

Elder Samuel Rowell and Mrs. Lula Mae Rowell are being recognized by the Ocean City Juneteenth Organization with the Business Leadership Award during the Inaugural Juneteenth Celebration & Brunch, June 17, 2017. Mr. and Mrs. Rowell's business motto of "Brotherly Love" is reflected in all they have done in serving the community with creating jobs and creating business opportunities for years. Mr. Rowell and his family's legacy is personified by hard work, selflessness, and second chances. The tradition is living on with Mrs. Rowell and the Rowell children.

Mr. Rowell was born on October 29th, 1940 to John C. Rowell and Alberta Omiller Davis-Rowell in Marion County, South Carolina. Mr. Rowell grew up on his father's farm in South Carolina, and was the 5th of fourteen children. Mr. Rowell graduated from Terrell's Bay High School in Centenary, South Carolina, and was an all-star basketball player. One day as Mr. Rowell was plowing in his father's fields, he made a decision that there was a better life out there. As he has often shared the story, he left the plow and the mule in the field, got on a bus and made the trip to Ocean City, New Jersey. Mr. Rowell met a beautiful mentor, who soon gave him a position as a chef at the Chatterbox restaurant in Ocean City. Mr. Rowell also performed odd jobs, such as selling balloons on the Ocean City boardwalk. Mr. Rowell joined the United States Army, and was a Korean War veteran. Through his travels back and forth to New Jersey, Mr. Rowell encountered a beautiful young lady, Ms. Lula Mae Crawford. After a short flirtatious courtship, Mr. Rowell asked his young beauty to marry him. Mr. Rowell was employed by Buffalo Molded Plastics Company in Somers Point, NJ, where he continued to work for many years even as he ran his own business. Mr. Rowell and Mrs. Rowell purchased a home in Ocean City, and in the early 1960's began their family. They continued to add to their family, and many children followed. Mr. Rowell would often refer to his many children as his own baseball team. Mr. Rowell and Mrs. Rowell were both members of the Household of Faith church in South Carolina under the leadership of Bishop George W. Chambers. Mr. Rowell soon pastored a sister church in Ocean City. The church was run on the first floor of the "*Pink Hotel*," which Mr. Rowell owned and operated as well. Mr. Rowell's relationship with his Ocean City Chatterbox mentor blossomed, and she assisted him in starting his own business performing moving and hauling jobs. Mr. Rowell's success was immediate, and he began to acquire additional real estate in Ocean City. At one point, he owned a great deal of property on West and Bay avenues in Ocean City. Mr. Rowell became a landlord that paved the way for many to migrate from the south to Ocean City, even offering many transport to the north. Mr. Rowell fathered the business, *Sam Rowell & Sons Moving and Hauling*, which has been in business for over 45 years, and today is run by his sons. Mr. Rowell instilled his work ethic into his children and ensured that they knew how to work hard to pursue their dreams. In his travels, he often returned from the south with truckloads of watermelons, and sold them to the community citizens and supermarkets alike. Many will remember him for his kind words, helping hand, and commitment to treating others with respect. While Mr. Rowell would admit that he was not perfect, he presented himself a role model for all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Lula Mae Crawford was born on January 1st, 1942 to William and Ardella Crawford. Mrs. Rowell is the 3rd of eight children and her parents were prominent farmers in Pee Dee, South Carolina. Mrs. Rowell graduated from Marion County High School in 1960. Since a very young girl, Mrs. Rowell has been a member of the Household of Faith church under the leadership of Bishop George W. Chambers in Marion, South Carolina. As a very young woman, Mrs. Rowell was at a basketball game where she met Samuel Rowell. Mrs. Rowell was infatuated with Sam, and they soon began a courtship that led to a proposal of marriage. Sam was traveling back and forth to New Jersey, and Mrs. Rowell had migrated to New York where she lived with her best friend. The courtship continued, and finally in early 1964 the two married. While Sam completed his tour of duty with the United States army, Mrs. Rowell gave birth to their first child. Mrs. Rowell and Sam soon moved to Ocean City, New Jersey where Sam had begun to establish roots, and had worked during summers on the boardwalk. As the two began their family, many children followed. Mrs. Rowell loves her children, and has always protected her children as a lion mother to her cubs. As her husband's business, *Samuel Rowell & Sons*, began to skyrocket in success, Mrs. Rowell truly was the backbone of the business. Mrs. Rowell ensured that the accounts receivable and accounts payable were performed appropriately. She ensured that scheduling was appropriate, that adequate workers were assigned, performed all payroll, tax reporting, truck maintenance, and customer service were all above reproach. The business would not be what it is today without her finite wisdom and oversight. Mrs. Rowell truly is the woman who made the man and the family. As Sam served as pastor of his own church, Mrs. Rowell served as the First Lady. She also acted as treasurer and secretary for the church. Mrs. Rowell treasured events such as preparing the children for Easter services. She also sang, and led services in the church. One of Sam and Mrs. Rowell's greatest assets was their own singing group, *The Rowelletes*, which was entirely made up of their own children, and an accomplishment they were both extremely proud of. Through all of her hard work, Mrs. Rowell found the time to raise and support her family, but also worked outside the home at Buffalo Molded Plastics Company in Somers Point. Mrs. Rowell also served as record keeper for all of the properties that she and her husband acquired. Mrs. Rowell ensured that public property was maintained and clean. She collected rents, and ensured that repairs were timely. Coupled with her husband, they created a powerhouse in the Ocean City community. Mrs. Rowell is a mother first and foremost, and could often be heard singing a hymn or humming a tune at the kitchen sink. She has always been an inspiration to her children, her community, and to her extended family. Many children throughout the community refer to her as "mom." Mrs. Rowell exemplifies the true meaning of love with all those who encounter her. Mrs. Rowell is now enjoying her days as a mother and grandmother to 55 grandchildren.