital , said his longtime manager Joseph Rapp.



**August Wilson** Age: 60  
The two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning Wilson died of liver cancer Oct. 1 in Seattle . He was 60. Wilson 's plays dealt with the effects of slavery on generations of black Americans.



**John H. Johnson** Age: 87  
Publisher John H. Johnson, whose Ebony and Jet magazines countered stereotypical coverage of blacks after World War II and turned him into one of the most influential black leaders in America, died 8/8/05, his company said. He was 87.



**Brock Peters** Age: 78  
Actor Brock Peters, best known for his heartbreaking performance as the black man falsely accused of rape in "To Kill a Mockingbird," died 8/23/05 at his home after battling pancreatic cancer.



**Luther Vandross** Age: 54  
Grammy award winner Luther Vandross, whose deep, lush voice on such hits as "Here and Now" and "Any Love" sold more than 25 million albums while providing the romantic backdrop for millions of couples worldwide, died on 7/1/05. He was 54. Vandross died at John F. Kennedy Medical Center in Edison , N.J. , Cause of death unknown.



**Renaldo "Obie" Benson** Age: 69  
Renaldo "Obie" Benson (June 14, 1936 - July 1, 2005) was an African-American soul and R&B singer and songwriter. He was best known as a member of Motown group The Four Tops. Benson died of lung cancer and other illnesses on July 1, 2005. His last performance as a Four Top was on April 8, 2005 live on Late Night with David Letterman.



**Johnnie Cochran Jr.** Age: 67  
Johnnie Cochran Jr., an attorney who rose to fame when he helped win an acquittal for O.J. Simpson in a double-murder trial, died 3/29/05. Cochran died at his home in Los Angeles , his family said in an e-mailed statement. He had been suffering from a brain tumor, the family said.



**Ronald Winans** Age: 48  
Ronald Winans, a Grammy-winning member of The Winans and of gospel's first family, died 6/17/05 at the age of 48. Winans, who had suffered a heart attack in 1997, died at Harper Hospital of heart complications. He had recently been admitted for observation after doctors realized he was retaining fluid.



**Ossie Davis** Age: 87  
 Actor Ossie Davis, who pioneered roles for African Africans in a stage and screen career that spanned more than 50 years died at age 87 on 2/4/2005. Davis was found dead early Friday by his grandson and paramedics at the Shore Club hotel in Miami Beach , where the actor had been shooting the film "Retirement".



**Reggie Roby,** Age: 43  
 A 16-year NFL veteran punter and three-time Pro Bowl selection, Reggie Roby died February 22nd 2005, after being found unconscious at home by his wife. Melissa Roby found her husband with no pulse. Cause of death is unknown.



**Shirley Chisholm** Age: 80  
 Mrs. Chisholm died 1/1/05 at age 80, and her obituaries inevitably led, as she knew they would, with her litany of firsts -- first black woman in the House, first black woman to seek a major party presidential nomination.

## OBITUARIES 2004



**Reggie White** Age: 43  
 Reggie White, a fearsome defensive end for the Philadelphia Eagles and Green Bay Packers who was one of the great players in NFL history, died 12/26 /04. White died at Presbyterian Hospital , where he was taken after his wife called 911.



**Ol' Dirty Bastard** Age: 35  
 O.D.B. or to use his full monicker, Ol' Dirty Bastard, died 11/13/04 in a recording studio. He was aged 35, 2 days away from his 36th birthday, O.D.B. (real name Russell Jones) was finishing off his comeback album and apparently complained of chest pains before collapsing in the studio.



**Rick James** Age: 56  
 Funk legend Rick James, best known for the 1981 hit "Super Freak" before his career collapsed in a cloud of violent drug charges died in his sleep August 6th 2004 at his residence near Universal City, apparently of natural causes.



**Paul Winfield** Age: 62  
 Academy Award-nominated actor who was known for his versatility in stage, film and television roles, including a highly praised 1978 depiction of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Winfield died March 7th 2004 of a heart attack, said his agent Michael Livingston.



**Ray Charles** Age: 73  
 Ray Charles was one of American music's great innovators, blending the gospel of the black church with the sensuality of the blues to create an emotionally raw genre called soul. He died at his home in Beverly Hills, California at age 73 after a long battle with liver disease.



**Isabel Sanford** Age: 86  
 Isabel Sanford, best known as "Weezie" or Louise Jefferson on the sitcom "The Jeffersons," died of natural causes on July 9th 2004. Sanford had been hospitalized since July 4 died at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center with her daughter Pamela Ruff at her side.



**Ron O'Neal** Age: 66  
 Actor Ron O'Neal, best known for starring in two "Superfly" blaxploitation movies in the 1970s. O'Neal, who was 66, died Jan. 14th, 2004 at Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles after a long battle with cancer.

## OBITUARIES 2003



**Barry White** Age: 58  
 Grammy Award-winning R&B singer and disco icon known for his lush baritone bass voice. His soulful, seductive songs include "Can't Get Enough of Your Love, Babe" and "You're the First, the Last, My Everything." Barry Died: Los Angeles , July 4, 2003



**Bobby Bonds** Age: 57  
 All-Star baseball player who, in his 14 seasons in the major leagues, hit 332 home runs and stole 461 bases. He played for the San Francisco Giants for seven years. His son is slugger Barry Bonds. Bobby Died: San Francisco , Aug. 23, 2003



**Idi Amin** Age: 80  
Human rights groups estimate that Idi Amin ordered the deaths of about 300,000 people. Amin was ousted in 1979, and died in exile in Saudi Arabia . Idi Amin Died: Jidda , Saudi Arabia , Aug. 16, 2003



**Nell Carter** Age: 54  
Flamboyant singer and actress who won a Tony and an Emmy Award for her performance in Ain't Misbehavin'. She starred in the television series Gimme a Break! Nell Died: Beverly Hills , Calif. , Jan. 23, 2003



**Althea Gibson** Age: 76  
Althea was a professional tennis player who was the first black person to play in and win Wimbledon and the United States national tennis championship. She won both tournaments twice, in 1957 and 1958. Althea Died: East Orange , N.J. , Sept. 28, 2003



**Maynard Jackson** Age: 65  
Influential former mayor of Atlanta, Ga., who transformed the city into a power base for the black middle class by advocating for the city's black majority and establishing affirmative-action programs. Maynard Died: Arlington , Va. , June 23, 2003



**Nina Simone** (Eunice Kathleen Waymoa) Age: 70  
Sultry chanteuse whose difficult-to-classify music combined jazz, classical, folk, and gospel. A civil rights activist, she recorded "Mississippi Goddam" after the murder of Medgar Evers. Nina Died: Carry-le-Rouet , France , April 21, 2003



**Edwin Starr** Age: 61  
Soul singer best known for his Grammy-winning 1970 hit, "War." Edwin Died: Nottingham , England , April 2, 2003



**Gregory Hines** age 57  
Dancer Gregory Hines, the tap-dancing actor who starred on Broadway and in movies including White Nights and Running Scared, died of cancer on the 9th of August 2003.



**Fred Berry** Age: 52  
Actor Fred Berry, best known as "Rerun" on the 1970s TV show "What's Happening!!", died, Oct 2003