



## Mr. Levanda "Lee" Gayden

November 10, 1948 - September 8, 2023

On November 10, 1948, Levanda "Lee" Gayden was the first child born to Joseph and Rozelia Gayden in Monroe, Louisiana. Later, the Gayden family migrated to Kansas City, Missouri where Levanda spent his life. His father, Joseph Gayden, Jr. passed away before him. His mother is now the family's matriarch. Lee passed away on Friday, September 8, 2023, with his family and companion by his side.

When we reflect on Lee's life, we cannot ignore the popular nickname, "Rated X". Some wonder about the origin of the name and its significance. If you were acquainted with Lee, you can answer these questions and fondly remember him, even though his passing is heartbreaking. He is also remembered by his CB Handle "Sailboat".

Lee graduated from Central High School in the class of 1966. He studied business at Metropolitan Junior College. He later acquired certification in Auto Mechanics. Lee worked at General Motors in St. Louis for several years before returning to Kansas City to join his family's auto repair business, "Gayden and Sons". This was a dream come true for his father, who taught Lee everything he needed to know about the business of Auto Mechanics. Lee attended Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church growing up and many members there fondly remember him.

Lee worked as a heavy machine operator for A Pac, Bowen and O'Donnell and Sons Construction. While employed at O'Donnell, Lee became union representative due to his ardent support for unions. Lee retired in 2010.

Lee, of course, did not like "retirement life" so he worked at Advanced Auto Parts. The company graciously allowed him to work whenever he was able throughout his illness.

Lee wed his high school sweetheart, Arlene Taylor (sharp). Together, they welcomed their only daughter, Terrye Gayden. Although they eventually ended their marriage, they parted on good terms and maintained a friendly relationship. A decade later, Lee was overjoyed to have a son, Leight Gayden, with Barbara Warren. In 1997 Lee married Donna (Smith) Gayden and became involved in his stepdaughter Charisse's life. Donna, Lee and Charisse had a good bond.

In any endearment about Lee, it is essential to acknowledge his devoted companion of 15 years Belinda "Lynn" Pleasant. The two relished traveling and were enthusiastic about the Chiefs. They attended rodeos and themed parties. Lynn recounting how much of a cowboy Lee was, strutting in his boots and letting out a hearty "hee-haw!". Lynn stood by him until the end, tending to him as he fought cancer.

Lee had a great passion for motorcycles. He frequently rode his yellow cycle by himself and with companions to explore the open road, Lee is quoted as saying, " I can drive anything with wheels."

Lee was a sociable person who had no enemies. He was always in high spirits and enjoyed parties. He was an active member of the Kansas City Scorpios, The Mark Four Social Club, Team 2 and The Bae Bae Kids. He stayed involved with his 1966 Central Class Alumni. Being a part of these

groups allowed him to express his outgoing and fun-loving personality while indulging in his love for partying.

Lee had a sharp mind and knowledge of diverse topics. He was known for quickly answering game show questions and completing even the most challenging crossword puzzles. When explaining a subject, Lee would pause and say, "Stay with me now." A heartwarming gesture was captured as Lee promised to participate in the breast cancer walk to honor the memory of a classmate who lost a battle with the disease. Lee pledged to continue his efforts the following year and included his ancestors in the dedication. He promises to uphold the value of generosity and support instilled in him through his family's traditions.

Lee's passing has left many loved ones in mourning; his beloved mother, Rozelia (Rose) Gayden, his sisters, Beverly Blackwell (James) and Audrey Owens (John); his best friend and brother, Joseph Gayden (Melinda); his children, Leigh Gayden (Lisa) and Terrye Gayden; his grandchildren, Terry Phillips and Tareq Matthews; great grandson Tamarion Phillips, Lee had a special bond with his nephews, Jerry Walker (Tiffani), Barrett Blackwell, Yule Owens (Margot) Karrell Foster and Kyrie Foster, as well as his nieces, Jennifer Blackwell (Michelle), Karima Foster, Lariah Fooster and Jaslynn Franklin, a host of other relatives and friends.

Funeral services will be held on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, 12 pm at the Watkins Heritage Chapel. Visitation will be from 11am-12pm at the chapel. Condolences may be shared on our website.

# Tribute Wall

"W"

“ Lee and I got acquainted around 1989 or 1990 at the time we were part of a group called "The Dawg Pound" at the El Capitan on 18th Street and Vine. Lee was always laid back and cool.

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**"Michelob" John Wallace** - September 20, 2023 at 08:04 AM

TC

“ Our Sincere Condolences and Prayers from  
The Millers (49th College)



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**The Millers (49th College)** - September 19, 2023 at 02:14 PM

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“ Our Sincere Condolences and Prayers

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**The Millers (49th College)** - September 19, 2023 at 02:10 PM