



Mrs. Betty Jean Bradley Cole

June 3, 1944 - January 23, 2026

Betty Jean Bradley Cole, age 81, of Colt, Arkansas, peacefully transitioned from this life on Friday, January 23, 2026, at her home surrounded by the love of her family. She was born on June 3, 1944, in the Oakwood Bayou–Gould community, the ninth child of the late James Bradley and Dilsie Webb Bradley. From the very beginning, Betty Jean’s life was rooted in strength, kindness, and purpose. Her early years in Oakwood Bayou laid the foundation for a deep love of family, community, and service that guided her throughout her life. She later moved to Gould, Arkansas, where she spent her childhood and early teenage years embraced by a close-knit village grounded in faith and fellowship. As a teenager, she relocated to Pine Bluff, Arkansas, to live with her beloved big sister, Pearlone B. Manuel, whose love, guidance, and encouragement shaped her high school years and beyond.

From an early age, Betty Jean was taught the importance of having a personal relationship with God. She was baptized at Oakwood Bayou Baptist Church and later worshiped faithfully at Jericho Missionary Baptist Church in Gould. After moving to Pine Bluff, she became a devoted member of Kings Highway Missionary Baptist Church. Following her marriage to the love of her life, Robert Lee Cole, she united with Christ Episcopal Church in Forrest City, Arkansas, where she served faithfully as a Lay Reader and held leadership roles as both Junior Warden and Senior Warden. Her faith remained steadfast throughout every season of life, guiding her service to others and

strengthening her walk with God. She also extended her commitment to service through Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, and the civic organization Semper Fidelis, embodying the ideals of service, sisterhood, scholarship, and leadership.

Education was a cornerstone of Betty Jean's life and something she valued deeply. She attended William O. Fields School in Gould, Arkansas, completing her education through junior high school, and later attended Gould High School. After moving to Pine Bluff, she graduated from Townsend Park High School in June 1963 as part of the Dollarway School District. She continued her studies at Arkansas AM&N College, now the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, where she pursued Food and Nutrition and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Institutional Dietetics with an emphasis in Home Economics Education in 1967. Never content to stop growing, she later attended Philander Smith College, now Philander Smith University, earning a degree in Human Sciences and Gerontology, strengthening her lifelong dedication to elder care and community service. Betty Jean was a woman of many gifts, known as a mentor, peacemaker, and natural leader whose generous spirit touched everyone she encountered.

In April 1963, Betty Jean was united in holy matrimony to the love of her life, Robert Lee Cole. Their marriage was built on faith, friendship, respect, and unwavering love, forming a beautiful partnership that lasted for 63 years. Together, they shared life's joys and challenges hand in hand, truly inseparable and devoted to one another as best friends and lifelong companions.

From their loving union, Betty Jean and Robert were blessed with five children, one daughter and four sons. She was preceded in death by her beloved daughter, Alisha Cole. She leaves to cherish her memory her sons, Alexis Cole (Patricia Ann), Aeric Cole (Annie), Aaron Cole (Shonta), and

Marcus Cole. Together, Betty Jean and Robert instilled in their children the values of faith, hard work, determination, and strong family principles that continue to guide them today. Her legacy of love also lives on through her grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and extended family.

Betty Jean is lovingly remembered by her devoted husband, Robert Lee Cole; her sons; her grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and her brother, Arthur Lee Bradley (Roseann) of Gould, Arkansas. She is also survived by her sisters Alma Remley (O.C.), Bonnie Bradley, and Bobbie Bradley, all of Pine Bluff, Arkansas; Ozella Jones (Alfred) of Overland Park, Kansas; and Ruby Lenora of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, along with a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, extended relatives, and dear friends who will forever treasure her life and legacy.

Betty Jean was preceded in death by her parents, James Bradley and Dilsie Webb Bradley; her daughter, Alisha Cole; her brothers J.B. Bradley, J.D. Bradley, and Robert Bradley; and her sisters Pearlone B. Manuel, Lettie B. Harris, Thelma Carr, Ruthie Allen, and Dorothy McAlister. She was also preceded in death by her maternal grandparents, Abe and Pearl Rucker Webb, and her paternal grandparents, Henry and Emma Charles Bradley.

Above all, Betty Jean Bradley Cole will be remembered for her servant's heart, unwavering faith, deep devotion to family, and profound impact on the communities she loved. She was a hard-working woman, dedicated servant, farmer, and community leader who proudly served as a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated; founder and manager of Eldercare of East Arkansas; and a board member of East Arkansas Enterprise Community, Save the Children, AmeriCorps, and the Rockefeller Foundation. She found joy in flowers, trees, and gardens, delighting in God's creation, and believed strongly in stewardship, responsibility, and understanding the value of a dollar.

Her legacy lives on through the lives she touched, the institutions she helped build, and the family she nurtured with unconditional love. She will be deeply missed, forever cherished, and lovingly remembered.

Cemetery Details

Jericho Cemetery

21639 AR 114 E
Gould , AR 71643

Previous Events

Service

FEB 6. 2:00 PM (CT)

Forrest City Civic Center
1335 North Washington Street
Forrest City, AR 72335

Tribute Wall

JB

“ So many, many memories of Mrs. Cole. She was my church member at Christ Church and my frat sister (☐❤️🖤❤️). But much more importantly to me, she was my friend-a dear friend. Please know that you, Mr. Cole, Alex, Eric, Aaron and the entire Cole family have my Heartfelt Deepest Sympathy 🌸 and love. I'll never forget Mrs. Cole. She was a wise woman and I learned a lot from her. 🙏🙏

John Martin Bransn - February 15 at 04:49 AM

RR

“ Ricky Ray lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Betty Jean Bradley Cole



Ricky ray - February 06 at 11:23 AM

GC

“ I am saddened beyond words knowing that Ms Betty is no longer with us. For many many years she was a family friend; especially a dear friend of my mother (Ms Eulene Carter who is also deceased). We lived in Wynne, AR during those ears & it was ALWAYS such a joy when she would visit. Mother was a well known seamstress there & designed many creations for Ms Betty. Her family was her backbone & she very often spoke of them. Around 2016 or 2017 Ms Betty came to visit us here in Little Rock (we relocated here years later from Wynne) & it was such a joy seeing her!! R.I.L. Ms Betty; for sure we'll all meet again.
Gloria Carter/Little Rock, AR

Gloria Carter - February 06 at 11:01 AM

NT

“ It was always good seeing her when she came over our Granny Madea and Henry house in West Memphis on Autumn. It's always love having a good loving and caring family. That's how we were raised.

Nicole Tharps - February 05 at 02:05 PM

SH

“ Betty was a wonderful friend and a long time servant to Christ Church where she served in many roles. May she rest in peace with the Lord whom she loved.

Steve Higginbothom - February 03 at 07:33 PM

ST

“ Shirley Williams Thorn sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Betty Jean Bradley Cole



Shirley Williams Thorn - February 03 at 07:08 PM

ST

“ Family of Soror Cole, Heartfelt Sincere Condolences to you. I pray that God will hold you near and comfort you. May her beautiful memories warm your heart. Soror Cole will be dearly missed and not forgotten 🙏💕💚

Shirley Williams Thorn - February 03 at 07:06 PM

DF

“ *Debra Hargraves Ford lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Betty Jean Bradley Cole*



Debra Hargraves Ford - February 02 at 10:03 PM

GH

Betty was a classy lady in every sense of the word. My condolences to her family. May God grant them peace and strength during this time.

Gloria Hawkins - February 03 at 10:16 AM

DM

“ *A word of comfort and of hope, that in your deepest sorrow, you will find new strength and peace of mind and courage for tomorrow.” Please know that you are in my prayers.*



Sending condolences to the family of Betty Bradley Cole.

Delores Farr Morelon

Delores Farr Morelon - February 02 at 08:17 PM

DJ

“ *MY PRAYERS AND CONDOLENCES TO YOU FAMILY*



DEBRA Jamison - February 02 at 05:51 PM

JW

*Our Sincere Condolences to the Cole Family. She will truly be missed.
The Whitaker Family Madison,AR*

Janice Whitaker - February 02 at 08:54 PM

FS

With our sincere condolences 🙏 to the Cole family .

Jones and Shaw families

Frances Shaw - February 03 at 11:52 AM