



Mission Viejo **Writers**  
*Author Series* Present

**Phyllis Lawson**

**Saturday, June 18**  
**11:00 am**

Council Chamber at City Hall  
 200 Civic Center, Mission Viejo

**Call for reservation**  
**949-830-7100 x5105**

**www.cmvi.org**

Sponsored by Friends of the Mission Viejo Library and partnered  
 with South Orange County Genealogical Society




**An Invitation from South Orange County Genealogical Society**  
**Author Phyllis Lawson, Saturday June 18, 2016, 11 am**  
**Council Chamber at City Hall, Mission Viejo**

At the age of four years old, I was plucked off my front porch, from the only family I knew, and delivered sixteen hours away to land on the doorstep of Grandmother Lula, who I never met before. I was abandoned by my mother, pure and simple. I needed a miracle and that miracle took the form of an old tattered quilt (a family heirloom) that my grandmother made out of the clothing of long lost loved ones who died in the face of extreme bigotry, racism and ugliness that was pervasive to that time.

Lula Horn (1883-1986), through oral tradition, and through the weaving of ripped up pieces of clothes transformed into quilts, told me the tragic stories of my ancestor's lives and deaths. Each piece of cloth woven into the quilt had the blood, sweat and tears of Black people living and dying at the hands of unconscionable injustices. The weaving of their clothing into a quilt mended each broken life back together with each pull of the thread.

Born in 1883, Grandma Lula lived to be 103 years old and overcame the ugliness of racism through creating beautiful quilts. She quilted as a way to bring healing into the world, and working on this quilt created something even more powerful: an impenetrable bond between Grandmother and Granddaughter.

In addition to her career in the military, Phyllis Lawson worked as a professional counselor for the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia. She currently resides in Florida. She is married and has two sons and five granddaughters. Seamlessly written, *Quilt of Souls* is a book that needs to be brought to the forefront. It is a rare story not only due to the complexities and intricacies of the quilt as a physical object, but also what it stands for metaphorically. It speaks about, and unearths, the taboo subjects that were only heard in whispers during that era.

*Quilt of Souls* is a book the world needs to have. It is more than my personal memoir; it is a historical unveiling of hushed bloodlines and stories of a time and place that got swept under the carpet-powerful, intense, poignant stories that need to be heard.

No matter your ethnicity, this book will transport you back in time and will break your heart wide open. It will make you laugh, cry, and swell with hope and resilience. Out of the grave agony of despair comes healing for many generations. *Quilt of Souls* is about the strength of Black women who prevailed before and after the turn of the century, a demographic that has gone unrecognized, with no celebration of the lives they endured and upheld. The untold stories of these women who were quilt makers, laundresses, and butter churners are revealed in this book. It tells of how they survived and provided for their children and the grandchildren they raised.