



TEXAS INFORMER



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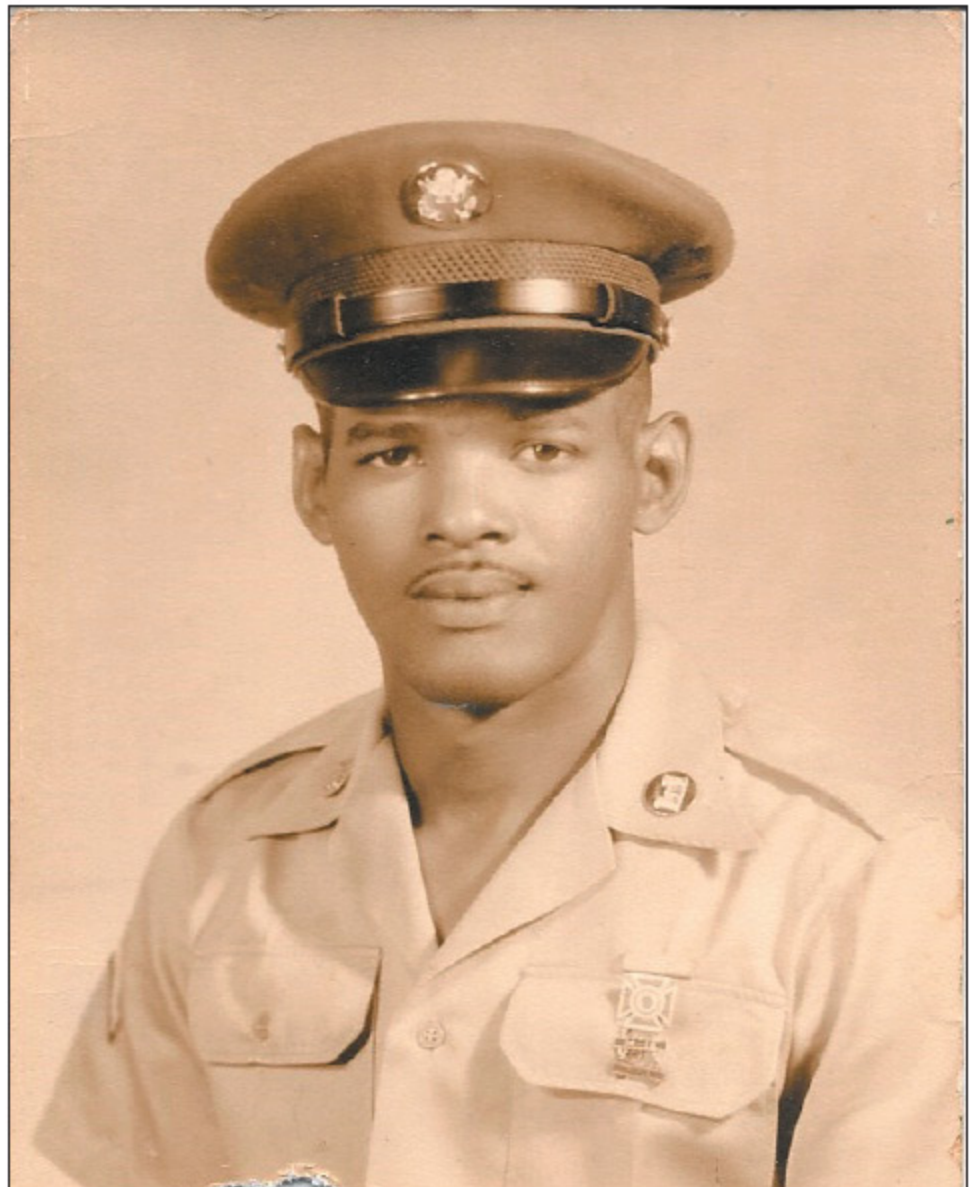
Bringing you positive news about local people since 1995!

Sweet Union Memorial Tribute



Sweet Union Baptist Church held a special Memorial Tribute to deceased members and recognized outstanding members and members with the most years of service of 2016. Those remembered were Mrs. Gladys Williams, Ms. Mizellar Scott, Ms. Francis Redd, Deacon Larry Wallace, Trustee Clayborne Williams and Trustee Hal Williams.

Continued page 6



Staff Sargent Cleo Edward Craig remembered on Memorial Day see story page 3

Tyler Junior College Rusk and Jacksonville Locations offer Nursing Program

Jacksonville/Rusk
For residents to the south of Tyler, there are TJC-Jacksonville and TJC-Rusk. TJC-Jacksonville, (N. Ragsdale, Jacksonville), offers a 20-student vocational nurse education program as well as a transitional program for registered nurses who wish to quality as associate degree nursing graduates. Core curriculum courses are also offered at TJC-Jacksonville, which is

located on the fourth floor of East Texas Medical Center Jacksonville
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TJC-Rusk is the newest addition to TJC's expanded array of credit instructional sites and offers a 20-student vocational nurse education program to serve East Texas. TJC-Rusk is located on the campus of Rusk State Hospital (805 North Dickinson Drive, Rusk, Texas 75785).
General Information: 903-510-2114.

Continued page 5

Troubled Veterans Recount War's Horrors in POV Documentary 'Of Men and War,' Sat. June 4, 2016 on PBS

Think you can't afford college?

Grants are awarded by the government and private organizations to help eligible students pay for school. Scholarships are given out by the government or by private companies. Your grades, heritage, religious affiliation, and other factors will help you qualify for these. Now that you know you may have many possible ways to pay for college, you can find the online school that's right for you.

PTSD has left a profound mark on troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan; first-of-its-kind treatment center in California offers hope to soldiers haunted by their combat experiences

Documentary Continue page 12

EDITORIAL

A
Season

Maxine Session, Editor

This month we honor fallen soldiers and others who have touched our lives in some way. May cover story is about Cleo Craig, a special cousin that touched my life and many others for a season. I would like to share the following "A Season" written by Iyanla Vanzant.

"When people come into your life for a season, it is because your turn has come to share, grow or learn. They may bring you an experience of peace or make you laugh. They may teach you something you have never done. They usually give you an unbelievable amount of joy. Believe it! It is real! But only for a season.

In the same way that leaves must fall from the trees, or the moon becomes full and then disappears, your seasonal relationships will end at the divinely appointed time. When that time comes, there is nothing you can say or do to make it work. There is no one you can blame. You cannot fix it. You cannot explain it. The harder you clutch, the worse it will feel. When the end of a season comes in a relationship, the only thing for you to do is let go.

A Veteran

I was, that others did not want to be.
I went where others did not want to go and did
what others failed to do.

I asked nothing from those who gave nothing
and reluctantly accepted the thought of eternal
loneliness should I fail.

I have seen the face of terror. I have felt the sting of fear
and I have enjoyed the sweet taste of a moment's love.

But most of all, I have lived times best forgotten.

At least I am able to say I am proud of what I am.

A veteran who served his country.

~ Author unknown (from the VA office of Vernon Denmon, Palestine, TX)

LEGAL NOTICE

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

Game #	Game Name / Odds	Prize	Final Close of Game	End of Sale Date
1714	Texas Cashew - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.64	\$5	5/31/16	11/16/16
1683	\$8 Set For Life - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.81	\$5	5/31/16	11/16/16
1747	\$20,000 Double Payday - Overall Odds are 1 in 4.11	\$5	5/31/16	11/16/16
1677	Money Money 11 Months - Overall Odds are 1 in 2.90	\$20	5/14/16	11/16/16
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1733	Super Lularis - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.87	\$5	6/29/16	12/29/16
1738	High Roller - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.87	\$5	6/29/16	12/29/16
1748	\$20,000 Cash - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.74	\$10	6/29/16	12/29/16
1711	Holiday Game Cash - Overall Odds are 1 in 3.31	\$20	6/29/16	12/29/16
1482	Millions Cash - Overall Odds are 1 in 2.51	\$50	6/29/16	12/29/16

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Blenheim Germany Speedway Race Track named for Staff Sergeant Cleo Edward Craig

Cover Story

~by Maxine Session

In April 1952 President Harry Truman signed the Japanese peace treaty granting Japan full sovereignty and officially ending World War II.

February of 1954 Leadbelly's famous folk songs were released on a four record set of 94 songs which included "Irene Goodnight" and "Jailhouse Blues."

March of 1958, 23 year old singer Elvis Presley traded his rock-and-roll crown for a set of Army fatigues as he was drafted into the Army.

In April 1972 the Blenheim, Germany Speedway was named "Craig Speedway" for Sargeant Cleo Edward Craig of Rusk, Texas.

There use to be a well known saying, "Old soldiers never die." That saying is still true. Memorial Day is being celebrated on May 30th to commemorate those soldiers fallen in war in service to our country.

Cleo Edward Craig was not fallen in war but is being remembered simply because he is loved and his history should be recorded. He was born in Rusk, Texas October 11, 1941. He grew up in an era that was very different from the age of technology of today.

Youngsters spent leisure time listening to the radio and playing records. He listened to records by Louie Armstrong, Wes Montgomery, Miles Davis and others and just hungout with the "old gang". The word "gang" back then had a different meaning from today. It was just a group of friends, guys and/or girls that you spent time with because you had a lot in common with each other. Like Cleo, his friends played football, basketball attended school functions and went on double dates on weekends.

Guys and girls dressed well to go to school. Cleo was always as they said back then, "sharp as a tack". He wore spit shined dress shoes that had taps for tap dancing attached to them which was the style. He wore dress slacks with matching dress shirts and suspenders that held his slacks high on the waist. When he wore cotton slacks or jeans, they were starched and ironed and the creases were sharp enough that they looked as if they would cut.



Cleo and Vera Mallard Craig at home in 1964

Cleo was very active in high school. He was president of his class all four years. He danced with quick-silver in his feet, but smooth enough for the best waltz or two-step. Frank Sinatra and Sammy Davis had nothing on him. He was in the band and choir. Band was a big thing. Bradford band directors created a jazz ensemble that played for events at that school and others in the area. Cleo played the trumpet. Sonny Watts, Billy and Charles Thompson, Joe Teague, Willie Johnson, Harold Ballard and Alvin Sneed were some of his closest friends. Most had a deep love for music as he did. The guys either drove their own cars or their parent's cars on weekend. They went off on side roads or seldom used highways and raced whoever was thought to have the fastest car. Cleo raced everything his parents had from a 57 Fairlane Ford to a 59 Chevy Empala. He attended Sunday school, was Sunday School Superintendent and sang in the choir at Mt. Pleasant

CME. Most everybody attended Church and Sunday School because that's what parents expected.

He graduated G. W. Bradford High School in 1961 and began college that fall at Jarvis Christian College of Hawkins, Texas, majoring in music. He met and married Vera Mallard Craig September 16, 1962. They lived in Rusk while he attended Jarvis. After awhile they moved to Wells, Texas and later Lufkin.

In October 1966 Sargeant Craig joined the United States Army. He took basic training at Fort Polk, Louisiana and later was stationed at Fort Lee Virginia. He served in Korea before being sent to Blenheim, Germany. During his Army life he served as President of the local bowling alley and Vice President of the Blenheim Speedway.

On Sunday April 9, 1972 the Craig family attended church. After service Sargeant Craig went straight to the race track to get prepared for the race. Vera and the children, two year old twins Dominique and

Angelique soon followed and had taken their seats in the stands. Craig was driving a Volkswagon that day. The race began, the crowd cheered for their favorite driver. Drivers were rounding the track as the speed picked up to about sixty miles an hour. Then suddenly as Cleo's Volkswagon rounded the curve it flipped over. He was wearing his seat belt but his neck was broken. Thirty year old Sargeant Cleo Craig was killed instantly. Later Vera said the only thing that gave her comfort was the fact that the last thing they did before leaving church was take communion. Just days following the accident the track was renamed "Craig Speedway" in his honor.

He was brought home and given a burial with full military honors. Today Sargeant Craig lies at rest in Memorial Cemetery in Rusk. His wife Vera Craig lives in Austin, Texas.

He was the son of the late Lonell and Lovie Cook and Rev. C. Craig. Grandparents were the late Oscar and Luella Denman.

OLD FASHIONED GINGERBREAD CAKE

4 oz. (1 stick) sweet butter
 1/2 cup light -or- dark brown sugar
 1/2 cup molasses -or- cane syrup
 2 eggs
 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
 1/2 tsp. baking soda
 1 tbsp. ground ginger, or to taste
 1 tsp. cinnamon
 1/2 tsp. cloves
 1/2 tsp. allspice
 2 tsp. vanilla extract or brandy
 1/2 cup buttermilk (or milk with a little
 yogurt stirred in)

Cream butter and brown sugar. Beat until fluffy and add molasses. Beat in eggs. Add dry ingredients, then vanilla and buttermilk. Turn into a buttered cake pan and bake in a preheated 350°F oven for between 20 and 30 minutes. (Check after 20 minutes).

CREAM CHEESE GINGER ICING: 1/4

cup unsalted butter, at room temp.
 1/4 pound cream cheese, at room temp.
 1 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar, sifted
 1 tsp. vanilla extract
 1/4 cup finely chopped candied ginger

Beat together butter and cream cheese until smooth. Add sugar and beat until smooth. Mix in vanilla and candied ginger. Chill briefly before frosting the gingerbread.

Variation: Add some raisins to the gingerbread.

Yield: 1 (9-inch) cake.

Happy Birthday

Krystal Ward Carter

May 1st

Happy 3rd Birthday

Madalyn Carter

May 28



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The Texas Lottery Commission Invites You to Attend:
“Doing Business Texas Style” Spot Bid Fair

In conjunction with: DFW Minority Supplier Development Council's ACCESS 2016

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Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas
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The Spot Bid Fair is FREE of charge!

Small, minority-owned, and Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) will have a unique opportunity to compete for bid awards and network with state agencies and institutions of higher education. Bids must be submitted to agency staff on-site.

Bid opportunities available for view and download at:

<https://data.texas.gov/Business/Bid-Book-Spreadsheet-2016/daek-f7x4>

For more information contact:

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Tiffany Dockery at (512) 471-2863 or tiffany.dockery@austin.utexas.edu



SUPPORTING TEXAS EDUCATION
AND VETERANS

You Still Have Time To Enter College This Fall



Krystal Ward Carter

you don't need to be a first generation immigrant or the first person in your family to go to college. Specific organizations qualify women or LGBTQ students as minorities. The types of scholarships for minority students vary from academic merit scholarships to athletic scholarships to need-based scholarships.

When searching for financing opportunities, take into consideration your skills, talents, and areas of need. Scholarships are not limited to college institutions either - there are specific charitable organizations, corporations, professional associations, and minority advocacy groups that are dedicated to serving underrepresented student populations.

Be sure to first cover your bases at home. If you are the child of a veteran or honorably discharged veteran, you should qualify for education benefits. If you have a parent who works for a corporation such as Target or Wal-Mart go online to their corporate site and search for scholaaarships and see what they have to offer and how to qualify.

1. Go online and pullup the application for the college you

are interested in attending. Fill it out, submit it and contact a counselor on that campus to get all information about schedules, courses, scholarships, financial aid, costs and deadlines. There are many people out there who are willing to help you. But you must ask!

2. Go to www.fafsa.ed.gov to pullup a student financial aid application, you may qualify for an educational grant.

Completing a FAFSA is the first step in applying for most federal, state, and college-provided financial aid for students. It stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid because it is filed with the US Department of Education, but most state-sponsored and college-sponsored aid requires the same FAFSA filing, so it is not only for federally sponsored student aid as the name might imply.

There is a fee of about \$75.00 for filing this application. If you are in high school and don't have the money or parents to help you, go to your high school counselor and request assistance with this

Many blessings with your future. Time is going to pass, so get started now.

.....
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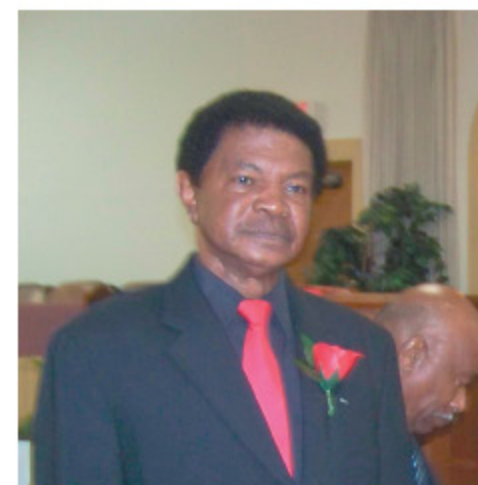
Sweet Union Special Tributes



Charlie Esco outstanding member 2016 sixty-five years of service.



Bettie Price seventy years of outstanding service.



Odell Hnton Trustee fifty-five years of outstanding service.



Billy Jack Williams lights a candle in memory of his mother Mrs. Gladys Williams.



Tracey Wallace lights candle in memory of her husband Deacon Larry Wallace.



Michelle Rhodes recognized as an outstanding member of 2016.



Theresa Franklin outstanding member 2016 Organist and choir member.

Jacksonville, TX.-A large crowd of about 250 were present at Sweet Union Baptist Church annual Family and Friends Day Service April 17, 2016. A memorial Tribute was given for deceased members Gladys Williams, Mizellar Scott, Ozeal White, Francis Redd, Larry Wallace, Clayborne Williams and Hal Williams. Members of their family were present to light a candle in memory of each; Regina Williams, Billy Redd, Tracey Wallace, Odell Hinton and Billy Jack Williams.

Members recognized with outstanding years in service were: Bettie Price seventy years, Lincoln Brown sixty-five years, Gladys Berry sixty-three years, Arvella Hunter fifty-seven years, Gwen Herdon sixty-three years and Carolyn McCann sixty years. The oldest living member of the church is Ms. Melba Silmon age 101. Outstanding members for the year 2016 were also recognized. Charlie Esco was recognized for sixty-five years of service.

She is a member of the Mass Choir, the Historical Committee and past member of the Cherokee County Historical Committee.

Odell Hinton was recognized for fifty-five years service, a member of the finance committee, budget chair, historical committee and Mass Choir.

Theresa Franklin fifty-five years service, organist, and Mass Choir member.

Billy Redd was recognized for fifty years service, Trustee, Brotherhood Chairman, and member of Mass Choir.

Leonard Montgomery was recognized for forty-five years service, Deacon Board, Advocate member of the Brotherhood.

Michelle Rhodes was honorable mention for outstanding service, youth director, church treasurer and announcing clerk.

Sweet Union Church Pastor is Rev. Ceola Cruley, Jr. Dr. Charles Walls, Pastor of New Zion Baptist Church was the speaker. Sis. Doris Robinson, program coordinator said all praises to God for such a great service which had a record breaking crowd in attendance.

Black Comedians React to Larry Wilmore's White House Correspondents' Dinner Jokes

By Stacy M. Brown (NNPA News Wire Contributing Writer)



President Barack Obama speaking at his last Whitehouse Correspondents' Dinner, as he drops the mic and says Obama out! Critics praised President Obama's monologue at the 2016 White House Correspondents' Dinner. (Screenshot/WhiteHouse.gov)

Obama, Out: The Commander-In-Chief Proves Once Again that He's the Best to Ever Do It

President Barack Obama dropped his microphone at the annual White House Correspondents' Dinner, acknowledging what everyone had already concluded: he slayed it! Larry Wilmore didn't do so bad as host, either, at least depending upon who is doing the review and if you're among those willing to dismiss his use of the N-word. But, leave it to comedians like George Wallace to really sum up the evening – in Wallace's case, probably better than anyone else. "Please come to my 2:17am show at the Waffle House Correspondents' Dinner," Wallace wrote on Twitter, right after the event ended. "I'm getting from [Larry Wilmore] what I wanted and didn't get from Chris Rock at the Oscars: Peak truth-telling..." said Erica Williams Simon, a comedian in her own right and a self-described recovering D.C. political strategist and activist. Comedian Akilah Hughes had even more to say.

"Someone come through with the 'White Feelings about Larry Wilmore' Bingo card," Hughes tweeted as she followed the monologues and skits at the dinner. The comedian was even more impressed with Obama's mic drop. "Literal mic drop from Mr. President #ObamaOut," Hughes said. Chris Acuff took note of those who were not laughing at Wilmore's jokes.

"D.C.-based jourmos, Republicans [and] everyone at CNN," Acuff noted on his Twitter feed. However, Rev. Al Sharpton called Wilmore's remark in which the comedian saluted Obama by using the term "My N—a," distasteful. "It was in bad taste," Sharpton said.

Comedian Dick Gregory also said Wilmore could have done without the obscene word. "I wouldn't have done it," Gregory said. Philip Lewis, an editorial fellow at the Huffington Post, tweeted that pundits should "save your N-word, think pieces. We don't want them." Lewis then signed his tweet, "Sincerely, the Black community." Brandon Patterson of Mother Jones, however, had a different take.

"I wish White people were as offended by police brutality and mass incarceration as they are by black people using the N-word," Patterson tweeted. By dropping the N-word on Obama, Wilmore broke the cardinal rule of cutting-edge humor – he wasn't funny," said Leonard Greene of the New York Daily News. However, Matt Wilstein wrote in "The Daily Beast" that, "Wilmore proved exactly why he was the perfect choice to host Obama's final White House Correspondents' Dinner. Even if the crowd of journalists in attendance didn't seem to agree."

Wilstein continued: "More than ever before, the president was an impossible act to follow. Not only did Obama deliver a slew of jokes at Donald Trump's expense, but he also presented an elaborate 'Curb Your Enthusiasm'-style video that included an epic John Boehner cameo. Wilmore began by welcoming the guests in the house once again to the event, 'or as Fox News will report, two thugs disrupt elegant dinner in D.C.' He introduced himself as 'a Black man who replaced a White man who pretended to be a TV newscaster,' before adding, 'so yeah, in that way Lester Holt and I have a lot in common,' to groans from the crowd at Brian Williams's expense."

He was even more harsh to CNN's Wolf Blitzer, saying, 'Hey, Wolf, I'm ready to project tonight's winner: Anyone who isn't watching 'The Situation Room.'" Perhaps, no one else captured the historical sentiment of the evening better than former Attorney General Eric Holder after Obama finished his speech in grand style.

"Dropped the mic!! Obama out. POTUS killed at WHCD. You're going to miss my man America," Holder wrote on Twitter. "Consequential – and funny. #POTUS2016"

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Personal Point Of View by Robin Robinson

The TRUTH About Racism... A lot of discomfort in the room. That's how one audience member described the City Club Luncheon last week when Terry Mazany basically told the prestigious crowd that racism and white privilege are at the root of our city's evils.

Mazany heads the Chicago Community Trust – a philanthropic powerhouse that has been trying to 'fix' the city for over a century. He is also a white man. So he is calling out his own privilege, arguing that if the city hopes to turnaround education and public safety, it has to "confront our unreconciled heritage of racism and white supremacy."

Issuing a challenge to the city's movers and shakers to see Chicago's violence, educational failure and economically gutted neighborhoods through the lens of racial disparity, Mazany raised the scorching report by the Police Accountability Task Force as more proof that

racism pulls the trigger that not only literally shoots us dead, but kills our hope for solutions. "We have state-sanctioned oppression, disproportionate laws, and policing that result in one third of all Black males having some interaction with our justice system." Mazany said, adding, "African Americans constitute 74 percent of the victims of police-involved shooting."

The report from the Task Force convened in the wake of the release of the video showing Chicago Police officer Jason Van Dyke shooting 16 year old LaQuan McDonald 16 times was blunt in its assessment of CPD as rife with racism, stating that "If you are not severely and wholeheartedly dealing with racism, you are not going to get to the bottom of this issue."

Mazany zeroed in on the response to the report by the Fraternal Order of Police. When pressed on why Chicago police had targeted neighborhoods of color, Union

President Dean Angelo said wards that had the most crime happened to be neighborhoods where the population was more than 80 percent African American. He explained, "Officers aren't responding to neighborhoods of color. They're responding to neighborhoods of crime."

Terry Mazany Terry Mazany Describing that as a statement that dehumanized and criminalized African Americans, Mazany says the challenge is to acknowledge the pain [of such statements] and move to reconciliation." He added, "for us to make progress in reducing racism in our city, Angelo and the FOP must be at the table – all of us on the same side confronting racism, not negotiating across the table with black lives in the balance."

Mazany's reference to "the table" is no doubt a link to the Trust's upcoming On The Table event. The third year of an initiative that stages thousands of mealtime conversations on the same day – to tackle crucial and difficult topics as human beings sharing food and drink, making the hard truths perhaps easier to digest. The idea is also to bring people together

who might not ordinarily be socializing. It is the opposite of a 'townhall' meeting, where we tend to rail against the 'system' and shelve personal responsibility.

This year's On The Table topic is subtly connected to the racism Mazany says Chicago must face and fix – it is UNITY. Hosts can interpret that in a variety of ways, but the Trust seems ready to focus on race-based disparity almost exclusively in it's future planning and funding – because, startlingly, the feedback from the past two years of On The Table named that as what people are worried about ... the root of Chicago's most pervasive and destructive conditions.

Racism. There, we're saying it. Now, say how you feel about it, what you can or should do about it, how and why it is your problem. Anyone can host an On The Table, anywhere that you can break bread. You choose the time, place and guest list. So far 50,000 people are expected to pull up a chair. Hopefully, FOP President Angelo will attend one ... probably not the one Mazany is hosting.

Juneteenth Gospel

Explosion

Featuring Lee Williams and Spiritual QCs & Many More!

June 17, 2016

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Christianity

Luke 12:48



To whom much is given, of him shall much be required.

Unfortunately we are not always aware of just how magnificent we are. The same light others are shining blinds us about ourselves. We become content being like everyone else when something inside tells us we are not. But we plod along being angry or bitter when others expect us to do what they cannot. The key is not to do what others do and say; it is to know we can, believe we can and do what we can to the best of our ability. If we know what to expect from our-selves, we will always live up to our greatest expectation.

Happy Birthday
Joel McGowan
 May 22nd

Have you ever wondered why certain people are expected to do things a little faster or better than everyone else? The simple answer is because they can. Have you ever wondered why you are expected to do the impossible, achieve the unattainable or overcome the insurmountable? Very simply because you can. You know how you can just look at somebody and know they can do it? Well the exact same thing is true about you.

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Prince found unresponsive



and celebrities expressing their condolences. Even President Obama issued a statement within hours of Prince's passing. "The world lost a creative icon," said the president. "Michelle and I join millions of fans from around the world in mourning the sudden death of Prince. Few artists have influenced the sound and trajectory of popular music more distinctly, or touched quite so many people with their talent. As one of the most gifted and prolific musicians of our time, Prince did it all — funk...R&B...rock and roll. He was a virtuoso instrumentalist,

a brilliant bandleader, and an electrifying performer." Gov. Mark Dayton said in a statement that Prince made Minnesota a better place. "Prince, and his music, defined an era," said Dayton in a statement. "His tremendous talent was matched only by his generosity and commitment to improving his community. Minnesotans and our nation mourn the loss of a great artist today; one who has left an unforgettable mark on music history, and whose contributions to the betterment of our state will be remembered for years to come. Minneapolis Mayor Betsy Hodges said Prince was a city treasure. "For

the residents of Minneapolis, the loss of Prince is too large to describe.

His music brought untold joy to people all over the world. But in Minneapolis, it is different. It (his death) is harder here," said Hodges in her statement. "Prince was a child of our city and his love of his hometown permeated many of his songs. Our pride in his accomplishments permeates our love of Minneapolis. "From his youth in the Minneapolis Public Schools, to his graduation from Central High School, to his breakthrough performance at the Capri on Broadway Avenue, to his worldwide success, he was one of us. He gave us more opportunities to hear his music than anyone else. What a blessing. Only now may we realize how lucky we were." Rep. Keith Ellison said April 21 will be remembered as a dark day in history. "My heart is heavy with the news of Prince's passing. To the people of Minnesota, Prince was a cultural ambassador. He inspired countless others around the world with his music and theatrics. Prince showed us it was okay to be different.

He showed us that the best way to be cool was to be yourself," said Ellison. "Prince wasn't merely a pop star — to many of us, he was much, much more. The world will be a little less bright without Prince in it." Sen. Amy Klobuchar thanked Prince for being the state's top ambassador.

"I grew up with Prince's music. He was a superstar composer, an amazing performer and a music innovator with a fierce belief in the independence of his art. He made 'Purple Rain' a household name, First Avenue a landmark, and brought international fame to Minnesota's music scene. I was always so proud to say 'Prince, he is from Minnesota.'" insight News is a member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association.

By Harry Colbert, Jr. (Insight News, NNPA Member)

The reaction to the passing of Prince Rogers Nelson, more commonly simply known as Prince, has come from all reaches of society. Prince was found unresponsive at Paisley Park — his home and entertainment compound — in the early morning hours of April 21. He was 57.

The death came as a shock to most, even after word spread that the prior week his plane had to make an emergency landing due to what was said to be flu-like symptoms. But Saturday before his death Prince hosted a party at Paisley and reportedly told fans he was in good health. Statements from around the globe flooded in, with dignitaries

Take a day to heal from the lies you've told yourself and the ones that have been told to you. ~Maya Angelou

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African Americans invented Memorial Day Study Finds



May 1, 1865 African Americans gathered in Charleston, South Carolina to commemorate the death of Union soldiers. It soon became known as Decoration Day, the first Memorial Day.

TheRoot.com--Three years before the commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic called on Union veterans' organizations to decorate the graves of dead soldiers, blacks in Charleston, South Carolina in 1865 launched the first Decoration Day in honor of the Union's war dead, says Yale University history professor David Blight.

"That ceremony on May 1, 1865 was actually the first recorded Decoration Day or Memorial Day," said Blight, author of several books, including "Reunion and Race." Today, the national observance on the last Monday in May still serves as a day to remember those who died in wars. It's also mixed with parades, picnics and other displays of patriotism.

Blight was in a Harvard University library doing research for "Reunion and Race" about 15 years ago when he stumbled across a box of unorganized papers of a Union veterans' organization and a folder with the words "First Decoration Day" written on it.

He sifted through those papers and landed on a research path that would take him to South Carolina and the former Washington Race Course and Jockey Club, a place that was once a prestigious horse racing course for the

state's low country planters and others in the wealthy, aristocratic class.

During the Civil War, that track was turned into a prison for Union soldiers. Many died there, but were not buried properly, Blight said.

Following the Confederate surrender ending the Civil War, blacks went to the place where hundreds of prisoners had been buried, many in mass graves.

"Blacks, many of them recently freed slaves, buried the soldiers properly. They put up a fence around the area and painted it. More than 260 were buried there. We don't know the names. We don't know the race," Blight told BlackAmericaWeb.com. Following the burials, there was a ceremony. Blight found more information about the rites in old newspapers and magazines such as Harper's Weekly. Several large newspapers from the North would send reporters into the South to cover the war and its aftermath, with some writing narratives with great detail, Blight said.

"At 9 a.m. on May 1, a procession stepped off, led by 3,000 black schoolchildren carrying arm loads of roses and singing. The children were followed by several

hundred black women with baskets of flowers, wreaths and crosses. Then came black men marching in cadence, followed by contingents of Union infantry and other black and white citizens," Blight said. "As many as possible gathered in the cemetery enclosure; a children's choir sang 'We'll Rally Around the Flag,' 'The Star-Spangled Banner' and several spirituals before several black ministers read from scripture. This was their way of saying what the war meant to me and what America means to me. They were now freed men and women."

According to Blight, they paid tribute to the dead on the very grounds where the wealthy enjoyed the good life.

"Some of their former owners probably went to the track," he said. "Some of the people who buried the dead soldiers and carried flowers may have even worked at the track."

Finding an account of the celebration at the track led by blacks proved to be quite difficult for Blight, at first. "That shows that some parts of history can be lost, depending on who is in control," Blight said. "You have to realize that the white Democrats in South

Carolina soon returned to power. The blacks were out of office. Southerners did not want to remember the war, especially through an event such as this."

Recognition of the Memorial Day event finally did come to Charleston. Last year, a historic marker was placed on the grounds

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POV

Documentary

Continued from page 1

“This devastatingly raw documentary shows that for some the fighting may stop, but the suffering continues. . . . Empathetic and rigorous, [the film] burns low and slow.”—Jeannette Catsoulis, The New York Times Of Men and War

Of Men and War. © Alice Films

Post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, affects almost 30 percent of the 834,467 Iraq and Afghanistan War veterans treated through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Consumed by anger and traumatic memories long after their return, soldiers often resort to drugs or suicide to end their suffering.



Filmmaker Laurent Bécue-Renard provides a searing account of how the disorder has affected veterans and their families in Of Men and War. The film offers an unparalleled look at the enduring consequences of PTSD and the role treatment can play in helping soldiers reclaim their lives. An Official Selection of the 2014 Cannes Film Festival, the documentary has its national broadcast premiere during the 29th season of POV (Point of View) Saturday, June 4, 2016 at 1 p.m. on PBS. (Check local listings.)

Of Men and War, made between 2003 and 2014, begins with a scenic drive through California’s Napa Valley, where therapist and social worker Fred Gusman, who pioneered revolutionary PTSD programs at the Veterans Administration in the late 1970s, opened The Pathway Home residential treatment center in Yountville in 2008.



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