

# TEXAS INFORMER

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P.O. Box 332  
Rusk, Texas 75785



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## Christian Celebraties Named



United Women of Strength named this year's honorees at a banquet held Friday Night December 4, 2015.  
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Current members of United Women of Strength: Annie Blanton, Billie Brown, Lillian Duffie, Charlie Esco, Ruby Franklin, Francis Freeman, Jessie Foreman, Jean Hinton, Ethel Rollins, Barbara Scott, Helen Scott, Secretary, Maxine Session, Verion Starling, Gladis Thompson, Callie Walker, Evelyn Wilcox, Annie F. Williams and Lois Teague, president.



We wish you a Merry  
Christmas and a Happy  
New Year!



# God's Gift

When I first heard the gospel news,  
It was revealed to me,  
Why Jesus Christ came to this earth,  
To die to set us free.  
I'd like to share this news with you,  
Why the Lord Jesus came,  
So you can have this free gift too,  
When you call upon his name.

I was told how in the beginning,  
That the enemy of God,  
Tricked Adam and Eve into eating,  
Of the fruit that God forbid.  
They disobeyed the sovereign Lord,  
But not without a cost,  
Through them sin came into the  
world,  
Separating mankind from God.  
But God so loved the world,  
He gave Jesus, his only Son,

You may live a life of kindness,  
Without Jesus, but this I've  
learned,  
Good deeds lead not to salvation,  
Jesus is God's gift to mankind.  
Some say they have not sinned at  
all,  
But if they read God's Word,  
It says for all have sinned and  
fallen  
Short of the glory of God.  
You must believe,  
You must love the Lord thy God  
with all your heart, mind and  
soul and love your neighbor as  
yourself.  
So take the gospel to your heart,  
With God you always win  
over satan and sin.



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Website: [www.texasinformer.com](http://www.texasinformer.com)  
[informernews08@aol.com](mailto:informernews08@aol.com)

PUBLISHER/SALES MANAGER

Walter Session

EDITOR/WRITER/Co-publisher

Maxine Session

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Billy "Hollywood" Grooves

A. J. Rhodes

Furlich July Arrington

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[informernews08@aol.com](mailto:informernews08@aol.com)  
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# United Women of Strength present Holiday Christian Celebrities 2015

By Maxine Session

United Women of Strength presented it's annual Awards Banquet on Friday night December 4th at the Norman Activity Center, Jacksonville, Texas. Twenty-two people from around Cherokee County who make a difference daily in their church, family and community were recognized. Each was introduced, by a person of their choice, and presented with the 2015 Certificate.

Rev. Kenneth Cain was Master of Ceremony and entertainment was provided by Regina Session and Atimad Sanders.

Those presented were Ivey Polk, Gloria Jean Mackey, Bennie Ray Thirkill, Adria Cole, Jamarious Hart, Regina Session, Carlyon Moreland, Bobby Knowlton, Ben Duffie, Marasha Silman, Vanessa Rivers Boyd, Archie B. Dennis, Gwen Herndon, Kathy Jenkins, Rickey Cambell, Monnie Mosley, Christian McCuin, Lera Mae Whitaker, Mary Kemp Winston, Rochell Sanders, Brenda Lankford and Rosa B. Martin.

A full course meal with drink and dessert was served the approximatly 150 people in attendance by the organization members. Members are Lois Teague President, Evelyn Wilcox Vice President, Callie Walker Vice President Emeritus, Jean Hinton Secretary, Helen Scott corresponding Secretary, Annie Bowens Treasurer, Mr. & Mrs. Freeman Ticket Managers, Billie Brown, Lillian Duffie, Charlie Esco, Ruby Franklin, Francis Freeman, Jessie Foreman, Annie McClelland, Evelyn Robinson, Ethel Rollins, Barbara Scott, Maxine Session, Verion Starling, Ann Silman, Gladys Thompson, and Annie Williams.

The United Women of Strength is a service organization which has made a difference in the lives of community people by assisting with transportation to the doctor, paying for prescriptions, emergency rent payments, donations to people who were hospitalized with extended illnesses and student scholarships. The organization was organized August 21, 2006. Prior to that it had been the National Council of Negro Women. NCNW began in 2002 with Marie Johnson as president and approximately 30 Jacksonville area women. It was registered with the National organization. A house on Dorothy Street was purchased in 2002 to use as a meeting place. About 2006 the membership decided that the \$1,500.00 a year fee paid to the national organization for the use of the name could be better used in the community. Lois Teague had become President at that time. The Application was canceled and thus began the United Women of Strength.



Picture courtesy of Jean Hinton

Pictured above are some of the members of National Council of Negro Women about 2004. Some of those shown above are Francetta McGowan, Annie Blanton, Jean Hinton, Daphne Session, Shunnon Ratcliff, Helen Scott, Flora Waites, Carlene Hinton, Zerline Williams, Callie Walker, Leisha Dennis. nton



Picture courtesy of Loise Teague

Pictured above are members of Women of United Strength about 2007.

The members of United Women of Strength are committed to improving the quality of life of African American women in Jacksonville and surrounding areas by enhancing the social and economic development of the entire community and by supporting the education of young people.

Some of the original members were Hallie Peoples, Linda Hinton, Tammy Scott, Terri Canady, Doris Robinson, Felisha July. Meetings are held at the North Side Community Center and sometimes in the homes of members. Recruitment is in process. For information on becoming a member or the next scheduled event, please contact one of the members.



**WHAT's Cook 'n****Old Fashioned Simple  
Fruitcake****Ingredients**

- 1 package spice cake mix (2 layer size)
- 1 package (3 3/4 ounces) instant lemon pudding mix
- 2/3 cup apricot nectar
- 1/4 cup Apricot brandy
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup chopped dates
- 1/2 cup chopped candied cherries
- 1/2 cup chopped candied pineapple
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- Glaze, optional
- 1 cup sifted powdered sugar
- 2 to 3 tablespoons apricot brandy

**Preparation**

In a large mixing bowl, combine cake mix, pudding mix, apricot nectar, 1/4 cup apricot brandy, and vegetable oil. Beat on medium speed until batter is smooth, about 2 minutes. Add eggs one at a time, beating after each addition. Fold in the chopped fruits and nuts. Turn batter into a generously greased and floured 10-inch tube pan. BAke at 350° for 50 to 55 minutes for 50 to 55 minutes, or until cake tests done

Cool for 15 minutes in the pan then remove to a rack to cool thoroughly. For best flavor, wrap and store in refrigerator for 24 hours before serving.

Combine 2 to 3 tablespoons of apricot brandy with 1 cup confectioners' sugar; drizzle over fruitcake before serving, if desired.

**Chicken and Dressing****Ingredients**

- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/4 cup butter, cubed
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1-1/2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten

**Directions**

1. In a large saucepan, saute onion and celery in butter until tender; remove from the heat. Stir in the broth, seasonings and eggs. Add bread cubes and parsley; toss to coat.
2. Transfer to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. baking dish. Top with chicken. Combine soup and water; spoon over chicken. Let stand for 10 minutes.
3. Cover and bake at 350° for 50 minutes. Uncover; bake 5-10 minutes longer or until a thermometer reads 160°. Yield: 8 servings.

**At Christmas - Poem**

by Edgar Albert Guest

A man is at his finest towards the  
finish of the year;

He is almost what he should be  
when the Christmas season's here;  
Then he's thinking more of others  
than he's thought the months before,  
And the laughter of his children is a  
joy worth toiling for.

He is less a selfish creature than at  
any other time;

When the Christmas spirit rules him  
he comes close to the sublime.

When it's Christmas man is bigger  
and is better in his part;

He is keener for the service that is  
prompted by the heart.

All the petty thoughts and narrow  
seem to vanish for awhile

And the true reward he's seeking is  
the glory of a smile.

Then for others he is toiling and  
somehow it seems to me

That at Christmas he is almost what  
God wanted him to be.

If I had to paint a picture of a man I  
think I'd wait

Till he'd fought his selfish battles  
and had put aside his hate.

I'd not catch him at his labors when  
his thoughts are all of pelf,

On the long days and the dreary  
when he's striving for himself.

I'd not take him when he's sneering,  
when he's scornful or depressed,

But I'd look for him at Christmas  
when he's shining at his best.

Man is ever in a struggle and he's  
oft misunderstood;

There are days the worst that's in  
him is the master of the good,

But at Christmas kindness rules him  
and he puts himself aside

And his petty hates are vanquished  
and his heart is opened wide.

Oh, I don't know how to say it, but  
somehow it seems to me

That at Christmas man is almost  
what God sent him here to be.

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## Seminary Heights Church of Christ and Fred Douglass Development Corp. donate Thanksgiving Baskets



Pictured L to R - Ella Whitaker, Bruce Harris, Justin Boseman, Chistine Dansby, Pastor Kelvin Dansby, Jean Hinton and Belinda McClelland and Brenda Roberts. The group packed and delivered 35 baskets filled with turkey and complete items for prearing thanksgiving dinner.

## VFW Post 3406 Honors Veterans



Above is pictured participants of the 2015 Veterans Day service held at the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary Post 3406. Wayne Morgan US Army Vietnam Veteran was the speaker. Charles McCullough, Betty Townsend, Melvin Session, Mayor angela Raiborn, Virginia Goforth, Odis Bryant and Emerson Griffin, Post Commander, were all participants. The service was well attended by Rusk citizens.

## Tonya Fuller housewarming held



L to R - Pictured Shinnita Hicks, Veronica Johnson, Laura Fuller, Tonya Fuller, (honoree), Janelle Wickware, Sharon wickware, Shelia Fuller, and Connell Foreman . The ladies above enjoyed attending the Fuller Housewarming November 28, 2015. Ms. Fuller is excited and ready to celebrated the first Christmas in her new home.

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. March and Celebration will be held on January 18, 2016 in Jacksonville, Texas. For detailed information please call A. J. Rhodes at (903) 284-6203 or Helen Scott.

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# VFW Post Commander Emmerson Griffin heads Flag Dedication



L to R pictured - Walter Session, District II Councilman, Rev. Melvin Session, Rev. Geraldine Harrison, Rev. Jimmy Foreman, Rev. Jerry Leviston, Commander Griffin and Maxine Session program participants.

Audience waits for program to begin at Rusk Memorial City Cemetery where more than forty veterans rest.

A dream became reality for VFW Post 3406 Commander Emmerson Griffin in November 2015. Knowing that many veterans are laid to rest in Rusk Memorial City

Cemetery, he felt that flags should fly there to honor them. About a year prior he began research on the cost to install a US flag with lights,

Continue on page 9

## NFL presents Cody Glenn with gold football



L to R - Pictured RHS Coach Patton, Makayla Glenn, Cody Glenn and former RHS coach, Coach Tucker.

As part of the 50 year NFL Superbowl celebration the NFL will present a gold football to 3000 NFL Superbowl players and 52 coaches and the high school that produced the player or coach. Cody Glenn, a 2005 RHS graduate and 2010 Superbowl player was presented a gold football at the RHS November 7, 2015 football game in Rusk, Texas.

This year's Superbowl game will be televised from Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California.

Glenn played college football with the Nebraska Cornhuskers graduating in 2009. He was drafted in 2009 by the Washington Redskins and later picked up by the Indianapolis Colts as a free agent. He also played with the Baltimore Ravens.

Cody's first year as a Colt landed him right smack in the pile of world championship players when the Baltimore Colts faced the New Orleans Saints in Superbowl XLIV.

## Nelson Mitchell, the oldest living African-American Pearl Harbor survivor



PEARL HARBOR (Dec. 5, 2015) Nelson Mitchell, the oldest living African-American Pearl Harbor survivor, reflects in the shrine room of the USS Arizona Memorial during a Pearl Harbor Survivor/ World War II, Family and Friends Harbor Tour at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. The harbor tour is one of several events that will take place leading up to the 74th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day to pay tribute to the nation's military while enlightening Americans about veterans and service. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Tamara Vaughn/Released)



# Mrs. J's 411



Being considerate of others

Ferlich July Arrington

Tis' the season to be jolly. There are some things we can do to lift the spirit of others and ourselves. It's called being considerate. The best way to do that is to put yourself in someone else's place for a moment.

A friend of mine said she was busy putting up Christmas decoration in her yard recently when down the street she heard people having a conversation, one, christian people don't appreciate hearing. Profanity was flying with every other word. And to make it worse, children were in the yard where the conversation was taking place!

My friend said her first inclination was to turn around and yell at them to please not do that, but reconsidered and went inside her home.

Another friend was almost hit on a mall parking lot by another driver in a rush to get a parking place.

Being considerate is being polite and caring. People like it when you are considerate and they remember you and your act of kindness.

In this day and time when days can become stressful, be the one to lend a listening ear, hold the door open for the one who is entering behind you or say please and thank you. This can make the difference in the way others treat you.

It's considerate to say may I, please, come again or excuse me.

It's considerate to say excuse me rather than walking out slamming doors, yelling at others and mean mugging people.

Usually being kind comes back to you. What you put out comes back like a boomerang!

Until next time be a blessing to someone. It will brighten your day!

## CHRISTIANITY

### Why should you read your bible?

We're all told that we're supposed to read our Bible, but why should we? What makes the Bible so important? Can it really do anything for us? Here are several reasons why we should read our Bibles, and it's far more than, "because I told you so!"

#### 1. It Makes You Much Wiser

The Bible isn't just there to read. It's a book full of all kinds of advice. From relationships to money to how to get along with your parents, it's all in there. When we become wiser, we make much better decisions, and with good decisions comes many other good things.

#### 2. It Helps Us Overcome Sin and Temptations

We all face temptations to sin every day, often several times a day. It's part of the world we live in. When we read our bible, we get advice on how to approach situations and overcome the temptations we face.

#### 3. Reading Your Bible Gives You Peace

We all lives such busy lives. Sometimes it feels chaotic and noisy. Reading the Bible can help us sort through all the craziness to see what's really important. It can bring about peace in our lives rather than allowing us to wallow in our confusion.

#### 4. The Bible Gives You Direction

Sometimes our lives can feel a little like we're just wandering uselessly. Even teens can sometimes feel that they lack direction. When we read our Bible's we can clearly see that God has a purpose for us at every state of our lives. His words can give us direction, even if we only need that direction and purpose in the short term.

#### 5. It Builds Your Relationship with God

There are a few really important things in our lives, and our relationship with God is one of them. Reading our Bibles gives us insight into God. We can pray on scripture verses. We can talk to God about things we're reading. We grow in an understanding of God as we read and grasp more of His Word.

#### 6. Read a Bestseller

If you're an avid reader, this is one bestseller you shouldn't miss. The Bible is an epic story of love, life, death, war, family, and more. It has it's ups and downs, and it's pretty riveting. If you're not a reader, this may be the one book worth saying you read. If you're going to read anything, you can say you read the biggest bestseller of all time.

#### 7. Learn a Little Bit of History

There is plenty of archaeological proof of biblical stories. The Bible is full of real history, and it can give you insight into other areas of history. When we read about our forefathers leaving England for freedom of religion, we understand them better. So the Bible helps us understand human history and how often we repeat the same mistakes.

#### 8. We Can Understand Jesus a Little More

When we read through the New Testament, we get to read about Jesus' life. We can understand better his choices and the true sacrifice of his death on the cross. He becomes far more real to us when we get into his story in the Bible.

#### 9. It Can Change Your Life

The Bible is a life-changing book. So many people go to the self-help section of the bookstore to look for a magic solution to their problems. However, most of those answers sit in the chapters of the Bible. It can give us insight, help us grow, explain our depression, explain our behaviors. The Bible can make a huge difference in our lives.

#### 10. It Brings You Back to Faith, Rather than Religion

We can get very caught up in our religion. We can go through all the motions that religion dictates, but it means nothing without faith. When we read our Bible, we open ourselves up to remembering our faith. We read stories of others who have demonstrated real faith, and sometimes we also are reminded of what happens when we lose our faith. Yet the Word of God reminds us that He is our focus.

#### 11. Reading the Bible Brings a New Perspective

When things just don't seem right or things are getting a bit stale, the Bible can bring a new perspective into the mix. Sometimes we think things should be one way or another, but the Bible may remind us that there are other ways to think.

## LEGAL NOTICE

These Texas Lottery Commission Scratch ticket games will be closing soon:

Game #	Game Name / Odds	\$	Official Close of Game	End Validations Date
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1613	Bonus Cashword Overall Odds are 1 in 3.45	\$3	12/2/15	5/30/16
1665	20X The Cash Overall Odds are 1 in 3.83	\$5	12/2/15	5/30/16
1685	Golden 7's Overall Odds are 1 in 4.09	\$5	12/2/15	5/30/16
1703	Golden Ticket Overall Odds are 1 in 3.70	\$5	12/2/15	5/30/16

For detailed odds and game information, visit [lottery.org](http://lottery.org) or call 1-800-375-6886. Must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket. The Texas Lottery supports Texas education and retirees. © 2015 Texas Lottery Commission. All rights reserved.



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## Cemetery flag dedication from page 7

then approached a few community people about funds. He was directed to City Manager Mike Murray and District II Councilman Walter Session and requested that the city fund the project since it is city owned property. The city complied and the platform along with Texas and US Flags were installed in early November of this year.

The Flag dedication was held at 2:00PM Sunday November 15, 2015, honoring the service men who rest there. A small crowd of community people whose loved ones served the country were in attendance with local people participating. The invocation was given by Rev. Jimmy Foreman, pastor of West Union Faith Ministry. Rev. Melvin Session assistant Pastor of Woodville CME Church led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, Councilman Walter Session, who served in the U. S. Army, gave the welcome and Maxine Session gave a brief history of Rusk Memorial Cemetery. Commander Emerson Griffin read the names of those US Service men who rest here and gave an emotional but brief talk about the reason for the need to honor them in this way. "The flags should fly because they gave of themselves by serving and protecting their country, these United States of America. It took more sacrifice than most people know. Only those who have experienced serving would know," He stated. Rev. Jerry Leviston, Pastor of Mt. Olive Baptist Church, gave the closing remarks, commenting on why he felt a duty to join and serve his country. Rev. Geraldine Harrison, Pastor of Mt. Pleasant Church gave the benediction.

The ceremony was a dream come true for Commander Griffin who served in the United States Army more than nineteen years. The community expressed deep gratitude to him for the dedication he shows to fellow veterans, those past and present and for coming up with the idea to place the flags here, and for seeing the project through.

The lights to highlight the flags have been ordered and will be installed as soon as they arrive.

*Remember,  
the place where our loved ones  
rest holds the roots  
from which our branches  
still grow.*

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## OBITUARIES

### Earnest Lee Glenn

Services for Earnest Lee Glenn, were held Saturday November 14, 2015 at the Lancaster Community Baptist Church in Lancaster, Texas. Earnest was born in Rusk, Texas on March 26, 1949 to the late Lonzo and Beatrice King Glenn. When the Lord called Beatrice home, Earnest was given to his uncle Eddie and aunt Annie Lula King Wickware. They adopted him as their own.

Earnest grew up in the Woodville community of Rusk where he joined Woodville CME Church and received his education from G. W. Bradford High School. He attended Texas College, Tyler, Texas and Prairie View A. & M University at Prairie View, Texas. He served his country as a member of the U.S. Army. Upon discharge he worked at Kraft Foods in Garland, Texas. He joined Lancaster Community Church where he remained a member until death.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Lonzo and Beatrice Glenn, brother Willie Glenn, Adoptive parents Eddie and Annie Lula King Wickware, brother Ravay Wickware; son Eric Glenn, step-daughter and Kimberly Kinchlow.

Earnest loved his family and leaves behind to cherish his memory: daughter Orenda Glenn (Leon) Spikes; grandson Trey Spikes, step-daughter Tamara Greene; brothers: Lonnie L. (Veora) Glenn, Donald Ray (Jeannie) Glenn, Robert E. (Venita) Glenn, Rodney (Sh"Angela) Glenn, Darryal Glenn, Donnell Glenn, Kevin Glenn; sisters Clotilda (Ellis) Horn, and Edma M. Glenn.

Adopted: sisters Myrnell (Joe) Lockhart, Laura (William) Fuller, Flora (Theo) Williams, Donney (Roy) Saylee, Shirley (Jimmy) Foreman, Janell Wickware, Connie (Jeff) Foreman, Sharon Wickware, Yvonne Cox, Mary Waggoner, Earlee Carter; Special friends Shanna Powell, Richard Heath, Fred Bailey, and a host of neices, nephews, cousins, and other

#### Generosity

The desires of lazy people will be their ruin, for their hands refuse to work. They are always greedy for more, while the Godly love to give.

~Proverbs 21:25-26

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# Slocum Massacre Historical Marker Dedication Set

On Saturday, January 16, 2016, a historical marker commemorating the Slocum Massacre and listing the names of its officially acknowledged victims will be unveiled in southeastern Anderson County. The unveiling will take place on MLK Day weekend, just two weeks shy of the one-year anniversary of the marker's landmark approval by the Texas Historical Commission. The dedication ceremony will be held at the Slocum ISD cafeteria auditorium at 1:00 pm and Dr. Malachai Crawford, Assistant Director of the African American Studies Program at the University of Houston, will be the keynote speaker.

#### SLOCUM MASSACRE

One of the darkest moments in Texas history, the Slocum Massacre began on July 29, 1910. After false rumors of an African American uprising were circulated, armed white men from all over the region began pouring into the Slocum area and killing African Americans at will. The carnage went on for two days and though dozens of African Americans were reported slain, authorities identified only eight victims. "Men were going about killing Negroes as fast as they could find them," said Anderson County sheriff William Black. "And, so far as I was able to ascertain, without any real cause. I don't know how many [whites] were in the mob, but there may have been 200 or 300. Some of them cut telephone wires. They hunted the Negroes down like sheep."

The bloodshed led to a racial expulsion and many African Americans abandoned homes, property and businesses and fled for their lives. Sheriff Black and District Judge Benjamin H. Gardner worked diligently to hold the perpetrators responsible and seven white men were indicted; but the case was never prosecuted. Black and Gardner were shortly voted out of office and the indictments they secured were transferred to Harris County and subsequently ignored.

Most of the identified casualties of the Slocum Massacre were interred in an unmarked mass grave which,

to date, has not been located. Neither the dead nor their disenfranchised relatives ever received justice or recompense and the white population of the Slocum area was permitted to claim or repurpose the abandoned African American properties as they saw fit and consign the egregious affair to oblivion.

#### SLOCUM MASSACRE RECOGNITION

On March 30, 2011—after reporter Tim Madigan's two-part, investigative feature revisiting the atrocity appeared in the February pages of the Fort Worth Star Telegram—the 82nd Texas Legislature adopted House of Representatives Resolution 865 (filed by Reps. Marc Veasey and Lon Burnam), officially acknowledging that the Slocum Massacre occurred. Three years later, after the publication of *The 1910 Slocum Massacre: An Act of Genocide in East Texas* (History Press, 2014), author E. R. Bills and Slocum Massacre descendant Constance Hollie-Jawaid petitioned the Texas Historical Commission for a historical marker commemorating the incident and their request was approved on January 29, 2015.

#### SLOCUM MASSACRE MARKER DEDICATION CEREMONY

DATE: 1 pm, January 16, 2016  
LOCATION: Slocum ISD, 5765 E. State Hwy 294, Slocum, TX 75839

NOTE: The main portion of the dedication ceremony will take place at the Slocum ISD Cafetorium. The actual unveiling of the marker will occur at the site of the marker, a half-mile south of the school on the west side of FM 2022. As parking at the actual site of the marker will be extremely limited, ceremony attendees are encouraged to park at the school and utilize the free shuttle (bus) to the marker location.

#### SLOCUM MASSACRE MARKER DEDICATION CEREMONY INFORMATION

CONTACT: Constance Hollie-Jawaid (EMAIL: [constancejawaid@yahoo.com](mailto:constancejawaid@yahoo.com) / PHONE: 214-842-1221) or E. R. Bills (EMAIL: [erbillsthinks@gmail.com](mailto:erbillsthinks@gmail.com) / PHONE: 817-454-3189)



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Margarett Perkins, Laura Perkins, James I. Perkins and Dr. L. Michael Metke President of Tyler Junior College enter into agreement making possible the Rusk TJC Citizens Promise. The James I Perkins Family Foundation and Tyler Junior College established this scholarship program for Rusk High School graduates. The top fifty-percent/qualifying students will have \$8000. scholarships to TJC beginning with the class of 2014.

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## Bradford Class of 1965 celebrates 50 years since graduation



L to R - FR: Maxine Burley Session, Shirley Freeney Jones, Doretha Session Johnson. BR: Jay Lee King, Melvin Session and Willie B. Bradley.

You would have thought President Barack Obama was in the building when the class of 1965 greeted each other. The screaming, laughter and hugging was on when they met in Rusk at the Mt. Pleasant Church Fellowship Hall on November 7, 2015. This was the 50 year celebration of their graduation. Doretha and Jay Lee had not seen each other since graduation and Willie not attended a reunion since the early 90's. What a day it was in spite of the heavy rain that was falling outside. They enjoyed a home cooked meal complete with deserts and reminised about their senior play, a comedy called "No Boys Allowed."

The 1965 class motto was "The World Steps aside to let any man pass, if he knows where he is going." From the roundtable discussion held sharing the most joyous parts of their lives with each other, it is clear they have found this to be true.

They recalled quotes from their class sponsor Mrs. Betty Monmouth and the pranks some of the boys pulled during high school days.

Others attending were Walter Session husband of Maxine and Vivian King wife of Jay Lee.

Other members of the class are: Raymond Chandler, Jessie Marie Cox, Frazier Foreman, Ruby Inez Fuller Sparks, Myra Nell Glenn, Sandra Gossett Kendricks, James King, Edward Sneed, Perry Simmons, Lee Autry Taylor Atkins, Leon Thompson, Andrea Vallier Hughes and Rose Mary White. Those members who are deceased were remembered: Charles Bradley, Dale Carter, Dorothy Cook King, Lewis (Minered) Cumbrey, Doris Jean Guptin Miller, Leon Hart, L. C. (Kocomo) Kendricks, Ellis Monmouth, Jr., Juanita Neeley Cook, Ellis Ira Parks, Melvin Edward Session, Richard Session, Leon Stafford, Harold Thompson, Eddie D. Wickware.

Mt. Pleasant CME Church hosts  
23rd Choir Anniversary  
Sunday January 25, 2016  
3:00PM  
The public is invited to attend

Rev. Verts Thacker  
Linwood Baptist Church - speaker



## History of Rusk Memorial Cemetery

By Maxine Session



Before the establishment of Rusk Memorial Cemetery, black people were only allowed to be buried in the west or backside of Cedar Hill Cemetery. In other words, Cedar Hill Cemetery was and still is segregated by race.

Black families knew this was not right, but felt there was nothing they could do about it.

Irving Conley was not pleased about this. His family was buried in the Mount Mariah Cemetery off Bagley Road, but he decided to do something for others. He owned several acres of land surrounding his home and to the rear of it.

In 1953 he donated three lots of the Irvin Conley estate to Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church. He had a partial street cut on which the church was built, with the help of the city of Rusk and Herman Bradley, a fellow church member and city of Rusk employee who knew how to operate a street maintainer and other heavy equipment.

About 1960, Mr. Conley donated more of his estate to be used for a cemetery in which black people could be buried. So again he went to the city and Mr. Bradley to have the street cut from where it stopped in front of the church to Bradley Street. That Street was named Reeder Street from his wife Inez's maiden name. He donated the land to the east of the street for the present Rusk Memorial Cemetery, drew a map denoting cemetery plots and made it available to families.

Ollie Lee Foreman, a lifetime citizen of Dickinson First Addition who lives on Reeder Street remembers when it all took place and had this to say. "There was a fence separating the church land from the other land south of it. The street ended at the

fence. We couldn't drive through the street to Bradley Street, but had to turn around. Mr. Conley donated the land to the city, took the fence down, and had the street cut. In the beginning families did not have to pay anything to bury their people. The first to be buried there were Maurlean Johnson Waggoner and her infant son, Demetrius Waggoner in December of 1963."

Mr. Conley maintained the cemetery map for many years keeping a record of each person buried there. Eventually the map was turned over to the City of Rusk to maintain.

Today many local people who lived worked and raised their families in Rusk are buried in Memorial Cemetery. This includes more than forty veterans who served this country.

June 17, 2009 the city of Rusk acquired from Mary Bradley, wife of Oliver Bradley, Block 1117 Tract 42 of the J HUNDLLEY TIM survey. The lot size is 50 X 158. It faces Beale Street and provided an entrance which the city of Rusk setup with a brick entrance, fence and sign. A cement platform was poured November 2015 and The Texas and USA flags were placed there at the request Commander Emerson Griffin. The Flags were dedicated November 15, 2015 in a community ceremony hosted by VFW Post 3406 Commander Emerson Griffin to honor those US Service men buried there.

The research and interviews to produce this information was done by Maxine Session. This history is not complete. Anyone having additional information please contact Maxine at 903 683-5743. The current Cemetery records are maintained by Amy at Rusk Singletary Memorial library.