



Gloria Jean Wiggins

November 11, 1952 - August 29, 2026

Baltimore, Maryland

Gloria Jean Wiggins died in Baltimore on August 29, 2026. She was seventy-three. Born there on November 11, 1952, she grew up in a row that kept the stoop swept and the radio on the ballgame, and she learned a case file before she learned a campus. A form, she said, is a door: it can open or it can pretend to.

She spent twenty-nine years as a social-services caseworker, walking kitchens after an eviction notice and school offices after a child had already been asked to be older than the calendar. She did not enjoy the work the way a person enjoys a hobby. She enjoyed finishing it correctly. She would not let a mother be rushed. She would not let a number invent a family. After a bad afternoon she sat in the car with the radio off until her hands were quiet.

She married Andre Wiggins in 1976. They raised a son and a daughter in a house that needed storm windows and a porch that never lacked an extra chair. Andre drove a sanitation truck. Gloria packed lunches and considered a Sunday crab a civic obligation. After she retired she read the paper with a pencil and argued, fondly, with the letters page.

Friends remember a woman who showed up to help move a couch as if that were the natural use of a Saturday, who could explain a deadline without making it a sermon, and who kept one good coat. She loved a quiet pew, a cup of coffee that was never quite hot enough, and the harbor when it looked like metal. She died in Baltimore, the port city she refused to narrate as a punch line. The files are closed. The fairness she practiced there is harder to replace than a case number.

Services

A memorial in Baltimore. A gift to a family-services fund or the Enoch Pratt library suits her.

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