'Nam hero honored with 1st legion post

By James M. Abraham
AFRO Staff Writer

A group of local veterans are organizing a new American Legion Post which will be the first in the state dedicated to and named after a Vietnam War hero.

The post, whose 50 members currently meet at the War Memorial Building, is named the Ortha Spriggs, Jr. Memorial Post.

Spriggs, a Baltimore native, lost his life in 1969 during bloody action in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam.

He and several of his men were being evacuated from a fire zone when two of his soldiers were wounded. Spriggs, according to testimony, leaped from the evacuating helicopter and rushed to save his men, but was killed by enemy troops during the attempted rescue.

Commander Russell Brown, Area "C" head of 30 Baltimore American Legion Posts, said that Pitts, who had already served one tour of duty in Vietnam before his fatal assignment, went back because "he had left a part of himself there."

"He went back because a lot of the men he served with were still over there," he said. "It takes a lot of courage to put yourself on the line knowing that you might not come out of the Delta."

Retired Army Major Earl Nesbitt, who currently is the supervisor of Veterans' Hiring in the Department of Human Resources, probably knew Spriggs better than any of the members of the new post.

Nesbitt entered Morgan State College, (now university), during Sprigg's college career, and said that Spriggs, who by then was a campus leader and head of the Pershing Rifles, (a para military organization), led him into the military.

"I had no intentions of pursuing ROTC," said Nesbitt, "but Ortha was instrumental in that. Without the teachings and Philosophy of Ortha Spriggs, I wouldn't be where I am today."

Spriggs, who was born in Baltimore in 1935, attended Douglass High School and Morgan College.

While at Morgan, he founded the college's chapter of the Pershing Rifles, which is still an institution at the school. He also was one of the few blacks to receive an American Legion Honor Award during his tenure in the school's ROTC program.

Upon graduation from Morgan in 1958, he was commissioned 2nd lieutenant assigned to the army's 2nd Armored Division.

During his 11-year military career Spriggs attained the rank of captain and garnered an impressive array of awards for his valor. Among these are the Bronze Star with three Oak Leaf Clusters, an Army commendation medal, a Purple Heart, a Vietnam Service Ribbon, and a other honors.

Spriggs grew up in the Northwood section of the city, and both Commander Brown and Major Nesbitt say that they hope to establish the post in the same area.

Commander Brown says that Vietnam War era veterans were not admitted to any Legion posts until last year, when a special act of Congress made such admissions possible.

Spriggs is survived by his mother, Sadie Spriggs, and a son, Ortho Spriggs, Jr., who is presently a pharmacy student at Towson State University.

MRS. SADIE SPRIGGS, young Ortha Spriggs III and former Morgan State University professor of military science, Col. Clarence M. Hurt view medals won by army captain Ortha T. Spriggs Jr. Picture was taken in 1972. Ortha Spriggs III is now pharmacy student at Towson State University.

Firemen accused of cheating

Baltimore County officials said Tuesday they are going to clamp down on examination procedures because four firefighters are accused of cheating on a promotion test.

A county personnel officer reported seeing two firefighters exchanging information during a lieutenant's test last November. Two other firefighters were accused of cheating when more than 20 of 89 persons who took the test were called in to talk with Bruce Bortz, an assistant county solicitor.

B. Melvin Cole, county administrative officer, said the investigation did not reveal enough evidence to warrant formal charges against any of the four suspects.

The personnel department will monitor future tests more carefully, he said.

"If someone did cheat, they should have pulled the paper immediately, regardless of how embarrassing it may have been. In the future, on all tests, we will be sure to have enough proctors," Cole said.

Paul H. Reincke, county fire chief, said lieutenant test scores will be validated soon.

Several firefighters said those suspected of cheating are thought to be among the high scorers.

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Employment picture gloomy at Beth Steel

Officials and union leaders at Bethlehem Steel continue to paint a gloomy picture of the future, despite the return of 200 workers to the Sparrows Point Plant.

Since Jan. 1, 540 of the company's 2,000 laid-off employees have been recalled to the plant because buyers want to replenish low inventories, company officials said Monday.

Union officials said they thought large numbers of workers would return to the payroll when Bethlehem Steel re-fired two coke ovens, a blast furnace and another furnace and recalled 340 employees last month.

But nothing materialized. It just didn't pick up from there. We are at the point where we will believe more work when we see it. Until then, the guys just don't want to hear it," said Joe Kotelchuk, president of United Steelworkers of American, Local 2610.

A modest increase in production means only that the 540 recalled employees will remain on the job, officials said.

At present, we do not expect economic conditions in 1981 to be much better than they were in 1980. Industry shipments are expected to be up [illegible] percent to [illegible] percent over 1980. As a result, it looks like 1981 will not be a particularly good year for Bethlehem," said Donald H. Trautlein, company vice-president in Bethlehem.

Steel's recently released annual statement.

Bethlehem Steel's production nationwide is 68.9 percent of capacity, but officials would not reveal production levels at the Baltimore plant.

Man missing since Dec. 12 no clues

George Brown

Police still have no clues as to the whereabouts of George Brown, 37, who disappeared from his home Dec. 12.

According to Brown's fiance, who asked to remain anonymous, "G.W." as he was called by his close friends, left his home in the 1300 block of Fulton Ave. Dec. 12 after talking to a friend on the phone 20 minutes earlier. Intending to go with his fiance to take their daughter to the clinic later that morning, G.W. told her he "would be right back."

He never returned to the house, however, and, despite the fact that G.W. was a popular man, none of his friends or family have seen or heard from him since.

Brown's fiance said he may have been despondent because he had been laid off from his job as a county sanitation worker since September and had been unable to find other work. She said he had been in trouble with the law before for minor offenses, but she did not think an altercation with the law was the reason behind his disappearance. And, she siad, though he had many enemies," she doubts they are responsible for his disappearance.

When last seen, Brown was wearing a red, white and blue jacket, jeans and a dark cap. He is described as being about 5'6" tall and about 180 pounds. He is dark skinned and wears a close-cut Afro and has a small scar on his upper lip.

Any person with information on the whereabouts of Brown should call the Missing Persons Bureau of the Baltimore City Police Department at 396-2334.

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If You Ask Me

By Bettye Moss

About people

Thinking-of-you cards to Frank Butler, retired principal of Bates High in Annapolis.

The 93-year-old educator has been a patient at the Multi-Medical Center since January.

His niece, Mrs. Elaine Nolan, reports he was greatly cheered by the recent testimonial Bates faculty and alumni held at Asbury Methodist Church.

In attendance, relatives, friends, former students whom he counseled, and members of Sharp St. Methodist Church here in Baltimore, where Mr. Butler has been an active member for years.

And best wishes, also, to Richard Feed, the retired postal worker, and longtime Catholic lay leader. He is a patient at Jenkins Memorial Hospice on Caton Ave.

Now 82, Mr. Feed will be remembered as the proud resident of the 1500 block McCulloh St. and a very active member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church.

People remembering others: — At the recent 37th annual Blue Ribbon Tea of the Eastside Community Committee, the sponsors, The Women's Citywide Committee for Juvenile Delinquency, did a thoughtful thing.

They opened the program with a moment of silent prayer for William S. (Bill) Taylor, founder of the organization and for Mrs. Elva Harris, a board member.

Adrian Cephas sang the memorial solo. Mrs. Lillian, chair of the committee, led the memorial. Mrs. Thelma D. Roy is president of Eastside Committee.

The late Dr. Ralph J. Young's long and devoted service as family physician and community leader, was recalled in a recent City Health Department ceremony.

A plaque in his memory was dedicated at the new Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Training Center in the South wing of the Eastern Health District, 620 N. Caroline St.

The center is a joint venture of the Health Department, the Centers for Disease Control, the Md. Laboratories Association and Hopkins.

It is located within a short distance from the Monument St. office in East Baltimore, where beloved Dr. Young provided loving care to many of his fellow Baltimore citizens. His daughter, Dr. Lois Young, the eye doctor, attended the ceremony.

More people

Charles (Chuck) Richards, the silver-voiced radio and TV personality, is out of the hospital and looking good. He dined with family and friends at Cross Keys on Sunday.

Also brunching there, Dr. Anne Emergy, her husband, Vallin, and fellow members of the Baltimore chapter of the Holidays (bridge club), who had attended Madison Ave. Presbyterian Church, where Dr. Emery was women's day speaker.

In the group were Messers and Mesdames Aaron Ellis, Errol Taylor, Wallace Baden, Joe Boston, Charles Ridgely, Liston George, Joe Bracy and Millard and Gloria Dorsey of Washington.

Also spied, Dr. and Mrs. George Woodland.

Cuff note: A number of church-goers report that their ministers led the congregation in special prayers for the 20 slain and missing Atlanta children.

At Bethel AME Church, there was standing room only — upstairs and down.

At Allen AME Church, the pastor, Rev. Ronald E. Braxton, gave a very moving tribute.

Union choir

The Woodlawn Senior High School auditorium was filled for the Sunday afternoon concert by famed Va. Union University Choir.

The 28-voice group came to Baltimore by bus from N.Y., where they had given concerts in Manhattan, Rochester and Buffalo.

Their annual appearance here was sponsored by the Miles W. Connor Chapter, (Baltimore), headed by Harlow Fullwood.

Cuff Notes: The Baltimore chapter is named for the late Dr. Connor, who was the first president of Coppin State College.

Prior to the group's appearance, Va. U. president, Dr. David T. Shannon, spoke, and Mr. Fullwood led fellow alumni association members in honoring local citizens.

Seen in the crowd: — Dr. Calvin Burnett, current Coppin president; Rev. Matthew Silver, Father Donald O. Wilson, the Wendell Suttons, Dr. I. B. Higgins, the Bill Spencers (Dr. N. Louise Young), Dr. and Mrs. Clifton Jones, Mrs. Mamie Woodford, who is praising all she sees for supporting the Baltimore chapter, Howard University alumni 115th birthday celebration held on Friday evening.

More cuff: Five Baltimore County police cars were on duty outside the school.

We were advised a cross had been burned in the area earlier in the week.

There was no trouble at the concert, so the five police cars just loafed away the time.

Green ribbons

Bob Clay's weekly Tuesday night party at the Ritz attracted a lively crowd.

Many wore green since it was St. Patrick's Day, and the host supplied guests with green ribbons to wear in memory of the Atlanta children.

Baltimore members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity who attended the Harrisburg chapter's Mardi Gras over the weekend at the Penn Harris Hotel were: Messers and Mesdames Cornelius Whittaker, Paul Bennett, William Reaves, Ben Philips.

On Friday evening, the Harrisburg group held a gala disco. The Mardi Gras on Saturday attracted over 700 guests.

Guests wore green ribbons for the Atlanta children.

Oops, oops

Of course we knew better. King's Landing Women's annual benefit on Sunday, April 25, at the 20 Grand, is a cocktail party, NOT a bull roast as we incorrectly reported last week.

The affair raises funds for the club's charities, including co-sponsorship of the YMCA's annual Martin Luther King Breakfast.

Bettye Lindsey is president; Roberts Keets is chair. Call her at 523-3176 for ticket information.

And, in our piece on the death of Judge U. Theodore Hayes, the line

(Continued on Page 21)

Consolidation of state colleges may be delayed

The state commisioner of higher education says he may delay presenting a plan to consolidate Maryland colleges and universities to a legislative panel until May or June.

State colleges and universities last month called 10-year projections on enrollment, faculty and curriculum to comply with a request from a House of Delegates education committee.

Dr. Sheldon H. Knorr, commissioner, said this week he will present raw data from the projections when he appears before the subcommittee next month.

In February, he said he would also present recommendations for reorganizing state colleges and universities.

Knorr said he agreed to present only the information from the 10-year plans after he consulted with Delegate Nancy Kopp, D-Montgomery, who chairs the committee.

Mrs. Kopp said her committee will not consider the consolidation issue until it has thoroughly studied the projections.

Decision due soon on Allen replacement

By Pam Widgeon
AFRO Staff Writer

The Supreme Court judges will be meeting March 24 to decide who will replace William Allen as clerk of Superior Court.

Allen, who was elected in 1978 submitted his resignation in January, following an investigation of his office.

He was the first black to serve as clerk of Superior Court.

The selection for Allen's replacement has been narrowed to two employees within the court. They are James Vogelsang and Charles W. Macke.

Judge Martin B. Greenfeld, chairman of the personnel committee that interviewed Vogelsang and Macke last week told the AFRO, the committee will make a recommendation to the bench on March 24 and the entire bench will make the final decision.

Members of the personnel committee are Judge Edgar P. Silver, David Ross, Mary Arabian and Robert M. Bell. That committee has recommended both names to the bench, the AFRO has learned.

Allen says he supports Vogelsang as the next clerk of Superior Court because he thinks Vogelsang is the most qualified man with 20 years experience in the courthouse. Vogelsang is white and Macke is black.

Macke, 42, is assistant chief deputy in charge of the land records division of the Superior Court and has been employed at the courthouse si ince 1965.

Mrs. Saundra Banks, clerk of the Court of Common Pleas and Elmer Harris, clerk of Baltimore City Court are the only other two black clerks.

Allen's resignation is effective April 2. He started working as a deputy clerk in Criminal Court in 1965 and served as a courtroom clerk.

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