

Lou Rawls

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"We started out together when he was singing church songs, him and Sam Cooke," Washington said. Recalling a heartfelt event he shared with Rawls, he said, "The last time we three were together was when Sam was performing in Los Angeles, and the night he [Cooke] got killed, we were sitting in the lobby after they had performed, talking about the old times in Las Vegas."

Washington spoke about one of Rawls legacies: "[Rawls] has done a lot for Black people, especially the Black colleges and universities. He really cared about his people and devoted much of his time helping others."

Another friend of Rawls, local youth development advocate and entertainer Lawrence T. Inkatha said, "Our relationship began at the age of nine when I was growing up in Detroit. We were a part of a group called the Four Pros, a protégé of the Four Tops. Around the age of 12 or so, my voice started to change; where I started out being a first tenor and all of a sudden my voice went to a bass, and I couldn't hit the high notes. My father introduced me to a live album by Lou Rawls, and I fell in love with his music."

Inkatha continued, "I looked up to Lou Rawls as



Entertainer Gene "Poo Poo Man" Anderson during happy times with long-time friend Lou Rawls.

my teacher, and I was his student. I take away from my [experience with Lou Rawls] an appreciation of all music. My most memorable thoughts... seeing him on stage. I saw him twice on stage, and he had a strong presence without all of the hoopla that you see today by other entertainers performing."

Rawls humility was noted by others, including Sarann Knight Preddy, who remembers him most for his kind public persona and the times he patronized the historic Moulin Rouge Showroom and Casino, which Preddy once owned.

"I have met him on several occasions. He used to come to the [Moulin] Rouge.. he never appeared there as a paid entertainer... but he came for shows," Preddy said. In keeping with his love

for charitable works, she added, "he performed for some fundraisers." She viewed him as "generous" and "awesome" and called him a "nice guy who the public loved."

Entertainer Gene "Poo Poo Man" Anderson, a member of George Clinton's Parliament Funkadelic and local resident, said, "I knew Lou Rawls very well, since I was about 7-years-old... I met him in Chicago early in my career."

Anderson recalls so many life events shared with Rawls and feels a great sense of loss for the kindness he said Rawls showed to people. "He was extremely encouraging to all parties around him. Rawls made people feel like they could know him. He was extremely warm. He would wave at people driving down the street." Anderson contin-

ued, "He was easy to get to. To be as astronomically large as he was as an artist, he was so easy to get to, to befriend. That makes a real star. He had no identity crisis at all."

"I have a thousand different memories," Anderson, thinking back over good times, said he cherishes one of the photographs he took with Rawls when they performed at a UNICEF fundraiser in St. Louis, Mo. "I am extremely proud of my association with him. He was my inspiration."

Everyone who commented about Rawls, highlighted his charitable work and his generous gift of his time to help raise money for worthy causes, like the college fund. Others knew Rawls in other special ways.

"I looked at Lou like an uncle and godfather. Lou and I go back almost 20-years. I used to talk to him all the time. He always gave me encouragement," said Mable Buckner-Payton, a local business owner. Payton said Rawls "always promoted education, and he worked so hard."

Payton credits Rawls with her success: "He is the one who encouraged me to move to Las Vegas to branch out in my special events planning business. He supported me [in my career] one-hundred percent."

Payton recited a favorite

Vet suing Jackson for delinquent bills

SANTA MARIA, Calif. (AP) - Michael Jackson is being sued for unpaid bills by the veterinarian who tends to the pop star's exotic animals at his Neverland ranch, which the singer has not occupied since being acquitted of child molestation charges last June.

Jackson has been living in the tiny Persian Gulf kingdom of Bahrain, but the lawsuit was filed in Santa Maria, Calif., where he stood trial last year.

Martin Dinnes, owner of Dinnes Memorial Veterinary Hospital, alleges that Jackson owes \$91,602 in veterinary bills. Dinnes helped the singer acquire animals for his zoo including flamingos, giraffes, elephants and orangutans, said his lawyer, Brenton Horner.

Dinnes continues to treat the animals regularly, Horner said. "He filed this (lawsuit) with great reluctance," Horner said. "He has a lot of admiration for Michael. This is just a business matter."

A hearing was set for May 2. Jackson lawyer Thomas Mesereau Jr. said he had not seen the complaint and could not comment.

saying of Rawls that he used to spur her move from Chicago to here: "There's nothing wrong with change. Change is good for everyone."

Payton added that she and her husband, entertainer and master of ceremonies, Jimmy Payton, who she met after moving to Las Vegas, "thought the world of him," spoken quietly as she prepared to travel to the funeral.

"We will never find another crooner like Lou Rawls. He was the epitome of class," she said.

Her words reflect the opinions of scores of Rawls' fans worldwide.

Rawls is survived by his wife Nina and four children: daughters Louanna Rawls and Kendra Smith; and sons Lou Rawls Jr. and baby Aiden.

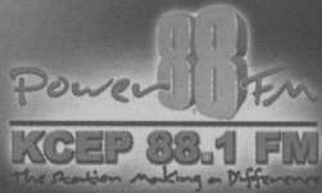
Angelus Funeral Home on South Crenshaw in Los Angeles is handling the arrangements. The funeral service is tomorrow at 11:00am at West Angeles Church of God in Christ.

Jesse Jackson will officiate the ceremony and Stevie Wonder, among others, will perform. In lieu of flowers, a Rawls family spokesman said they request donations be directed to the United Negro College Fund.

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