

# League of Military Veterans Newsletter



Second Baptist Church & St. James AME Church, Elgin

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## DID YOU KNOW WE SERVE PROUDLY



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# Administrative Information

- General: The Second Baptist Church & St. James League of Military Veteran's Newsletter is published periodically throughout the year. The managing editor is Deacon Ruberl Carr. This newsletter is a collective volunteer effort comprised of articles and items sharing veterans-related news, experiences, and resources amongst veterans, family members and our Church Community.
- The mission of the League of Military Veterans is to function as an in-reach and outreach service body of military veterans dedicated to providing a unifying advocacy for veterans, their families, service organizations and those currently serving in the armed forces to ignite a passion to follow Jesus on the home front and on the battlefield throughout the year.





**November 05, 2015**

**Presidential Proclamation -- Veterans Day, 2015**

**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

The United States military is the strongest, most capable fighting force the world has ever known. The brave men and women of our Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard demonstrate a resolute spirit and unmatched selflessness, and their service reminds us there are few things more American than giving of ourselves to make a difference in the lives of others. On Veterans Day, we reflect on the immeasurable burdens borne by so few in the name of so many, and we rededicate ourselves to supporting those who have worn America's uniform and the families who stand alongside them.

Our true strength as a Nation is measured by how we take care of our veterans when they return home, and my Administration is committed to ensuring our heroes and their loved ones have every chance to share in the promise they risked their lives to defend. We have made it easier for veterans to convert their military skills to the civilian workforce, enabled more veterans and their family members to attain Federal education benefits, and expanded access to timely, quality health care for all veterans. Just as every veteran deserves the support and benefits they have earned, those who have given everything to defend our homeland deserve a place of their own to call home.

To uphold this ideal, First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden's Joining Forces initiative has forged partnerships with local leaders across America to uphold the dignity of every veteran and work to end veterans' homelessness. No one who fights for our country should have to fight for the care they deserve. Earlier this year, I was proud to sign the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, which fills critical gaps in mental health care by raising awareness and taking steps to improve access to care for those suffering from the invisible wounds of war.

Our veterans left everything they knew and loved and served with exemplary dedication and courage so we could all know a safer America and a more just world. They have been tested in ways the rest of us may never fully understand, and it is our duty to fulfill our sacred obligation to our veterans and their families. On Veterans Day, and every day, let us show them the extraordinary gratitude they so rightly deserve, and let us recommit to pledging our full support for them in all they do.

With respect for, and in recognition of, the contributions our service members have made to the cause of peace and freedom around the world, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor our Nation's veterans.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim November 11, 2015, as Veterans Day. I encourage all Americans to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our veterans through appropriate public ceremonies and private prayers. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials to display the flag of the United States and to participate in patriotic activities in their communities. I call on all Americans, including civic and fraternal organizations, places of worship, schools, and communities to support this day with commemorative expressions and programs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand fifteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fortieth.



Barack Obama



## **A Prayer for Soldiers**

Brave warriors, should fate find us in battle,

May our cause be just.

May our leaders have clear vision.

May our courage not falter.

May we be triumphant and earn victory

as we show mercy to our enemies.

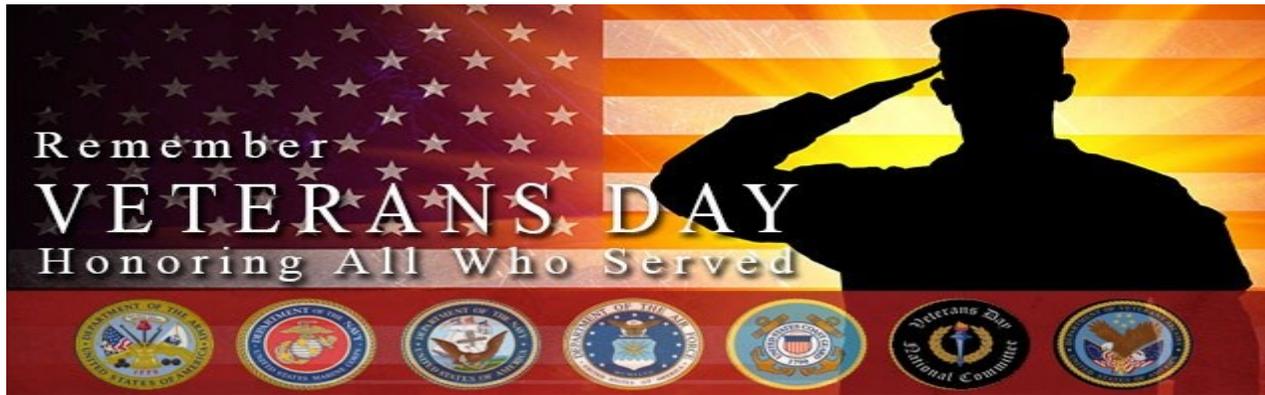
May our efforts bring lasting peace.

May our sacrifice be always  
appreciated by those we serve.

May we return to our loved ones unharmed.

Should we be harmed, may our wounds heal.

Should we perish in the struggle,  
may God embrace us and find for us  
a place in His Kingdom



## **The History of Veteran's Day**

November 11, or what has come to be known as Veterans Day, was originally set as a U.S. legal holiday to honor Armistice Day - the end of World War I, which officially took place on November 11, 1918. President Woodrow Wilson honored the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

In 1954, Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, struck out the word "Armistice" and inserted the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation on June 1, 1954, November 11 became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

Between 1968 and 1975, Veterans Day was moved around on the calendar, sometimes even appearing on the last Monday of October. Finally on September 20, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed a law which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978.

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.



**The SBC & St. James Military Ministry will take a trip to Washington, DC April 14-17, 2016. Details regarding accommodations and airfare will be provided soon.**

Explore Washington DC's Arlington National Cemetery and most famous memorials. See JFK's grave site and the Eternal Flame, and stroll through sites including the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the World War II Memorial. Witness the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and a tour of the **White House (Group Size Limited/Pre-Registration Required)**, Lincoln Memorial, US Capitol and more.

**We will also explore the following sites:**

Air Force Memorial  
Pentagon Memorial  
Marine Corps Memorial (Iwo Jima)  
US Navy Memorial  
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial

**Additional sites as time permits:**

Pentagon  
Jefferson Memorial  
Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial  
JFK Performing Arts Center  
FBI Building  
Robert F Kennedy Department of Justice Building  
Holocaust Museum  
Washington Monument  
Smithsonian Museums  
National Mall

For more information and to reserve a space contact Leon Montgomery (SBC) or Dr. Wes Scott (St James)



## Command Sergeant Major

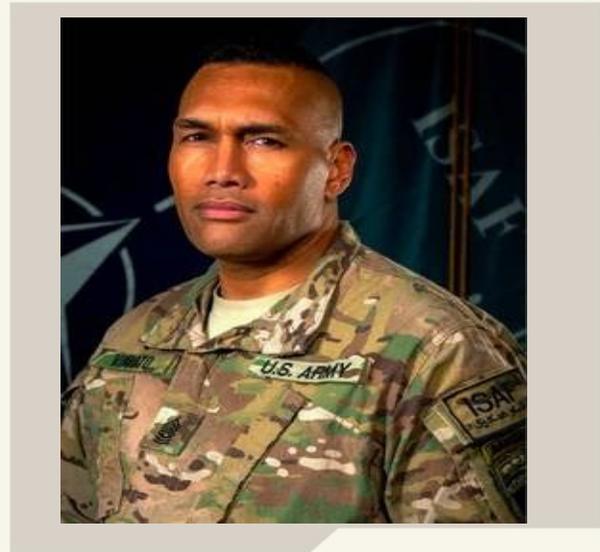
### Isaia (Ace) Vimoto

Command Sergeant Major Isaia T. Vimoto entered the military under the COHORT program from the island of American Samoa on 5 November 1981. He started One Station Unit Training (OSUT) at Ft. Benning, Georgia on 10 November 1981.

CSM Vimoto has served in every leadership position to include Team Leader, Squad Leader, Scout Team Leader, Scout Platoon Sergeant, Airborne Infantry Platoon Sergeant, First Sergeant, Assistant Commandant of The Sabalauski Air Assault School (1SG), Operations Sergeant Major, Battalion Command Sergeant Major, Brigade Command Sergeant Major, Division command Sergeant Major, Corps Command Sergeant Major and is currently the International Joint Command Sergeant Major.

CSM Vimoto's military education includes PLDC, BNCOC, ANCOC, the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, the Keystone Course, Force Management Course, and the Nominative Legal Course. He also completed: Basic Airborne School, Jump Master Course, Ranger School, Air Assault School, Drill Sergeant School, Rappel Master Course, Jungle Operations Training Course, Special Operations Training Course (SOT), and Master Fitness Course.

CSM Vimoto's awards and decorations include the LOM, DSSM, DMSM, BSM (x2), MSM (5OLC), ARCOM (x6), AAM (x6), Good Conduct Medal



(10th award), National Defense Service Medal, GWOT-SM, NCOPD (x4), Overseas Service Ribbon (x7), Army Service Ribbon, Expert Infantryman's Badge, Combat Infantryman's Badge, Ranger Tab, Master Parachutist, Air Assault Badge, Drill Sergeant Badge, German Jump Wings and Brazilian Jump Wings. He is a member of the prestigious Sergeant Morales and the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club. He was also awarded the Infantry Order of Saint Maurice, the Field Artillery Order of Saint Barbara, and Combat Spurs.

CSM Vimoto is married to Misimua Vimoto. They have five children: Sabrina, Ariel, Isaia Jr., Nephi and the late Private First Class Timothy R. Vimoto.



## Sergeant Major Ronald Green

Sgt. Maj. Ronald Green has been selected as the 18th sergeant major of the Marine Corps.

Green, previously sergeant major of I Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Pendleton, California, assumed the post Feb. 20, 2015.

The decision was made by Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Joseph Dunford, who convened a panel of general officers in early December to select the most eligible enlisted leaders who met a set of criteria including combat experience and strong writing and speaking skills. Dunford made his selection from a field of five finalists.

A 31-year Marine, Green is an artilleryman by training. He has served as a drill instructor at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina, and completed inspector-instructor duty with a Louisiana Reserve unit. He was selected to the rank of sergeant major in December 2004.

He served in Iraq in 2005, deploying with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169 as a unit sergeant major. He later completed a deployment to Afghanistan.

Green has previously advised general officers as sergeant major of Marine Forces Europe and of Headquarters and Service Battalion at Headquarters Marine Corps, Henderson Hall in Arlington, Virginia and



as sergeant major of Marine Forces Europe and Africa in Stuttgart, Germany.

His awards include the Legion of Merit and the Meritorious Service Medal.

"His dynamic leadership is well known throughout the ranks of our Corps. His wide range of experience in both peacetime and combat, and his record of performance make him extraordinarily well-qualified to serve as our senior enlisted leader," Dunford said in a Marine Corps releases.



## Lieutenant Mark Greene

### Navy Seal

Lt. Mark Greene, an East Coast based U.S. Navy SEAL (Sea, Air and Land), addressed African American students from the University of Cincinnati (UC) on mental toughness at the P&G headquarters.

The brief was organized by the East Coast SEAL and SWCC Scout Team Recruiting Directorate as part of the "Striving to Transform, Enrich, Empower and Reward" (STEER) program, and to promote Naval Special Warfare (NSW) awareness.

Greene explained how he had to become mentally tough when going through his training at Basic Underwater Demolition/school (BUD/s) and how he overcame adversity as an African American SEAL.

"That BUD/s experience destroyed every barrier I had, and I had to become mentally tough quick," said Greene. "It was tough going through BUD/s not only because it was the toughest physical challenge I had ever faced but also because the drop-out rate for African Americans was very high and that weighed on my mind heavily."

"This is a great time for African Americans here, you have so many opportunities available to you, you can not only find a job in the real world but you could join the military like me," said Greene. "The military has done great things for me. It gave me an education and a career."

Striving to Transform, Enrich, Empower and Reward was created in 2010 in partnership with UC and P&G and designed as a mentorship program providing African American students with African American men-



tors to help increase graduation rates.

"Mentoring makes a difference in the lives of students," said Debra Merchant, vice president of Student Affairs and Services at UC.

The East Coast Navy SEAL and SWCC Scout Team Recruiting Directorate identifies and engages high-quality, potential SEAL and SWCC candidates, informs them of a career in Naval Special Warfare and assists them with the recruiting process, and has a major goal of trying to bring more cultural diversity to Naval Special Warfare.

"Currently, there are three African American SEAL officers and 20 African American enlisted SEALs," said Greene.



## General Edward A. Rice Jr.

Gen. Edward A. Rice Jr. is Commander, Air Education and Training Command, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas. He is responsible for the recruiting, training and education of Air Force personnel. His command includes the Air Force Recruiting Service, a numbered air force and Air University. AETC trains more than 293,000 students per year and consists of 12 bases, more than 67,900 active-duty, Reserve, Guard, civilians and contractors, and 1,369 trainer, fighter and mobility aircraft.

General Rice is a 1978 distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He has commanded a squadron, group, wing, the Air Force Recruiting Service, two numbered air forces and a joint command. His numerous staff positions include serving as a White House Fellow at the Department of Health and Human Services, as a professional staff member for the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces, and as the Deputy Executive Secretary for the National Security Council. He has also served as Chief of Staff of the Office of the Representative and Executive Director for the Coalition Provisional Authority, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Washington, D.C.



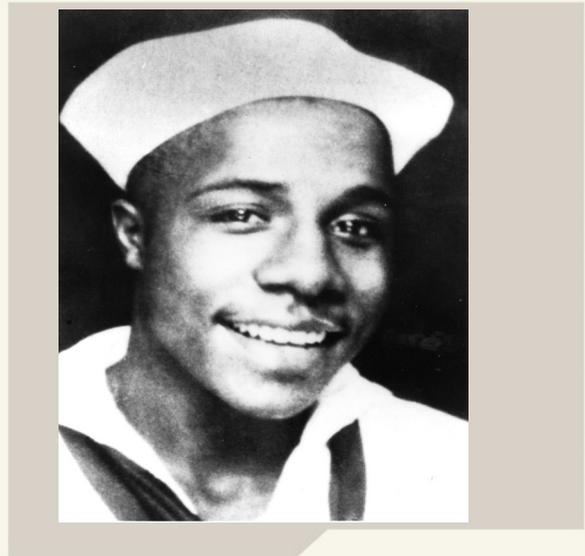
General Rice has significant experience in combat and contingency operations, to include commanding bomber operations during the first four months of Operation Enduring Freedom as Commander, 28th Air Expeditionary Wing. Additionally, during Operation Unified Assistance, General Rice served as the Deputy Commander for the joint task force, Combined Support Force-536, assigned to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to victims of the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia. The general is a command pilot with more than 4,000 flying hours in the B-1B, B-52G/H, E-3, B-2, KC-135, C-130H, T-37 and T-38.



## Chief Petty Officer

### Alex Haley

Though he never served aboard a ship in Alaska, the name Alex Haley should be familiar to anyone who has looked out over the waters of Kodiak, Alaska. Chief Petty Officer Alex Haley, perhaps best known for authoring the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*, enlisted with the Coast Guard in 1939 and rose from mess attendant 3rd Class to become the Coast Guard's first and only chief journalist ten years later. Haley collected and published the stories of his shipmates, earning the Coast Guard the attention of the public during World War II, and the Coast Guard Cutter Alex Haley, homeported in Kodiak, Alaska bears his name in honor of his tremendous contributions to the Coast Guard and the American people.





# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## Howard Taylor



**Captain Howard Taylor US Army** is the first black graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point from Elgin and an Airborne Ranger. He was 1 of 2 members from the same class to be accepted to the Academy, which was highly unusual and a testament to the districts educational preparedness. He was part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> class to have women graduates. He saw the 1<sup>st</sup> African American 1<sup>st</sup> Captain at the Academy (highest ranking cadet) and the 1<sup>st</sup> women graduates from the academy. President Reagan gave the commencement speech and it was his second public appearance after he had been shot. He spent 4 years at the Academy and 7 years active service 1978 -

## **Captain Howard Taylor US Army**

(cont.)

Originally, he had enlisted in the Marines in the delayed entry program as a junior in high school. But was lucky enough to have a high school counselor who was a reserve LT Commander in the Navy who thought he had the grades and background to receive an ROTC scholarship or an appointment to the academies. So he applied to all of them receiving a Marine Corp ROTC scholarship and later the appointment to West Point. The key here is young people sometimes do not understand their options and it takes Adults to open their eyes to see more than what they believe they can achieve.

He was stationed in Germany twice at the time of the cold war where the wall separated Eastern and Western Europe. He recalls travelling the corridor from West Germany to Berlin to run a marathon. 'We had to have special permission to go to Berlin and the Russian guards stopped and checked our papers at every stop. It was a strange situation'.

He was also stationed in South Korea along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). He recalls living in the camp closes to North Korea. It was eerie waking every day in aluminum huts (like Mash) within small arms fire of the North Koreans. The DMZ was a place where we were expected to patrol the border. Every day was with live fire. The bridges and rivers were mined so there was no way back. You just did your job. It was also one of the most satisfying times in the military. Having an Army Chaplain as a roommate was a blessing, especially one who listened to Anita Baker.

# ROLL CALL

Second Baptist Church-St, James AME Church, Elgin  
League of Military Veterans

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Rev. Johnny Jackson

Rev. Albert Fontenot

Kym Fowler

Deacon Ruberl Carr

Rev. Carlos Mullins

Kaila Daniel

Deacon Terry Jones

Deacon Dan Brown

Curtis Sartor

Deacon Calvin Giddens

Leon Montgomery

Darnell Alston

Bill Harlan (Taps 20 Sep 2014)

Divine Jackson

Xanthia Hicks

Valerie Richards

John Bell

Bruce Wilkins

Michelle King

Howard Taylor

Phyliss Higgins

CSM John E. Dill

John Harper

Nakia Ford

James Bennett

Peter Shannon

Sonya Ebhotemen

Sean Brewer

Bryan Turner

Issac Howard

Bennie Chapman

Keith Barnes

Kenneth Scruggs

Torrence Clark

Joshua Williams

Col. W. E. Scott

Freddie Crowell

Kevin Williams

Otis Matthews

Jerome Cunningham

James Williams

Curtis Rice

Tyrone St. John

Nathan Thomas

Tonia Moore

Leon Dixon

Donnell Daniel

Pamela Gibson

James Davis

Rich Emmanuel

Ray Holt

Alvin Gregory McCray

Edward Folds

Latresha Hazelwood

Roberta Shockley

James Harvey



SBC – St James AME  
League of  
Military Veteran’s Ministry

## PROUD TO BE A VETERAN

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

BRANCH OF SERVICE: \_\_\_\_\_

SERVICE YEARS: FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_

LAST SERVICE RANK: \_\_\_\_\_

DUTY STATION: \_\_\_\_\_

MOS: \_\_\_\_\_

VFW / AMERICAN LEGION: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENDATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

MILITARY ACADEMY / ROTC: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT INFORMATION:

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are interested in joining or supporting the Veteran’s Ministry, please fill out this form and return to Leon Montgomery (SBC) or Dr. Wes Scott (St. James) or one of the members of our group. Welcome Home Veterans!



