



Shirley Merrick Way

Description

Please join us for the NANA General meeting on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at the North Avondale Montessori School Cafeteria, from 6:30pm-8:00pm. We will be discussing and voting on a proposed city ordinance to add a secondary street sign at Avondale Ave. and Reading Rd. The family of Shirley Merrick is requesting NANA approve an ordinance from Vice Mayor Kearney's office for the installation of a secondary street sign, which shall designate the naming of the intersection of Reading Road and Avondale Avenue in North Avondale as "Shirley Merrick Way". This request would not change the name of the street, but would place a green honorary sign below the Avondale Avenue street sign.

Shirley Ann (Moss) Merrick was born April 2, 1933, Harlem, New York, the only child of Thurston and Virginia Moss. Shirley Merrick was a brilliant pianist and accepted into the Julliard School. Shirley married her childhood friend across the street, Henry P. Merrick, and they moved to Cincinnati, OH in 1959 where they raised six children in North Avondale.

In 1977 Shirley Merrick opened G & Shirley's Health Food Store in North Avondale. She said, "The G stands for God because he is my partner." Because health food was still outside of mainstream America and the Black community where professional healthcare was frequently ineffectual, Mrs. Merrick brought the message of "food is medicine" to the people. She regularly spoke at recreation centers, nursing homes, schools, churches, and civic centers and wrote for *NIP Magazine* and the *Cincinnati Herald*. Mrs. Merrick was a member of Zion Baptist Church and shared her knowledge with her beloved fellow believers, designing plans for their respective health conditions. Merrick conducted a weekly radio program on health on WCIN. An uninterrupted student of homeopathic living, she stayed aware of cutting-edge knowledge and acquired the latest products for her store, and always provided the highest quality without compromise. Merrick read science and health literature daily and attended several national health conferences annually. Shirley Merrick studied under and was certified by Nobel Prize winning scientist Linus Pauling, pioneer of the Vitamin C revolution.

Mrs. Merrick participated in many Cincinnati 5-K runs. She was the recipient of the *Applause Magazine* "Most Influential 100 Black Cincinnatians" award. Local and national dignitaries have been beneficiaries of her health wisdom, including former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services,

U.S. Congresswoman and Ambassador to Ireland, Margaret Heckler. G & Shirley's will be 46 years old in October 2023. It's located in College Hill, operated by Merrick's 4th daughter, Valynda Ann Mitchell, and has customers nationwide. It is the oldest Black-owned health food store in the United States.

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