

# Annette 'Nettos' Ingram remembered for love, laughter and faith

COLUMBIA — Tanya Williams flashed a smile, cocked her hips, thumped her chest with her palm and said, "I'm saying: You're not a puppy, you're a full-grown dog, and it's time to stand on your own four paws."

She was imitating her mother, Annette Ingram. Even though Williams was raised by her grandparents, she said her mother taught her some of her most important life lessons.

"Our mother, 'Nettos,' was a bridge," Williams said. "She closed a lot of gaps and led us to people."

Annette "Nettos" Marie Ingram of Columbia died Monday, April 13, 2015. She was 59.

Ingram, who was born June 15, 1955, left her first home in Michigan in her 20s to get a fresh start closer to family in East St. Louis. But she stayed in touch with her Michigan friends and encouraged them to move down to St. Louis, where there were better job opportunities, Williams said.

Annette Ingram met Malcolm Ingram, the love of her life, in East St. Louis. They married and moved to Columbia to be in a safer area and settle down, Williams said.

They were married for about 30 years.

Family members gathered outside of Rooten Tooten Barbecue off of North Garth Avenue early Tuesday afternoon to raise money for the celebration of Ingram's life. They sold hot dogs, hamburgers, soda and snacks.

It didn't go smoothly right away, but they made it work.

The family didn't have a grill, but they called a friend. The sign for their barbecue kept falling down, but they found a brick to anchor it.

"We're not gonna worry about that now," Williams said, giving another "Netto-ism." "Just a little bump in the road, now we're on the other side of the bump."

Ingram's legacy is her three daughters: Tanya Williams, April McKinney and Desiree Griffin. They share Ingram's toothy grin and her strong faith.

She is also survived by her stepdaughter, Camisha Moore, 12 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

"She had a love of God and she instilled a love of faith in her family," her sister Pearl Henderson said. "No matter what, we are a praying family."

Her faith wasn't idle – whenever Friendship Missionary Baptist Church needed a volunteer, she signed up. Ingram volunteered as an usher, cleaned the church and help raise money singing carols and baking cookies during Christmastime.

"I ain't got no money, but I got some time," Ingram would say.

Her giving spirit wasn't extinguished by her sickness. She never asked for help or called upon others — her first instinct was to think of everyone else.

She was a "soldier of love," Williams said.

Williams recalled Ingram's final piece of wisdom during her sickness.

"That man upstairs has been my friend a mighty long time," Ingram told her daughter. "Even when I didn't know it ... but I know it."

Services will be held at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, 1707 Smiley Lane.

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