



Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service  
Western Area

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# The Emerald News

LINK PAULETTE REDDICK TURNER, EDITOR

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## Spotlight on Link Dene Wallace

### Who is Link Dene?

Link Dene is a classy, sophisticated sister Link, who embodies the epitome of friendship. She has been married to Bob for 49 years and is the mother of three children, Rob, Kelci, and Morgen, and the grandmother of Kensey. Link Dene was an English major who had a 33-year career as a Professional Education High School Administrator.

Linkdom has been a part of Link Dene Wallace's family for many years, even before Dene became a member of the Phoenix (AZ) Chapter. Link Dene's mother, Mildred Bennett, and her aunts, Mary Jones and Goldye Hart, were



Links who ushered her and her sister, Linda Craig Sardana, into Linkdom on the same day in 1971, 47 years ago. Also part of this family of Links are cousins Angela Kirkendall and Ann Hart. Before becoming Links, Dene and her sister were presented as debutantes in the Links' Cotillion. As part of the long standing event sponsored by

the Phoenix (AZ) Chapter, both of Link Dene's daughters were also presented and soon her granddaughter will carry on this tradition by being presented during the Links' Cotillion.

Becoming a Link at the early age of 23 seemed natural to Link Dene. She credits her husband, Connecting Link Bob Wallace, who was a pro-football player with the Chicago Bears, with being very supportive and helping her balance Links, work and family.

### Linkdom: A Lasting Proposition

For Link Dene, Linkdom is a way of life. "Being members of the premiere organization for professional African-American women gives us the opportunity to serve our communities while building friendships with Link sisters throughout Linkdom." Link Dene has fully embraced the role of servant leader during her many years as a Link. She served four years as President of her Chapter and four years as Vice-President. She served as recording secretary twice, chair of Education Linkage and has been on all five facets. She has also served as chairman of her Chapter galas, golf tournaments and Cotillion. At the Western Area level Link Dene was chair of Education Linkage and currently serves on the committee for Recording Secretaries, where she helped put together the rubric that has helped streamline how secretaries take minutes. At the National level, Link Dene



was co-chair of the Young Achiever’s Initiative and served on the Essence Care Mentoring Committee. One of her proudest moments in Linkdom came when the 2018 National Assembly approved an amendment to the National Bylaws, which Link Dene had proposed. The amendment will allow members with 45 years of service who have served in an elected office at the local or national level, to be considered for Platinum membership.

While serving the community through her affiliation with the Phoenix (AZ) Chapter, Link Dene was creating a name for herself as an educational administrator. During her 33-year career, she served on many boards and committees at the local and state level. She organized the first youth component of the local chapter of the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE).

### ***The Family Affair***



**The Wallace Family on Mother’s Day**

When members of the Western Area Alumna and Platinum Affairs Committee visited Link Dene in her home, we were treated to a family affair as all of Link Dene’s children, her husband and granddaughter joined in the fun. Present were Connecting Link Bob, son Rob, daughters Kelci and Morgen, and granddaughter Kensey,



who won a “Floss-style” dance off with a member of our committee. To top off the visit, Link Dene’s dog-babies, Abbi and Bandit, provided plenty of barks.

This family is one that plays together. Link Dene is an avid golfer, who started playing at 12 years old. Much like her decision to become a Link was influenced by her mother,



**Her mother’s club**

Connecting Link Bob mentored students in the community on golfing fundamentals.

her love for the game of golf mirrored her mother’s love for the game. And following in Link Dene’s footsteps, both of her daughters became avid golfers, who earned golf scholarships to attend college. One of Link Dene’s prized possessions is an old wood club of her mother’s. She calls it her “go to” club. She has always played the game for pleasure and along with

### ***Changes over the years***

Link Dene reflected on how Linkdom has changed since she became a member. She talked about being in the Phoenix (AZ) Chapter when all of the charter members were still alive and the impact they made on her. She shared how in the past, a woman was invited to join the Links because of her husband’s status in the community. She shared that when she became a Link, there was no national strategic plan structure for programs. She also highlighted positive changes through the years, including: today women are invited to join based on their merits and the chapter’s programing needs; the Service Delivery Model has provided a national method for planning and evaluating local programs; the Strategic Plan keeps the chapter focused; health became such a big initiative that it was named a facet; and Scott Hawkins was created to provide training for younger members.

### ***Words of Wisdom***

Link Dene offered the following advice for 21<sup>st</sup> century Links:

- Remember what our founders were thinking about when the organization was founded.
- Be mindful of the community and what they are expecting and never let them down.
- Mentor new members. Let them know why we are the organization we are.

