



John Henry McElveen

March 6, 1936 - April 19, 2016

John H. McElveen, better known as Johnny Bean, age 80; of New Haven passed away on Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at Yale-New Haven's St. Raphael campus. His death was attributed to complications arising from pneumonia. Johnny is survived by his wife of 56 years, Helen S.; four sons; Romerro R., Jonathan J., and John H. McElveen, Jr.; and Daryl Pygatt, all of New Haven; one daughter, Monica Pygatt, of West Haven. He is also survived by five grandsons: Jamel V. Glasgow of New Haven; Anthony J. S., Idriss, and Jamal M. Pygatt of Atlanta, GA; and Samuel D. Wilson of Utica, NY. Johnny was also blessed with five great-grandchildren; Kyla S. and Jamel V. Glasgow, Jr.; and Sanaa, Anthony J., Jr., and Bryant Pygatt.

Johnny is preceded in death by one daughter, Helen P. McElveen; three sons, D'Artagnan and Johnny McElveen; and Anthony Pygatt; also one granddaughter, Nefertaria McElveen; and one great-grandson, Ethan E. Pygatt.

Johnny was born in Kingstree, SC, on March 6, 1936, to the late Ellen (Woods) and Lonie McElveen. Johnny was raised and educated in the city of Philadelphia, PA, although he often spent his summers with family in New Haven, CT. He met his wife, Helen S. Pygatt in Philly. They were married on May 28, 1960 and relocated to Brooklyn, New York. Johnny and Helen would eventually, permanently relocate to New Haven in 1986.

He lived and breathed the sport of boxing. Johnny was a former amateur, and later, professional boxer in both the featherweight, and lightweight divisions.

During a weigh in for his second professional bout, an official complained that the name McElveen was too long for a fighter. His manager offered “call him Bean”, due to his skinny body type; hence his boxing name, Johnny Bean. Johnny began training as a boxer, at a local Philadelphia gym, at the tender age of 8. He would go on to fight internationally, as a professional, from 1955-1971. During his boxing career, Johnny fought some of the biggest names of his day, including Carlos "Teo" Cruz, Harold Gomes and Sugar Ramos. Whenever he was not boxing, Johnny worked in the supermarket industry, primarily in management positions throughout his adult life. He ultimately retired from Stop and Shop in 2005.

Johnny became active in the House of Refuse Church in 2006 after meeting it's leader, Pastor Dorothy Greene, while convalescing in a local nursing home from a major surgery.

Flowers, acknowledgements, and donations to the family can be sent in the care of Beulah Heights Pentecostal Church.

Cemetery Details

Evergreen Cemetery

769 Ella T Grasso Blvd
New Haven, CT

Previous Events

Calling Hours

APR **29**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Beulah Heights Pentecostal Church
782 Orchard Street
New Haven, CT 06511

Service

APR **29**. 11:00 AM (ET)

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Tribute Wall



“ *John Henry McElveen* ”

October 09, 2023 at 06:14 AM