



Ruth Virginia Armstrong

December 3, 1928 - July 30, 2025

Ruth Virginia Armstrong (née Buckner), 96, of Chicago, Illinois, passed away in the presence of her daughter, on July 30, 2025. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, Ruth moved to Chicago in 1951, where she would build a remarkable life dedicated to caring for others and a deep love of family. She lived in Northern California for several years in the 2000s and 2010s.

Ruth attended St. Mary's of Nazareth School of Nursing in Chicago. Graduating in 1954, she was the first African American to earn a degree from the school. She passed the Illinois Nursing Board exam that same year, earning the highest score, and became a Registered Nurse. In the same year she married Charles B. Armstrong, who became publisher of the Chicago Metro News newspaper. Their partnership spanned over three decades until his death in 1985. As a registered nurse, Ruth devoted nearly fifty years to serving patients at several Chicago hospitals, including St. Mary's of Nazareth, University of Chicago Billings, Michael Reese (where she managed the G.I. Lab), Doctors Hospital of Hyde Park, and Sacred Heart. Her commitment to nursing reflected her compassionate nature and dedication to healing others. In addition to working full time, she frequently volunteered at her children's schools and led Girl Scout and Cub Scout troops, demonstrating her unwavering dedication to her community and her children's development.

Ruth was the devoted mother of six children: Sara A. (deceased), Margalynne

J. (Andrew), Judith M. (John), Charles B. Jr., Patricia M., and Peter C. (Karen). She was the cherished grandmother of Christina, Halema, Shakir, Justin (LaToya), Julian, Jillian, Ian, Ariel, Charles, and Rebecca. She was an adored mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother to four generations of descendants.

Beyond her family and career, Ruth had a profound passion for music in all its forms. She was a joyous devotee of the opera, attending numerous performances at Chicago's Lyric Opera and the San Francisco Opera. In 1978 she toured renowned European opera houses including La Scala in Milan, the Vienna State Opera House and the Hungarian State Opera in Budapest. Her musical tastes were wonderfully eclectic - she equally loved and attended concerts of popular artists like Tina Turner, Joe Cocker, and Pink Floyd. She also had a special fondness for musical theater, with "Carousel" being her favorite.

Ruth was an avid traveler who enjoyed exploring the world, visiting Europe, the Philippines, Canada, Jamaica, New York and other states. She delighted in sharing her love of adventure with her family, taking her grandchildren to Disneyworld and creating cherished memories with them.

Ruth is survived by her sister Yvonne of Dallas, Texas, her five children, ten grandchildren, numerous great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews and their descendants who will miss her wisdom, warmth, and enduring love.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial donations be directed to charities Ruth supported including: Greater Chicago Food Depository (<https://www.chicagosfoodbank.org/>), PBS (<https://www.wttw.com/>), or the NAACP (<https://naacp.org/donate>).

Funeral services will be held on August 9 at 11:00 am at Calvary Cemetery Chapel, Evanston, Illinois. Interment and reception to follow. Arrangements by Barr Funeral Home, Chicago, Illinois.

Previous Events

Service

AUG 9. 11:00 AM (CT)

Calvary Cemetery
301 Chicago Avenue
Evanston, IL 60202

There will be a closed casket service in the chapel of the cemetery.

Tribute Wall

DM

“ *Rest in Peace, Mrs. A.*

Dave Morris - February 02 at 05:31 PM

MA

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Margalynne Armstrong - August 17, 2025 at 03:16 AM

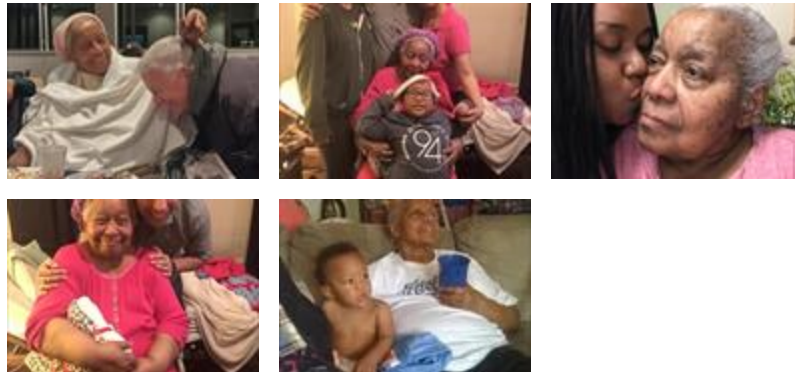
MA

Miss you mom ❤️

Margalynne Armstrong - August 17, 2025 at 03:17 AM

JT

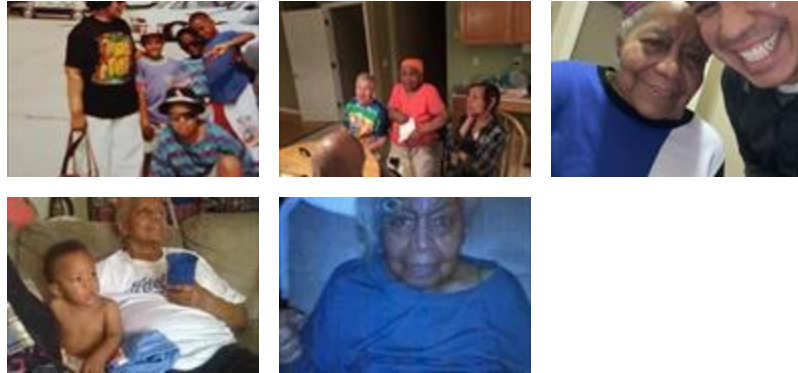
“ *We love you mom!*



Justin Terhune - August 09, 2025 at 07:01 PM

JT

“ 17 files added to the tribute wall



Justin Terhune - August 09, 2025 at 06:58 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Margalynne Armstrong - August 07, 2025 at 03:25 AM



“ Margalynne Armstrong lit a candle in memory of Ruth Virginia Armstrong



Margalynne Armstrong - August 07, 2025 at 03:15 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Ruth Virginia Armstrong.*



August 06, 2025 at 10:30 AM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Barr Funeral Home - August 04, 2025 at 02:38 PM