Salute to Veterans

Commemorating

50th Anniversary of the Korean Conflict
25th Year Anniversary of Vietnam
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Black Voice Foundation, Inc. Salutes Veterans

About The Foundation

The Black Voice Foundation, Inc. was founded by Hardy and Cheryl Brown, publishers of the Black Voice News in Riverside, California in 1988 with the help of a grant from IBM. The original mission of the foundation was to educate and train individuals in all aspects of the media. The foundation’s focus has since broadened to encompass not only media education but education in local African-American history, research in the humanities, and support of cultural and artistic activities primarily in the Southern California region. The Black Voice Foundation, Inc., a non-profit educational foundation for media studies, the arts and humanities, initiates its own projects and does not encourage unsolicited proposals.

Cultural Activities
The foundation sponsors cultural activities in the Southern California region. Past events include: co-sponsorship of a local appearance by poet laureate Maya Angelou, and Amandela Awethu, a photojournalistic exhibit highlighting the contributions of African-Americans in South Africa’s fight for freedom and the termination of Apartheid. The exhibit was featured at the California Afro-American Museum in 1994.

Community Activities
The foundation also sponsors community activities, including an annual trip to the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo in Los Angeles. In conjunction with the Black Voice News, the foundation publishes a special tabloid featuring local rodeo figures as well as traditional historical Black figures of “The West.” Another special tabloid feature of the Black Voice News is the Underground Railroad Experience, chronicling the route slaves took in their flight to freedom.

Archives
Preserves African-American history, particularly in the Inland Empire, through the collection of information on Blacks who live in both Riverside and San Bernardino counties. The archive also contains the Black Voice News which chronicles the achievements of Blacks in the Inland Empire since 1972.

Black Voice News Salutes Veterans

Brown Publishing Company is a full service news gathering and printing company with specialties in printing and selling books. The company consists of four entities in two sites, located in Riverside and San Bernardino, with affiliates in Los Angeles, Washington D.C., North Carolina and Ohio.

Black Voice News, the news gathering and dissemination arm of Brown Publishing Company, is an award-winning, legally adjudicated newspaper of general circulation. The only African-American newspaper in Riverside, it has approximately 10,000 audited circulation weekly with a readership of 40,000. It also has a mailing list of over 2000 paid subscribers with a renewal rate of over 98 percent. We have over 200 newstands in operation for easy customer access and are constantly expanding throughout the Inland Empire. To compliment the newstands we have over 41 church sites, business, and beauty and barber shop establishment drop-off delivery points.

Brown’s Books is the first and oldest Black bookstore in the Inland Empire with a variety of non-fiction, fiction, books for your reading enjoyment. Located in San Bernardino and Riverside, Brown’s Books specializes in African American Literature. The San Bernardino office of Brown’s Books’ primary focus is African American children literature.
Grant: WWII Heroes Were Black Too

By Cheryl Brown

Citizens of our nation watching the major media could have come away with the impression Black men did not fight in World War II during this year of the 50th Commemoration. This angered the men who risked their lives and families whose loved ones gave their lives so we Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and others could have freedom.

When they returned home they were met with visible signs that they were inferior, they could not get jobs as their White counterparts could and everywhere they turned it was "Colored" here "White" there. The visible signs have been removed. Every says we are equal. Tell that to Nathaniel "Nate" John Grant, one of the Buffalo Soldiers who fought valiantly in the War. He was hurt 50 years ago when he came home to the visible signs of legal segregation but hurt even more because the visible signs are gone but his contributions were ignored as our country commemorated the 50th Anniversary of W.W.II.

Grant was one of the thousands and thousands of Black soldiers who fought valiantly in the War. He was born in Leavenworth, Kansas in 1921, and is a second generation Buffalo Soldier, his father was Master Sergeant John Grant, 10th Calvary (Retired).

The Buffalo Soldier, goes back to 1866, shortly after the Civil War, four new U.S. Army regiments began duty in the Western territories of America. These soldiers were sent to protect the settlers moving West. They were designated as the 24th and 25th Infantry and the Ninth and Tenth Calvary. They fought with distinction in the Cheyenne War from 1867-1869, the Red River War of 1874-1875, the Ute War of 1879, the Apache Wars of 1875-1876 and the Sioux War of 1890-1891. They received 13 Medals of Honor, achieved the best combat records and were given the title of Buffalo Soldiers by the Native Americans. There was much they did in the expansion of our nation and in 1952, 86 years after their beginning, they were integrated with the Ninth and Tenth Calvary. They were the most highly decorated units in U.S. military history.

Grant, was a modern day Buffalo Soldier in the Ninth Calvary, who also served and retired from the U.S. Air Force. His duty began January 29, 1941, in Fort Riley, Kansas, soon he was transferred to Camp Funston, Kansas. "We began preparing for war. But we did not have the proper equipment. We practiced with wooden guns and used broom sticks to walk guard," said Grant. In 1941 there were maneuvers in Louisiana, there they were not allowed to go near the White community. The area was very prejudice against the soldiers.

In 1942 He was sent on a cadre to form the 93rd Infantry Division at Fort Wachuka, Arizona. He was a platoon Sergeant in the 93rd Calvary Recon. Troop. Between 1942 -43 he was sent to Fort McCollan, Alabama to form the 92nd Recon. Troop, again he was Platoon Sergeant.

By 1944, the 92nd Division was sent into combat. Grant's outfit was sent to Italy, where he received two Battle Stars, one from the battle in Povalley the other from the Arnold River battle.

It was in Italy that Grant's life was saved by a stranger. An Italian woman, to whom he owes his life. He was in an area and the enemy began shelling their retreat. "She threw me down and laid on top of me protecting me from a shell that landed 10 to 12 feet away, he said. Neither of them were hurt but the idea that the Italian woman saved his life and he never knew who she was makes him think about it even today. "I am so grateful to a person I didn't know and who I never saw again," said Grant.

When Grant received orders to go to Alaska, not wanting to be in such a cold isolated place he left of the Army and joined the Air Force. This proved to be one of the best moves in his life. His first assignment in the Air Force was sunny California March A.F.B., "we (Blacks) were all assigned to Squadron C or F, they did housekeeping duties (cooking and cleaning) all except three had Air Force assignments. Grant was assigned to the Skillet Range because of his experience in weapons, this was 1946.

Between the years of 1946-1949, all Colored troops were sent to Lockburn, Ohio, near Columbus, under the leadership of Col. B. O. Davis, Jr. in the 617 Bombardment Squadron Light which was a support group of the Tuskegee Airmen. Grant was relocated and worked as an armament man, working on the guns. "We were the firstbase to integrate the Air Force," he said.

The Korean War broke out in 1950 -1951 and Grant was sent to Norton A.F.B. in San Bernardino.

The Korean War took him overseas to France three years, when he returned in 1954 he was sent to George A.F.B. In 1958, Grant volunteered to go back to France. His career ended in 1961, when he retired from Glasco AFB, Montana.

Being in love with the weather in So. California, he returned and still resides in San Bernardino.

In 1970 he married for a second time, Alice Taylor, he has a son and daughter, Nathaniel Jr. and Linda.

WWII Hero William Hulsey

William Hulsey is a native of Los Angeles, California and has been a resident of San Bernardino since 1961. After graduating from Jefferson High School, he joined the United States Army and served in the European Theater of Operations during World War II. On "D" Day he was one of the troops who landed at Omaha Beach. At the end of World War II, he left the standing arny and joined the U.S. Army Reserves from which he retired in 1982. Hulsey worked in federal civil service for the United States Post Office for 10 years. On moving to San Bernardino in 1961, he continued in government service as an inspector at the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Barstow. He retired in 1982.

Hulsey is well known for his work with young people of the westside community from 1961 to 1983, including director of the State Champion Pacemakers Drill Team, who were champions in three categories. In addition, he coached two girls softball teams, winning league championships for two years.

He has been responsible for the choreography and continuity of the Beautification since its inception 28 years ago.
By Paulette Brown-Hinds

Over the past few years, Willie Porter of San Bernardino, noticed that the television broadcasts focused on the Buffalo Soldiers of the later 1800's. These "all Black" army units, were the soldiers that "won the west" and set the standards for the Buffalo Soldiers that followed. But little has been said about the Buffalo Soldiers of the 20th century, the last soldiers to carry on the proud tradition. "My life as a Buffalo Soldier started at Camp Lockett in 1943," said Porter. Camp Lockett is located east of San Diego and was first established as a cavalry camp in 1878. The location was chosen because it had a variety of terrain that includes heavily wooded underbrush, one of the world's harshest deserts, and a variety of other geographic hazards that developed a cavalry trooper's skills.

"It was at Camp Lockett that I had my first personal experience with a horse. Being from Detroit I was considered a "city slicker" I was issued a beautiful horse that I named Eve. The first day of training was hard, but today I am considered an expert rider," boasted Porter.

The Buffalo Soldiers trained intensely on horseback in anticipation of charging into battle overseas. He recalled his orders clearly, "The 9th and 27th regiments, located in Arizona, along with our two regiments made up the 2nd Cavalry Division. The 2nd Cavalry Division was shipped to North Africa in 1943 by way of Camp Patrick Henry. We sailed on the U.S.S. Billy Mitchell on its maiden voyage. We were scared but ready and proud to fight as a division. Upon reaching North Africa we received the shock of our lives."

The Army Headquarters had decided to disband the 2nd Cavalry Division and it was divided. "In the cavalry we were called troopers. After the change we were called soldiers. I was assigned to a tank battalion," recalled Porter. He received several commendations for his service including a Purple Heart, Combat Infantry Badge, and several citations for his participation in numerous invasions.

With the exception of a few White officers, the Buffalo Soldiers were composed entirely of African Americans. The name Buffalo Soldiers was given to the 9th and 10th Cavalry units as a sign of respect by the Indians they fought. Buffalo, according to military historian, David Allen, were worshipped and revered by the Indians. To place the title on the frontier. They reportedly patrolled from the Mississippi to the Rockies, from the Canadian border to the Rio Grande and they occasionally crossed into Mexico in pursuit of outlaws.

However, Bill Porter regrets that he was unable to fight under the colors of the Buffalo Soldiers, "My success in combat can be traced back to the fine training that I received as a tradition handed down by these brave men. My heart fills with pride as having served as a Buffalo Soldier. Fifty-two years later, I returned to the small town of Campo to visit Camp Lockett. I toured the historical landmark. As long as I live, I will be proud of the fact that I was one of the few...Buffalo Soldiers."

"In Memory Of Those Who Fought So That We Can Live"
By Cheryl Brown

In 1943 while still in high school Ollie Jackson, 18, was drafted. The war effort was calling every young man who was in physical shape to fight. The war was in full gear and this Oklahoma City native who was born in 1925 was still a youngster. Jackson was a good student and his principal petitioned and was granted a deferment for him.

As Jackson reminisces about that time he says he'll never forget. "It hurts to this day, I could not graduate with my class," he said. But what hurts more is the way he was treated in those days but compounded by the way he has been treated 50 years later. He too is insulted, by the way the celebrations left out the Black soldiers. "Even the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) calendar came out to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of W.W.II and of all 12 months not one Black was recognized," Jackson said. They have written the Buffalo Soldiers out of history. "How can they continue to do this and not tell the truth about what happened," he said. Black soldiers were among the best most decorated soldiers in the Armed Forces," he said.

Jackson didn't know what to expect. He was the first in his family to serve in the military.

Upon his induction into the Tenth Calvary (Buffalo Soldiers) Jackson went to Fort Seal, OK but quickly was sent out. He tells the story about the rumor that they were going to be shipped out to Mississippi. "When we found out we were going to Camp Locket in El Centro, California, we were ecstatic." We were training with horses and training because we expected Japan to come (invade) in from the West." They didn't and we were shipped to Newport News, Virginia before going to Oran in North Africa. From there we went to Tunisia on to Toronto, Italy to Foggia, Italy. Jackson's job was to prepare the landing fields and build a new runway for the B-17 and B-29 bombers to land. Jackson did not see combat but he was part of the glue that held the war effort together. He was the unsung hero in the background supporting the troops.

As the war was ending he was sent to the Philippines, his last stop before returning back to Oklahoma City. He holds the distinction of riding the Billy Mitchell troop transport ship on three occasions. His last time was to return to Oklahoma City where he started three years later.

He went to work as a civil service worker at Tinker AFB. He was a sheet metal worker. One day, he saw an opportunity on the bulletin board for a tour of duty in Japan. "When I found out my family probably could not follow, and the recruiter explained how the facilities were not really set up for "Coloreds," I abandoned the idea. She quickly added, "but there is Norton AFB, in San Bernardino, CA, that was just what the Doctor ordered. My sister lived here." he said. "So like the Beverly Hill Billies or the movie The Grapes of Wrath, my wife Bernice and five sons came to San Bernardino, CA in 1956."

As he reflected back on the war effort he said it was a time when Black people were truly equal. "In combat all men are equal. White men who were wounded didn't care whose blood they used they just wanted it if they needed a blood transfusion. A bullet knows no color," he said. Jackson recounted sadly, "after the war it was a different story, things were bad for Blacks here at home. Then we were ignored this entire 50th Anniversary Commemoration. There are Blacks who should have been recognized!"

However, just in case someone asks, he has saved items from the war. Just recently he found his Enlisted Pass. Jackson has kept his treasures because "ever since I was a child I never wanted to erase it."

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The Black Voice News Page 6 November 16, 2000

The Lonely Eagles
Tuskegee Airmen

In 1939, Europe was in flames. President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared that the United States would be "Fortress America," the last bastion of freedom for all people. We were on the brink of entering the war.

The newly-formed Army Air Corps was quite sure that no Black man could learn to fly or even serve a combat aircraft; however, the Black press, the myriad numbers of technicians, and the White American bomber crews revered them as the "Black Redtail Angels." Flaming from the imposing presence of an aura of respect and honor, the "Black Redtail Angels" inspired courage and confidence in the fighter pilots.

White American pilot crews revered them as the "Black Redtail Angels" because of the identifying red painted tail assembly of their aircraft, and more importantly because they never lost a bomber to enemy fighter interdiction. The Black Airmen won one Silver Star, 150 Flying Crosses, Legion of Merit, and Red Star of Yugoslavia, and left 66 of their comrades buried in foreign soil.

Although the 99th, along with the 100th, 301st, and 302nd fighter squadrons of the 477th Composite Group were building envious reputations overseas, the 477th Medium Bombardment Group was authorized in the spring of 1943. It became operational in January 1945. The segregated training program restricted the number of men available for the bombardment group, and thus many months were required to properly man the group. The imbalance in the production of pilots and aircrews, followed by a shortage of trainees, and the group itself was continually blamed for these difficulties inherited from Air Corps command. It became generally felt that the integrated "qualified" White command personnel were in many cases using the 477th as a stepping stone for speedy promotions, and were found in many instances to be sharpening their own inadequacies. This potent of trouble came to fruition in the spring of 1945 when 162 Black officers were placed under arrest for entering the "club," which the White command had attempted to segregate with White only membership and for refusing to obey an unlawful order. All White personnel were reassigned.

Fighting the adversities of a segregated military from the inside and an awesome enemy from the outside, the "Black Air Force" became a cohesive, motivated, and dedicated group.

Nearly thirty years of anonymity were ended in 1972 with the founding of Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. as a non-political, non-military, and non-profit entity.

The Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. National Scholarship Fund has awarded in excess of $600,000 to young Americans for college education, without regard to race, religion, sex or creed.

Saluting O.O. Goodall

He entered the service in February, 1943 volunteering to go to Tuskegee Army Air Field. After some obstacles put up by the powers to be, Oliver began his training in 1944. He graduated in class 44K as a Multi-Engine Pilot. Then joining the 477th Bomber Group at Godman Field in January 1945 and with hard work, he had his First Pilot's rating in six months. But in the Interim, he was involved in the famous Freeman Field Munity for going into the Officer's Club against the Commander's orders. Oliver was arrested with 161 other officers. There was a great amount of talk between the War Department and Congress before the dust was settled and all personnel was transferred out and replaced by Col. B. O. Davis.

The Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. in its efforts to give disadvantage youths a helping hand in their quest for a better life. They promote education into all youths without regard to race, religion, sex or creed.

(Left) O.O. Goodall, unidentified Tuskegee Airman, and Charles Ledbetter

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Rev. Bernell Butler Served His Country With Pride

First there was Desert Shield, which later became Desert Storm and in the heat of it all, there was Rev. Bernell Butler loving his contribution to the war effort.

For six years Butler was enlisted in the Navy, four years in the Mediterranean (Spain) and two years in Westpac (Pacific/Asia). He was involved in feeding Bosnians and Somalians as a part of his duties. He was an Airframe Hydraulic Mechanic. However, the best job he had, was one he volunteered faithfully for, serving as a Pentecostal Lay Service Coordinator. "There was no one to carry on a Pentecostal service and on an aircraft carrier that houses 5,000 I became the person to plan and structure the three-times-a-week service. I reported to the Command Chaplain weekly on what we were doing," he said.

Butler said it was that experience that helped prepare him for public speaking and the ministry.

He loved to travel and enjoyed everything about the military. That is everything but racism. When he worked the brig, Whites who were drunk were taken to the barracks to sleep it off, Blacks were thrown in the brig.

Another case of overt racism came when Butler's parents were experiencing some health challenges and he felt it was better for him to be stationed closer to home. He took back to back sea duty in order to be stationed in San Diego. He sought and received special permission to go home on the weekends. However, one Petty Officer (E-7) made his life a nightmare. He wasn't fond of Black people and treated us really bad. One weekend he called me back to duty because there was a rule you had to be no more than 50 miles from the base at any time unless you were on leave. I explained I had special permission to go home because of my parents' condition. He didn't believe me and began displaying intolerant behavior, cussing, ranting, and raving. He treated Blacks one way and Whites another. He accused me of being drunk and disorderly and wrote me up. Just before the official hearing the Command Master Chief came and cleared up the matter. He had to apologize to me and indicated all of his dealings with Blacks had been negative. I explained that I was a preacher and was trying to set a good example for the younger men. He started coming to our Pentecostal services and we became friends. He learned to respect me," said Butler.

"I beg to differ with some people who say the armed forces are not for Black people. We need to promote the service, so people there will learn tolerance," Butler said.

The fondest memories Butler recalls are his travels to different ports, and seeing different cultures. He likes the way the military taught him responsibility and leadership.

He was in the Navy Reserves until August 2000 and has honorable discharges for both active and reserve duty.

November 16, 2000
Winston Ellison Gives All For His Country Agent Orange Takes Lung

In 1959, fresh out of high school in Kansas City, Kansas, Winston Ellison was ready to get away from home and explore the world. Something he never regretted. "All of my expectations were met. I got a chance to travel all over the world," Ellison explained. As an Aircraft Mechanic and a Flight Engineer, Ellison operated the system in the C-141 airplane and monitored the take-off and landing data.

Ellison decided this is the way he would spend the next twenty years of his life, three years later the U.S. became involved in the Vietnam War. "My job was flying, and my station was Norton Air Force Base," he said. But after 20 years he saw his children were growing up and he had not been there for them like he wanted, so he retired and was honorably discharged.

In 1966-67 he spent his time in Vietnam. In 1968-1969 he attended flight school and upon graduation, he was in Vietnam every month until the war ended. In fact, he was on the next to the last C-141 flight that left Vietnam airlifting refugees. He even picked up ground fire in the tail end of the airplane. "We had a date to get them out of Vietnam and we just did what we were told," he said.

Like in the Dickens story, these were the best times and these were the worst times. Best because he saw the world and made acquaintances in all countries and worst because of the racism that he says is built into our system. "Racism is the American way and it is apparent everywhere we went. Ask the men from World War I and II," he continued.

His thoughts on racism elicited more of a response than his battle with Agent Orange that caused cancer causing the removal of his lung last year. He is not bitter over the loss of the lung, he is pleased the government is owning up to the damage the foliage removal chemical caused. He is however still not pleased with the problems caused. In 1979 he retired with an honorable discharge. He says in spite of everything, "I still loved the service."
Honored With Purple Heart Col. Smith Served With Pride

Colonel Ralph Smith worked years to attain his rank. He follows a long line of military serviceman with the exception of his father who owned the first Black cleaning service in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Upon his graduation from Withrow High School and the Mechanical Institute in Cincinnati he enlisted in the Air Force after listening to his cousin Charles Westmoreland. Smith went the route of the Air Force Reserves before he went into active duty.

The Korean conflict had just ended a year before and he really didn't know what he wanted to do. He was sent to Tech School at Wilmington AFB and, following his successful completion took and passed the exam for Officer Candidates School. In 1957 he was assigned to Mather Navigation School in Northern California. He graduated and was sent to Hunter AFB located in Savannah, GA.

Following the Cuban Crises he was assigned to an advance Cadre to Vietnam. He completed three tours of duty there but took time off to attend flight school where he earned his pilot's wings.

He liked the service, and when he returned from Vietnam he went back into the Reserves. He also put his GI Bill to good use. He went back to school and graduated with a BS in Metallurgy from USC, a BS from Cal State Dominguez Hills in Industrial Management and a Master's Degree from UCLA's School of Education.

He served on the Pentagon staff, attended the D.C. War College, and was assigned to Langley Field by the Department of Defense.

Additionally he holds CoGSOME, SME, PE and RiSME from the Society of Engineers.

He also holds the distinction of being married to Colonel Melva Smith who declined to interview at this time.

Most of his military experiences were good, even when he was severely injured in Vietnam he never complained, even when he was pulled out of the swamps with about 50 leeches that had gotten under his uniform and had to be burned off with liquid oxygen.

Then, because of a shrapnal puncture to his skull, a silver plate was placed in his head, leaving him unable to hear out of one ear. He was also injured in a lightening strike incident during a military alert, at Sewart AFB, near Nashville, Tenn.

Due to his two injuries he earned a purple heart with oak leaf cluster.

"The thing I never liked was the prejudice I encountered in Savannah, GA. They would make remarks to him that they would never make to other junior officers. But I was well prepared by my mother, father and grandmothers. One of my uncles was killed, his throat was cut during election time. They wouldn't let him vote so he made a remark and they were going to lynch him but decided to just cut his throat instead," said Smith.

He has another distinction. His grandmother's remains were exhumed to have the DNA testing because his family is a product of the Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings union. In every generation someone is named Thomas Jefferson for as far back as he can remember.

LaRan Productions Presents...

Winter 2000 Hair Extravaganza
Inland Empire Hair Designers Showcase

Sunday, December 10, 2000
6:05 pm - 10:00pm

Show starts promptly at 6:05pm

Ontario Convention Center
2000 Convention Center Way
Ontario, CA 91762

Tickets: $25 Advance, $40 Door
V.I.P. $35 Advance, $50 Door
Info: 909.820.5056
Lieutenant Alvin Smith served His Country As A Chaplain

When Pastor Alvin Smith graduated from Dorsey High School (73) in Los Angeles the Vietnam war was a year from being over. Smith had no intention of going into the military and went to Wilberforce University to further his education. But one of Ohio's worse tornadoes hit and he almost became a casualty, so he made his way back to California and was accepted to USC. After some time he left and graduated from Azusa Pacific College.

The tornado was a wake up call, but a trip to the African Methodist Episcopal Church General Convention in Atlanta, GA changed his life. While in a meeting he was overcome by the Holy Spirit and was crying uncontrollably. "I did not want to follow in my grandfather's footsteps," he said. Rev. T.L. Scott was a former pastor of Allen Chapel AME in Riverside and Bethel AME in Los Angeles. "I didn't want to go (into the ministry) and if it was not of God, I was coming out," he said.

His calling was from God and he enrolled in and graduated from the Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, GA, the only Black Accredited Theological Seminary in the nation.

While in seminary recruiters began to show the benefits of the Navy. "I was not ready to pastor but I wanted to serve the Lord, explore other options and serve my country," he said. Because the seminary was accredited he entered the Navy as a Lieutenant Jr. Grade.

His growth came when he had the opportunity to serve under Barry Black the highest ranking Black in the Navy today the first Black General of the Marine (Navy Chaplains served both the Coast Guard and the Marines).

Not growing up in a military family, Smith felt a little uncomfortable when Black men who were old enough to be his father saluted him, "I use to tell them don't salute me." But the brothers were quick to take him aside and explain to him that they worked long and hard to get someone in his place and that they were proud. It is a sign of respect. (Not to mention what would happen if they didn't salute him).

"I didn't know the Navy was among the last of the armed forces to integrate. I didn't know the highest Blacks could go was Steward," he said.

Smith lists the most positive experiences he had was the chance he had to witness in a diverse ministry not based on color. In the Navy you are the chaplain for everybody.

The most difficult experiences he had during the 6 years he served in the Navy involved other Chaplains. "A lot of Chaplains are conservative theological people who have a lot of racism. I've had Chaplains who refused to serve with me because of overt racism. I wasn't mature enough to handle the pressures of the racism, being the youngest Chaplain at 25 years of age and coming from a Black community. After three years of active duty I left of the Navy," he concluded.

Smith remained in the Reserves for five more years, he was coming up for a promotion to Lieutenant Commander, the equivalent to a Major, but decided to leave. He was honorably discharged attaining the rank of Lieutenant.
A Story of Tenacity: Col. Paul Green

By Cheryl Brown

Colonel Paul Green, a 33 year veteran of three wars scored so high on the test to become a pilot the first time he took it, his commander accused him of knowing someone in Washington, D.C. How did he get from being an orphan and growing up in an orphanage to a Full Bird Colonel? is a story of tenacity, courage, and suppression.

Green was fresh out of the orphanage working at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio when he saw a poster recruiting men for pilot training. What happened when he passed the three part test in the highest category marked him for a later time when Blacks would be trained to fly. This was before there was a Tuskegee Flyer.

Green didn’t listen to the Army recruiter when he told him to tell the draft if they called he was on hold for pilot training. “I saw the opportunity to leave the state of Ohio and jumped at it,” he said. For three long days he rode the train, “I was ecstatic I was going to California, where the sunshine and beautiful people were. He was excited that is until he arrived 30 miles east of Indio.

“All I saw was sand. I figured they made a mistake,” he told Black Voice News. There was no mistake.

After two months his commander sternly called him into his office. He said “you must know someone in Washington. You are going to pilot training.” Before long Green was on his way to Tuskegee, Alabama. The next year was very hard. Armed with a high school diploma he was behind and had to make up the equivalency of two years of college in six months. Tenacity paid off. He aced everything he had to learn and credits the orphanage training for his successes.

His mother, grandmother and older brother all died when he was six years old, and his father was a disabled veteran gassed in WWI. Not knowing his mother, he only had the experience once of leaving the orphanage to live with an aunt, but six months later returned to the orphanage because of her death. “They told us in order to be successful these things were important.” He still speaks as though it was yesterday.

He had courage as he climbed the ranks. He exceeded each challenge. Two months into the army he became a corporal in the California desert.

Walterboro, South Carolina was a tough place because of the prejudice there, but Green sees the glass always half full. He’s proud of the Tuskegee memorial erected there last year.

Soon he was shipped out to Foggia, Italy where he flew combat with the 99th Fighter Squadron in the 332nd Fighter Group. He’s proud Lt Col. Benjamin O. Davis was his commander. Green spoke of the times he scolded him for buzzing the airfield. “I couldn’t help it, I was young and flying close to the ground was a thrill,” he said.

“Wild” Bill Campbell was his immediate commander. Green flew 25 missions his plane had been shot but Tuskegee Airmen never lost a bomber during escort.

A nucleus of men were brought back before the end of the war to put with the 477 Composite Wing the plan was to send these “men of color” to So. East Asia, the war ended and Green left as a First Lieutenant.

Out for a year, he went to work as a civilian, where he started, at Wright Patterson. Then the Korean war broke out. He returned to active duty with the idea of flying P-51’s, but flew C-47 support missions out of Japan and the war ended before further combat involvement.

In 1948, after integration, he was accepted into Electronics Officers’ School in Biloxi, Mississippi. He became dual qualified and added Electronics’ Maintenance Officer to his resume. He worked on airborne and ground electronic equipment that included radar systems.

In 1970 he went to Alaska and for a while was sent to an ice island. There were only three people and the work he accomplished was spectacular. The success of the mission won him a promotion to Captain and not longer was he on reserve status.

It was on to Rome, New York and for the next five years he flew B-29’s. Then on to Kiestar Field in Biloxi, Mississippi. He was a staff Electronics Officer. Following that assignment he was stationed in Tokyo, Japan.

After that tour of duty he went to Carvallas, Oregon for two years before going on to Eglin AFB Florida. This was a time that the Army and Air Force were fighting over who should control the 6th Wing Air Fleet. Green was running tests on ground environment equipment. He picked up the rank of Lt Col.

Vietnam was in full swing and he left to fly combat. But he didn’t stop there, as a C-130 Mission Commander, he had to make sure of the ground operations. Once he recalls he thought he was dead. “The jeep I was sitting in went 10 feet off the ground the GI’s had moved in and were shooting at the Viet Cong, they formed a perimeter of protection around the airfield,” he said.

I was at McGuire in New Jersey that he made Full Colonel and went to Germany for four years. When time came to move, he requested the place of sunshine and beautiful people, California.

In 1974 he came as Deputy Chief of Logistics at Norton Air Force Base. After the unfortunate, unexpected death of Base Commander Colonel Mistro, he was placed in his position. In 1976 Full Bird Col. Paul Green retired after thirty-three years of service.

He and Angel, his ever faithful wife of 53 1/2 years and two children, set roots down in the area.

It took courage to fight in the wars he fought but it took more courage as he recalls one time flying home 30 body bags, dog tags on the outside. He says he was, and remains, most disturbed by how the American people treated those young boys who went to Vietnam. “Despite who or what race they were, they were dead. They didn’t have a chance to live,” he said.

Green also had a solution to problem people who have prejudices, “I get in difficult situations and figure out how to improve them,” he said. Then he related an example. “One time there was a very prejudice pilot the same rank, I had something he wanted that is to be proficient in electronics. As I worked with him I found his problem was he had never been exposed (to Blacks). He had never left his hometown. The man did have an attitude adjustment, but it was because his desire to have the information was greater than his prejudice.”

Green recalls one time having an experience while in uniform, a callous person remarked to him “live by the sword, you die by the sword.” Since he was the exception to the rule my spirit wasn’t broken,” he said.

“I’ve seen slaves in two African countries in the gold mines. I lived in rice paddies; I’ve seen the gas chambers in Germany and I’ve come to the conclusion this country has more to offer than any other in the world. This is the Promise Land.” We must Love, Hope, and work hard.
Rev. B. W. Inghram’s Quest To Find Lost History

By Cheryl Brown- Black Voice News

Rev. B.W. Inghram was drafted in 1942 out of San Bernardino and sent to Fort Wachuka, Arizona where he and a battalion of men trained for the World War II effort. During the news coverage of the war through the years he never heard about the 780th Police Battalion who were located there. Inghram, feeling that he wasn’t included decided to do something about it. “It seemed like my history and the history of the 800 men was being forgotten or ignored,” he said.

“I don’t feel I was included in the war with the coverage during the 50th Commemoration ceremonies. They at least recognized the 99th and 93rd Regiment, but even Washington D.C. didn’t have the information that we ever existed.”

Inghram started a letter writing campaign to find out what happened to the history of the 780th. His quest and interest took him first to Fort Wachuka, the historical society said they never heard the claim. There was no record of them ever being there. “I was there, we all were and we knew it,” said Inghram. He didn’t give up the next stop was Washington D.C., surely they would know about the 780th Police Battalion. They didn’t know either. The quest continued as he would not rest until he found the records. He did! Following contact with the McClellan base in Georgia he found out they had the information.

Inghram wants the record to reflect the contributions of the 780th to the war effort.

When Inghram left Fort Wachuka, he was sent to Fort Devens, Massachusetts and shipped out of Newport News, Virginia, from there a nine day boat trip to Morroco. He arrived on Easter Sunday, a special time for him as a Christian and minister.

The troops were then deployed to Marseilles, France, where he and others in his company, moved the traffic of military vehicles going to the front line. “We were as essential as any of the support troops, without the 780th the troops could not be serviced and the war would have suffered. General Patton advanced so fast he out ran his supply support.

Inghram was shipped back to Fort McArthur in Long Beach and was honorably discharged. He said, “I felt, I did my duty. I got out of the service. I came home. WE WON THE WAR.”

The Minor Post Helped Locate Hospital And Cemetery In Inland Empire

By Cheryl Brown Black Voice News

The Riverside American Legion Post 418 named for Edward J. Minor and was formed in 1962. Minor lost his life in an unfortunate drowning accident in Lincoln Park on Park Ave. in Riverside. Minor was a clean living, an upright service man, from Atlanta, Georgia. He was head cook at Camp Anza, located where Rohr is located in Riverside. He died in 1944 and was the first to die in the Army group that formed the Post. When the men who were organizing the Post found out it had to be named for someone who was not living Minor was chosen. “Mr. Minor was known by many as a clean living, decent man and we name the Post after him,” said Christopher George “C.G.” Sanders, the Founding Commander who served the first 4 years and is still involved.

The Minor Post is a working Post they have been involved in the UNCF (United Negro College Fund) Walk-A-Thon helping provide money for the education of students, the Veteran Employment Committee where they help Veterans to find jobs as well as other non-profit organizations and activities.

The Minor Post is responsible for the Pettis Memorial Veteran’s Hospital in Loma Linda, they cast the three deciding votes. During the debate of where the next hospital would be placed Post members faithfully attended meeting and supported the Loma Linda site. There were many detractors vying for the hospital. “It was a hot political thing. Every politician wanted it in their area. (Congressman Jerry) Pettis, (for whom the hospital is named), fought very hard for the Loma Linda site. In the end, with the help from the Post Loma Linda was selected.” Two things solidified the site, one there were more vet-

ers in Southern California than other areas: two, a Veterans Hospital must be placed in an area with a training facility, Loma Linda met the qualifications.

Additionally, the Post was instrumental in the placement of the National Cemetery in Riverside. “Land had been donated somewhere in Los Angeles for the Cemetery. The hotly contested site ended in court. For five years we attended meetings and gave our input. Oregon was in line and lobbied hard for it,” said Sanders. However, they showed the Riverside location was best because, the land formerly housed, Camp Hann, was owned by the government and highways 395 and 60 were nearby.

Rev. B. W. Inghram
Minter Tells His WWII Story

By Cheryl Minter-Brown - Black Voice News

This year marks the 50th of the Word War II. From the television coverage, you’d think none of the troops were Black.

Marvin N. Minter, after 50 years of silence, spoke with Black Voice about the days following the assault on Normandy, located on the beach of France.

Minter said two million troops were still in England on D-Day. They were waiting for to go into Normandy as a part of the second wave.

He was in the Third Army, commanded by General Patton, supporting Field Artillery.

Minter said every everyone was scared. “It was the most frightening experience of my life. But I remember thinking, as I was trapped by live fire, in 50 years none of this will matter.” Little did he know that 50 years later he would still be alive to talk about it.

Minter then recalled something that some people want to say never happened, the concentration camps.

“We were marched into the concentration camp at Dachau, there were thousands of bodies, left like sacks of flour. The smell was horrible,” he said.

“Hitler was an absolute lunatic, an animal. He not only killed Jews, he killed Russians, gypsies, gays, cripples, and the mentally impaired,” he said.

Minter recalls “When we arrived everyone was not dead, some of the people were dying from starvation. The Germans in Hitler’s Army ran away before we met.

Mitchell Served His Time Well Overseas 50 Years Ago

James Mitchell was a member of the Army 953 Quarter Master Service Corps during W.W.II. “We landed in Scotland in the bombing area, before going to Cherbourg and Paris, France.” His unit was under General Patton and they handled supplies in the segregated army. When he went to England, he went to school to learn how to be a cook and that was his job for the duration of the War. As a result of his duty in the Army he has a Northern France campaign ribbon, a ribbon with a Bronze Star, a service stripe, four overseas service bars and sharp shooter recognition.

When I came back to Texas to be discharged, Fort Sam Houston, had not changed it was still segregated. We didn’t just fight for ourselves (in Europe) we were fighting for everybody.”

Mitchell, saw first hand the devastation of the war. After the war he saw the remains of all those Jews, who were starved to death. He saw the gas chambers and the furnaces. It had a bad effect on him but he knew the magnitude of the devastation caused by Hitler. It was so devastating he does not want to talk about it to this day.

Thinking California was a better place he left Texas. Soon he found out “it was better but there were still places we couldn’t go or (restaurants) that were slow serving you. One place was located on Fourth and E in downtown San Bernardino. However, the city of Tustin was strictly like down south,” he said.

Mitchell is concerned about how the Black service men were treated then and now. “The Red Ball Express, hauled gasoline and supplies, they would get through when the Whites couldn’t. The Stars and Strips, (a military publication) would report on it but would never give the details,” he said.

In Memory of

Marvin Minter

1922 - 2000

Saluting

Vets who died so we could live
Local Vets Remember WWII After 50 Years

By Cheryl Brown
Black Voice

The World War II, global military conflict, in terms of lives lost and material destruction, was the most devastating war in human history. It began in 1939 as a European conflict between Germany and an Anglo-French coalition, but eventually widened to include most of the nations of the world. It ended in 1945, leaving a new world order dominated by the United States and the USSR.

More than any previous war, World War II involved the commitment of nations' entire human and economic resources, the blurring of the distinction between combatant and noncombatant, and the expansion of the battlefield to include all of the enemy's territory. The most important determinants of its outcome were industrial capacity and personnel. In the last stages of the war, two radically new weapons were introduced: the long-range rocket and the atomic bomb. In the main, however, the war was fought with the same or improved weapons of the types used in World War I. The greatest advances were in aircraft and tanks.

Causes of the War
Three major powers had been dissatisfied with the outcome of World War I. Germany, the principal defeated nation, bitterly resented the territorial losses and reparations payments imposed on it by the Treaty of Versailles. Italy, one of the victors, found its territorial gains far from enough either to offset the cost of the war or to satisfy its ambitions. Japan, also a victor, was unhappy about its failure to gain control of China.

France, Great Britain, and the U.S. had attained their wartime objectives. They had reduced Germany to a military cipher and had reorganized Europe and the world as they saw fit. The French and the British frequently disagreed on policy in the postwar period; however, and were unsure of their ability to defend the peace settlement.

The U.S., disillusioned by the Europeans' failure to repay their war debts, retreated into isolationism.

African-American soldiers fought with valor in this war as they had in every war since the Revolutionary War. But it wasn't until World War II, that gave the segregated colored soldiers proof they were many times the best soldiers in the armed services. The fighting was not only by the Tuskegee Airmen but in the Army, Navy and Marines as well. They were in a foreign land fighting for freedom when they were not free back home.

Local retired soldiers recently reflected on the war, their thoughts of success, and their treatment by people they were defending and the people as they returned home. They expressed concern over the erasure of the important heroic role they played to keep America, and the world free. They were also blatantly ignored by the television coverage of the 50th Anniversary of V-E Day, commemorating the end of the war, and subsequent programs.

**Dr. Will Roberts**, President of Company B, 1402nd Engineer (Combat) Battalion, feels that history has done an injustice by not publishing the role Blacks played. His unit supplied more ammunition to the front line infantry than anyone else, but when the citation came out in the "Stars and Stripes" it was barely mentioned. "They merely printed the ammunition they couldn't fight," he continued. "We did a good job, everyone played their part." But when they returned home from the war, Roberts said, he felt betrayed. Roberts told the story of the lies White soldiers told the European people, especially women, about Black soldiers. "They would tell them we were trained monkeys and that we had tails. One day as I was walking downtown two women walking by felt my behind and said in Italian, he doesn't have one," The things our soldiers had to endure!

**Carl Clemons**, who was enlisted in the Navy, said as he reflects back to returning home, San Bernardino still had the same poor employment practices. "The only jobs available were as elevator operators, maids or janitors. Except for Kaiser, Santa Fe and Norton there was no where Blacks could work," Clemons recalls.

**Benton PK. Blakely**, retired, as a major after serving 23 years in both WWII and Korea. "Blacks were a major part of the war, the coverage in the news does not tell to the fullest extent what we did." Blakely was a Corporsman in the Army corps of Engineers. He built roads, bridges, and dams.

**Jack Hill**, was also concerned that the time he spent is ignored. With all of the outstanding contributions we made, very little is written. "When I was in the service the governor of Mississippi had the guns taken away from the Black soldiers, they couldn't bear arms. In the local town of Centerville a Black soldier was killed by some Whites. The soldiers were very angry and for three months we couldn't come out of the camp," he said.

Blakely recounts a story he heard from Captain Ernest Dunn, organizer and First Company Commander of Company B 1402nd Engineer (Combat) Battalion. According to Dunn, "At March Air Force Field, soldiers broke out fighting. The Black Airmen rebelled when they set-up a segregated theatre. The account was glossed over in the newspaper.

All the men said they felt betrayed, Clemons indicated that the thing that struck them was that they fought for freedom for Europe but did not get freedom nor respect when they returned home. "We served in the military to preserve freedom for other countries. The real ability to achieve equality in our own country was still our number one war," he said.

Hill, although he felt betrayed, still developed a love for the service. "I lived at a good time. I was in Europe when they mixed the troops years later, it was hard on everyone. Some White guys said it was the first time they'd ever slept next to a Black. Because of my love for the military I endured the hardships," he said.

Blakely said, "It was quite an experience serving this country for 23 years. Fifty years after the war there is still unrest and fear between countries. I hope and pray one day this will be resolved and everyone can live in peace."

There were as many stories as men who lived them, we touched base on only a few. If we don't tell our own story no one will do it for us. History is just his-Story. This is a part of theirs.

Source: Encyclopedia Britannica
Charles Ledbetter: A Testimony Of Perseverance

By Melvin Tapp

War is hell, war is glory. As history has shown, so the present is shaped. Many have seen the horrors of war and survived to see better days.

Charles William Ledbetter has seen life and has lived through the horrors of war, and has gloried in the life's endeavors. His is a testimony of perseverance. From the testimony of battle as a 30 year war veteran as part of the now famous Tuskegee Flyers to the compassionate teacher of the handi-capped, the now famous Tuskegee testimony of battle as a 30 year war veteran as part of the Tuskegee Flyers and was a part of several missions during World War II. "The most notable of the Flyers was Chappie James who went on to become a General, but nearly all of the guys in the Flyers were great fellows and all were extremely competent," stated Ledbetter.

Even though the military services were segregated at the time, all enlisted men and officers were encouraged to further their education. "It was a way to keep us out of the bars and honky-tonk seven days a week, and the classes were integrated. I started in an Ohio State University extension and went on to a University of California Berkeley extension at the various military bases that I was assigned to," continued Ledbetter, "and most of the Flyers also continued with their educations."

Additionally, Ledbetter was a boxer and fought his way to the middleweight championship. "I was pretty good," he stated, "and I admired Sugar Ray Robinson, but I never met him inside the ring." Ledbetter related that when he and his compatriots did have time to party that he was one of the disciplinarians. "If somebody got out of line, White or Black often times we'd have to knock them out. And I had no problem handling that, but most times we just would break up any encounters," said Ledbetter.

After an eight year stint with the Tuskegee Flyers, Ledbetter was assigned to the 13th Bomb Group known as the "Grim Reapers" which was an integrated unit at Langley Field, VA. "The Korean War had just begun and we flew 29 missions during the Korean War," said Ledbetter. While in the Orient Ledbetter learned Judo while stationed in Korea & Japan. "I was good enough eventually to teach martial arts (judo) to kids and some adults," stated Ledbetter.

The Army Aircorp which included the Tuskegee Flyers had been converted to the U.S. Air Force by that time, and Ledbetter was now a sergeant in the Air Force where he completed his education and received a secondary teaching credential from Chapman College where he specialized in teaching the handicapped. "I had taught boxing and judo and I guess that wet my appetite to continue in teaching. I was especially interested in teaching handicapped children, both physically & psychologically. I have always been for the underdog, and I guess that the handicapped usually get the short end of the stick," said Ledbetter.

Ledbetter retired from the Air Force at March Air Force Base in Riverside, and as a resident in Moreno Valley (then Sunnymead), began teaching in the Perris School District. "I loved teaching. It was so fulfilling to see students respond. I always gave my best, and I expected my students to do well. The biggest problem I met with was in motivating them to do their best. I believe that if a person is confident he will succeed, and with the handicapped, I found most were lacking confidence due to their treatment by families, teachers, and others in their past. I had to first of all get them confident in their abilities," continued Ledbetter.

Ledbetter related that at an early age he learned fairness from a White man. "I had no father, so this White man, Mr. Chipp who helped raise me in Tennessee taught me to be fair, but kick butt if someone got out of line or I was bothered," stated Ledbetter. "So I have had that philosophy which I related to my students. If you aren't treated fairly, kick butt in the classroom with your studies. Always do your best, and even though you might be mistreated do your best to be fair with others," said Ledbetter.

When asked about his accomplishments, Ledbetter responded, "My military career that included my time with Tuskegee Flyers and awards for flying including the Bronze Star & Air Medal with clusters stands out but the teaching of some of my past students who have become successful business people, college grads, and one became a missionary, are of great importance to me. The activities of the school board that I'm a member of is very special to me. And I also give lectures on motivational topics and behavior modification, and to see the response in a positive way is quite satisfying. But most noteworthy is my family. I've been married over 40 years and I have five grown children (one son, four daughters) of whom I am very proud. My basic philosophy is to be loyal, appreciate God and why we are put on earth, to help each other especially the kids. Keeping an open line of communication to solve differences, and having good friends at Warner Ranch. "Where I Live, are important to me," said Ledbetter.

To live a full and rich life is the dream of everyone. A model of that kind of life is that of Charles William Ledbetter, fighter, educator, philosopher, husband, father and civic leader and gentleman.

Ledbetter has since retired from the School Board and still works out at the gym daily.
ATTENTION:

University of California, Riverside, Cal State San Bernardino, San Bernardino Water District, Riverside and San Bernardino County School Districts, Edison, The Gas Co., Metropolitan Water District

The President Signed

HR 1568

August 17, 1999

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