



EEO REVIEW

Produced monthly by the State Equal Employment Management Office (SEEM)...

MESSAGE FROM THE SEEM

Let's Celebrate!

February is Black History Month and this year's theme is "Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of Multiculturalism". Mr. Woodson is known to many as the "Father of Black History". Dr. Woodson was the son of former slaves, but earned his Ph.D. degree from Harvard University in 1912. In 1915, he founded The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (the Association). In 1926 the Association, under Dr. Woodson's leadership, established Negro History Week to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. In 1976 it expanded into Black History Month to celebrate the contributions made to the world by those of African descent. Mr. Woodson was once quoted to say "In the long run, there is not much discrimination against superior talent". With this thought in mind never let anything or anyone limit your potential. A duck is a duck no matter if you call it a dog or not; so if you're great...be great no matter what circumstances you find yourself in. Seek inspiration from Mr. Woodson, his is a story of meager beginning, surely no one ever thought he would go on to achieve the things that he did and here we are 82 years later celebrating his accomplishments and legacy. Please join us on the 26th at the Fort Pickett Officer's Club/10:30.



VIRGINIANS MAKING HISTORY

JOHN MERCER LANGSTON (1829-1897)



John Langston was born on Dec 14, 1829 in Louisa county Virginia. He is best known as being a black leader, educator, and diplomat, who is believed to have been the first black ever elected to public office in the United States. Langston was the son of a Virginia planter and a slave mother. Langston was emancipated at the age of five and attended school in Ohio. He graduated from Oberlin College in 1849. He quickly became a leader among free blacks and was elected to local offices in Brownhelm Township, Ohio in 1855 and Oberlin from 1865-1867. In 1864 he helped organize the National Equal Rights League, of which he was the first president.

After the American Civil War, Langston moved to Washington D.C. and practiced law. He also was professor of law and dean of the law department from 1869-1877 and vice president from 1872-1876 of Howard University. He was U.S. minister to Haiti and charge d' affaires to Santo Domingo from 1877-1885 and was elected president of the Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute in 1885. Then in 1888 he was a Republican candidate from Virginia for the U.S. House of Representatives, and after a challenge of the election returns that took almost two year, he succeeded in unseating his Democratic opponent and served in Congress from Sept 23, 1890, to March 3, 1891. John Langston passed away in Washington D.C. on Nov. 15, 1897.

The History of Valentine's Day

Every February, across the country, candy, flowers, and gifts are exchanged between loved ones, all in the name of St. Valentine. But who is this mysterious saint and why do we celebrate this holiday?

One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men -- his crop of potential soldiers. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

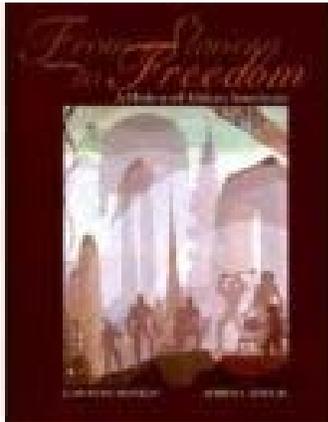
According to one legend, Valentine actually sent the first 'valentine' greeting himself. While in prison, it is believed that Valentine fell in love with a young girl -- who may have been his jailor's daughter -- who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter, which he signed 'From your Valentine,' an expression that is still in use today. Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories certainly emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic, and, most importantly, romantic figure.

Valentine's Day Quote

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or touched. They must be felt with the heart." -- Helen Keller



Lending Library - Book of the Month



From Slavery to Freedom
A History of African Americans
 - John Hope Franklin

Since its initial publication more than fifty years ago, *From Slavery to Freedom* has remained the preeminent history of African Americans. The eighth edition has been revised to reflect new scholarship and developments in the African American Community, to increase attention to African American Women and culture, and to feature a new final chapter extending coverage to the close of the twentieth century.

February 2008 Upcoming Events

© Langley AFB AAHC will be hosting a stage play "Son Rise" on 9 February 2008 at 1900.

© Ft Lee Equal Opportunity Office will be hosting the African American/ Black History Observance on 11 February 2008 held at Mifflin Hall in Lewi Auditorium BLDG 5000, 1200. Pin Point Theater will perform the play "1001 Inventions".

© Langley AFB Black History Luncheon will be held on 19 February 2008 at 1130 at the Enlisted Club.

© District of Columbia National Guard, Black History Month Observance with Musical Performance "Voices of Africa" & Guest Speaker Mr. Roger Cram Director of Special Projects Hiram College, OH held at DC Armory, 2001 East Capital Street on 27 February 2008 at 1000-1200hrs.

Virginia National Guard
presents:
"Teasley & Williams"

© Black History Month Observance Program will be held at Ft Pickett's Officer Club on 26 February 2008 at 1030. There will be a Musical Performance by Young Audiences of Virginia artists performing "Rhythm and Song".



Quote of the Month



"I have learned over the years that when one's mind is made up, this diminishes fear".

-- Rosa Parks

African American Participation In
The Virginia National Guard
(Most Significant Events & Most Recent within the last Ten Years)

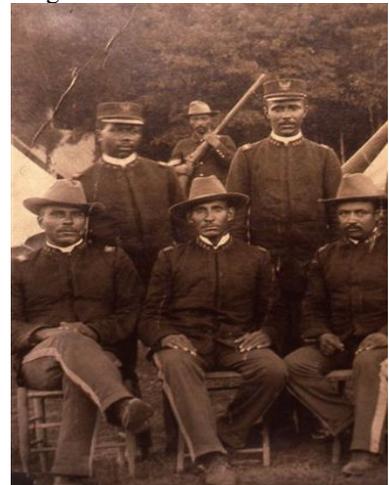
1872*

February 17- The "Attucks Guard" was organized in Richmond. Later redesignated as Company A, 1st Battalion Infantry, Virginia Volunteers (forerunner of the Virginia National Guard) this was Virginia's first African American unit raised in peace time. Unlike its Army counterparts this unit and all those that followed until 1898 was commanded by black officers.



1899*

January 26- The 6th Virginia Volunteer Infantry is released from active duty and returns home. The black officers decided that with the racist problems encountered during this tour they would not reorganize their companies in state service, thus ending 27 years of African American duty in the Virginia Volunteers. No black would serve again in the Virginia National Guard unit 1964.



Officers 6th VA Volunteer Infantry 1898

1964*

Staff Sergeant John H. Lewis enlists in the 192nd Tactical Clinic, 192nd Tactical Fighter Group, Virginia Air National Guard making him the first African American to join the state force since 1898. Lewis had served as a medic in World War II and in the Air Force Reserve before joining the Guard. He retired in 1981 with a combined 27 years of service.

1965*

Platoon Sergeant Douglas M. Day joins Company B, 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry in Christiansburg, becomes the first African American member of the Virginia Army National Guard. In 1976 he was named "Outstanding Enlisted Soldier of the Year" for the Virginia Guard.



1998

November- Despite obvious gains made by African Americans in the Virginia Guard since the 1960s, the state force was rocked by allegations brought to the press by black and white Guardsmen from both the Army and Air Guard of racism and discrimination, including the withholding of deserved promotions. Governor James Gilmore appoints a civilian panel to explore the charges, most of which were true. He ordered the adjutant general to make corrective actions to assure African Americans and other minorities are afforded the same opportunities on an equal basis to their white counterparts.

2000

October- Lieutenant Colonel Frank Batts was appointed commander of the 54th Field Artillery Brigade, the first African American in the Virginia Guard to command a brigade in the state force.

2001

February- Virginia Army Guard Colonel Bert W. Holmes, Jr., is promoted to brigadier general, becoming the first African American general officer in the history of the state force. Holmes, a medical doctor, is appointed as the Assistant Adjutant General, Virginia National Guard, also a first for a black Guardsman.

2004

This year marked three significant events involving African American women in the Virginia Guard.

April 3- Colonel Janice B. Young becomes the first African American woman to achieve colonel's rank in the Virginia Army National Guard. She is Deputy Commander of Detachment 3 (Medical), Virginia Army National Guard.

August 18- Colonel Debra J. Carroll becomes the first African American woman to achieve colonel's rank in the Virginia Air National Guard.



Colonel Carroll, guest speaker at the 2006 Black History Program at 192nd FW

December 14- The 183rd Personnel Service Detachment is mobilized under the command of Captain Robin Branch. The unit deploys to Kuwait in early 2005 making Captain Branch the first woman (of any race) to command a Virginia Guard unit in a theater of operations. As a Private First Class, Branch served with the same unit in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, 1990-1991.



Camp Virginia Headquarters Team with part of the 183rd PSD, the rest of the unit was split between five different camps throughout Kuwait.

VINTAGE POETRY

"Mother to Son", by Langston Hughes

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor—
Bare.
But all the time
I'se been a-climbin' on,
And reachin' landin's,
And turnin' corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark
Where there ain't been no light.
So, boy, don't you turn back.
Don't you set down on the steps.
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.
Don't you fall now—
For I'se still goin', honey,
I'se still climbin',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

This publication will be distributed on a monthly basis. If you have any questions or comments, please call Capt Allen at (804) 236-6596/DSN 864-6596 or Antoinette.allen3@us.army.mil

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