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FEBRUARY 2021

Where Are CJ Blanton and Colt Trudell?

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Scavenger Hunt

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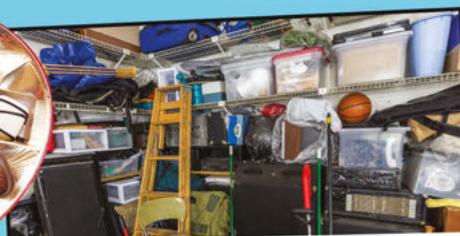
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EDITOR'S NOTE



Melissa

Melissa Rawlins
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Happy Presidents' Day . . .

Some of us who were only 3 years old in 1971, when Congress was trying to figure out how to establish more retail-friendly, three-day weekends for the nation's workers, might not know that Presidents' Day isn't really President George Washington's birthday. In fact, his birthday is February 22, which can fall on any day of the week, and was established nationwide as a holiday in 1885 to recognize the birth of our first president.

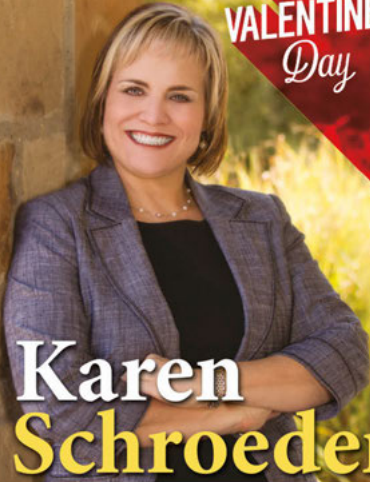
According to www.history.com, it was only after 1971's Uniform Monday Holiday Act passed that February's third Monday came to be called Presidents' Day, a day to celebrate past and present presidents of the United States of America. In some states, Abraham Lincoln and George Washington are the focus of the day. In others, Thomas Jefferson is added to the list. In Mansfield ISD, the holiday also serves as the first of several bad weather makeup days.

This year, Presidents' Day falls on February 15. The day some of us get our second monthly paycheck. The day some of us are planning how to abide until the end of the month. The day some of us are ready to go out and do some serious shopping!

If you think about it, there's no reason not to take a day to rest from routine, reroute your thoughts and consider how you got where you are. It wasn't without the influence of people who have either gone before us or are even now in positions of power.

Let today be a day when we find something new to be grateful for!

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WHERE ARE

CJ Blanton and Colt Trudell

THEY NOW?

— By Melissa Rawlins

Back in the day, Christopher Jerome “CJ” Blanton and Colton “Colt” Trudell connected at Mansfield High School because they shared the same philosophy — life is about loving. Today, each adheres to the same quality standards for their separate, yet unified, lives. Music is their profession now, whereas from 2010-2014 it was Tiger football and academics. Oh, and CJ spent a lot of time with his horse, Thelma Lou.

His devotion to equines hasn't changed. But today, CJ goes by C'ing, and he and Colt might be together up to 24 hours a day, depending on what musical projects they have going. Colt still operates from Mansfield, while his friend now operates from a 13-acre ranch that he runs with his sister in the Polytechnic area of Fort Worth. That's the same area where his Mansfield High School choir director, Reginald Wright, formerly taught middle school. Mr. Wright taught C'ing voice control, enunciation, finding the right pitch and, of course, how to do vocal warmups. “I still do those. Choir really toned my voice,” C'ing said.

Colt goes to C'ing's 12-horse, 18-stall barn every now and then, to work with his friend and business associate and, at times, to challenge himself to do something new — like ride a horse. “Recently, I was a cowboy for a day,” Colt said. “I didn't know how before doing all this artist management.”

Colt's entry into the music industry started after he left college in 2016. He had already taught himself how to invest in the stock market, as well as how to manage a business that leases Internet domain names. Through the years, he also studied music — not by playing any instrument, but by listening closely and frequently to the hundreds of artists in his playlist.

“I just love music. It helped me get through tough times,” Colt said. “There are certain people who can make music and certain ones who can listen, certain ones who can be a fan, certain ones who can master the tracks.” Colt is one with a heavy LinkedIn presence, who can get an artist in front of music industry decision makers, “big artist managers” capable of placing up-and-coming artists on the lineup in major shows. In 2019, this Mansfield born and raised young man started a promotional firm called Lynx Artists through his own company, Lynx Universal, and signed his first big-name act, Florida-based The Marleys. “Their grandad, Bob Marley, is a legend I paid attention to and learned from,” Colt said.



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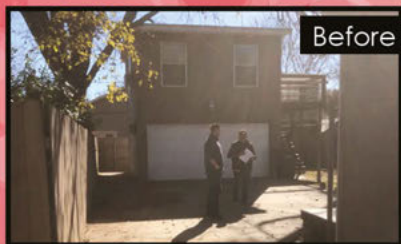
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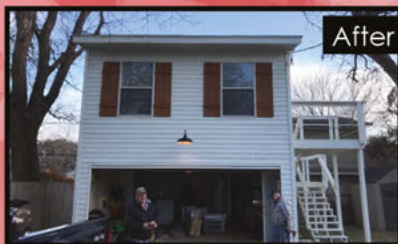
Todd A. Simmons
AAMS, MBA

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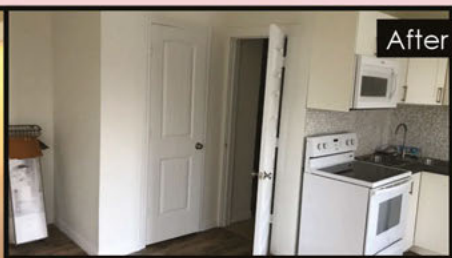
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By the end of 2019, C'ing had decided to go professional with the music he had been recording — first at a home studio in Echo Heights, and then at Troy ENT, off of Avenue H in Grand Prairie, and from there with Louis Satche. C'ing's vocals and songwriting were originally inspired by his mother, an emcee who also sang in her church choir. "I was thinking I'd go rap. But nobody else was doing country. And I really live it," C'ing said. "So, I went country."

He has developed a unique approach, switching up his flow three different ways: R&B, country and hip-hop. A singer focused on building the beats up, C'ing's songs — like the groovy "Funky Town Lullaby" — can be found on Spotify.

C'ing's parents are certainly glad he's happy making music, while working closely with his siblings managing an urban farm on the acreage once known as Camp Carter. "This is the best part right here. A lot of parents don't know where their kids are," Mr. Chris Blanton said. "My children watched his mother and I run the restaurant, The Old Poly Grill, where all the women in the family were doing the heavy lifting. I would wake up, leave Mansfield to drive to Poly to open the restaurant, and then go work all day at Chacon Autos, where I've been for 18 years. I'm proud of giving my children that work ethic."

While working his 9-5 job, C'ing encourages himself. "I want to make this money, so I can make this music thing shake," he said. C'ing happened to notice his old friend Colt on Facebook. "I saw Colt post something about how he was working with one





of The Marleys. I said, ‘Dang, we used to be good friends. I’m doing music on his side,’” he said. “I had my own active management, but I was hittin’ Lynx up for a big show.”

Colt has been advising C’ing since April 2020. “That’s what one of my favorite guys in the industry does. He doesn’t manage, he advises on finances or situations,” Colt said. “There have been managers who have been caught wasting money. I’m trying to change the image of the management spot.”

Plus, C’ing’s sister had already been doing a commendable job securing opportunities for her brother to perform his unique brand of country. “East Texas is our biggest fan base,” said C’ing, who recalls performing his second show at The East Texas Explosion, in front of thousands of people. “That’s where it goes down. All the inquiries before COVID were Houston, but with the pandemic, we did not go. We’re on the radio in Mississippi.”

“C’ing’s kind of a natural on performance. I haven’t criticized him on performance,” said Colt, who has advised him to drink hot tea with honey before performing what he likes to call C’ing Country. “It’s like baseball players warming up their arms.”

“Before a show, I’m going to sleep,” C’ing said. “Life is to live, enjoy what we got going. My philosophy is to step out on your own, and enjoy life.”

Keeping up with C’ing could make anyone dizzy. But laid-back Colt maintains the pace, operating his entire company from his cell phone and applying lessons he learned from Bob Marley to guard C’ing’s interests at every turn. “The super key to this industry,” Colt said, “is not letting anybody get you down and showing love no matter what.” **NOW**

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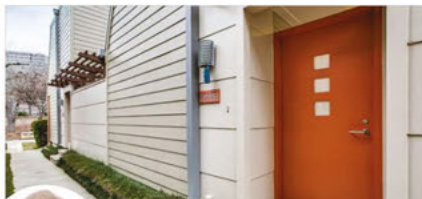
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Mindy Dickman, winner of the \$50 Cash Prize from NOW Magazines, said, "I enjoy reading about our community in *MansfieldNOW*. The scavenger hunt is a nice addition, and winning is an added bonus!"



Jason Edwards, winner of the 2nd \$50 Cash Prize from NOW Magazines, said, "It's great that *MansfieldNOW* does this fun Scavenger Hunt! It's a great way to get me connecting with local businesses!"

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— By Melissa Rawlins

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In need of financial advice? Schedule a visit with Todd Simmons, financial advisor and president of Simmons Wealth Management. “I help 20-year-olds who are just getting started, 80-year-olds who are not working anymore and everyone in between,” Todd said.

SIMMONS WEALTH MANAGEMENT

“At my client’s request, we can meet virtually,” Todd said. His goal is to discern individual investors’ preferences, desires and needs. Then, Todd strives to find solutions. He specializes in helping small business owners and people who have neither time nor ability, yet still wish to save and grow their money.

The year 2020 was a good one for Simmons Wealth Management. “We added new clients and investments,” Todd said. “Who knows what 2021 will look like? Technology companies will continue to lead the way, I think, as we work our way with experience through the COVID environment.”

An independent financial advisor since July 2015, Todd positioned Simmons Wealth Management as part of a larger group of advisors called Advisor Resource Council, an independent registered investment advisor part of an even larger group of advisors registered with, and offering securities through, LPL Financial, Member FINRA/SIPC. “We have a wider expanse of investment opportunities available to us here. We have a lot more freedom and flexibility to build individual portfolios here,” Todd said. “In the last four years, the group has developed more

strategies to offer clients looking for downside protection against bad markets and upside growth potential."

Always choosing quality, Todd inspires confidence and trust. "There are people counting on me on both sides of this deal," said Todd, pointing to his family pictures on the walls around him. Originally from Louisiana, Todd and his family moved to Mansfield in 2001. "My wife, Rona, has been a school teacher here in the district for 20 years. Our daughter is married and is a nurse just north of San Francisco. Our son is currently living in Shreveport, but thinking of moving back here. They've always been very supportive of me coming here, and still are to this day."

Todd grew up in a very philanthropic family, and looks at life as an opportunity to make long-term investments in people. While still in Louisiana, where he merged his talents in customer service and accounting on behalf of the city of Shreveport, he served a two-year term as president of The Center for Families. Since making Mansfield home, he has supported Mansfield Women's Club; Breast Center at Methodist Mansfield; the Mansfield Area Marines Tournament, called Devil Dog Teufelhunden; the Mansfield Kiwanis Club; and his family's church, Walnut Ridge Baptist Church.

With faith in long-term results, Todd's philosophy has kept him calm through several crises during 19 years in the business. "Even though we have value fluctuations, by focusing on the goal, as opposed to the value, we may increase our chances for success."

While each person's situation is different, and no strategy can guarantee success or protect against loss, Todd would be happy to help you determine which options might be appropriate for you. If you agree that patience and quality are virtues when investing, then call Simmons Wealth Management today. **NOW**

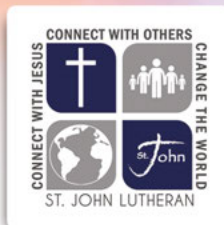
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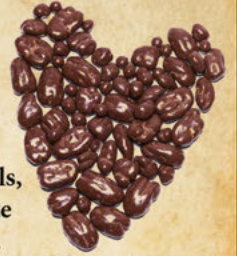
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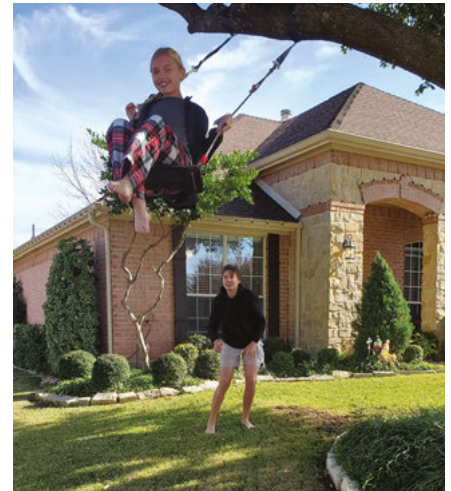
Zoomed In: David Cook

By Melissa Rawlins

Beating the challenges of 2020 was the theme of a recent gathering at Trusted Medical Centers — Mansfield. Dr. Harvey Castro honored health care workers and first responders who risked their lives to care for those whose bodies were fighting the virus.

Outgoing Mayor David Cook was given a colorful stick and asked to crush a piñata labeled 2020. First, he told the crowd, “I’m proud to be chosen to beat the COVID-19 piñata. I anticipate 2021 to be so much better and can’t wait for things to be normal again.”

After subduing “2020,” he headed into his own personal horizon. Beginning on the second Tuesday in January, Mr. Cook convened with The Legislature of the State of Texas as the newest legislator to represent House District 96 in Austin.



Parker and Scarlett Burt enjoy a sunny day swinging in their front yard.



Dr. Marcelle Petry of Healthy Body Chiropractic presents a check to The Faith Center in support of feeding families.



Mercy Street Kitchen joins with Triumphal Christian Fellowship to serve hot chili, with all the fixins prepackaged, to people in need.



Mo the Buffalo oversees Kelly Chambers and Del Waller's celebration of one month down, and another good month to look forward to, at PlainsCapital Bank.



Mother-daughter duo Meredith Walker and Sherri Prykryl shop in preparation for a great year.



Out hiking with their dogs at Elmer Oliver Nature Park in Mansfield, Steve and Maria Cosio stop at the Treehouse Overlook to enjoy the view of Walnut Creek.



Proud grandparents, Dror and Anna Biran, anticipate the arrival of Giana Lauren Alame with her parents, James and Lauren Alame.

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CookingNOW

In the Kitchen With ASHLEY HENDRICKS

— By Melissa Rawlins

Most days, Ashley Hendricks helps students and staff at Lake Ridge High School. During the COVID-19 quarantine, she upgraded her joy-giving hobby of baking to an at-home business with her friend. “It is my way of using a gift that God had given me,” Ashley said. Now that school’s back in action, she still makes cookies at night.

Here she shares recipes that are not too terribly time-consuming, for the kinds of hearty meals she always served her three boys when they still lived at home. When Ashley still lived at home, both of her grandmothers and several aunts were excellent cooks and bakers. “My mom always made a homemade meal for dinner every night, and we ate as a family,” said Ashley, a gift-giver by nature. “It is something I always tried to do with my family.” **NOW**

Peanut Butter Chocolate Cake

Cake:

2 cups sugar
1 3/4 cups flour
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 1/2 tsp. baking soda
1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
2 eggs
1 cup buttermilk
1/2 cup oil

2 tsp. vanilla
1 cup boiling water

Peanut Butter Filling:

1/2 cup butter
1 cup peanut butter
3 cups powdered sugar
1/4 cup milk, plus more as needed

Chocolate Frosting:

1 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder

8 cups powdered sugar
1 Tbsp. vanilla
2/3 cup hot water

Garnish:

12 full-sized peanut butter cups, chopped
1/2 cup mini-chocolate chips

1. For cake: Heat the oven to 350 F. Spray 2 9-inch cake pans with nonstick spray. Place parchment paper on the bottom of the pans; lightly spray again.

2. In a bowl, mix together all dry ingredients. Add the eggs, buttermilk, oil and vanilla to the dry mix. Scrape the bowl, bottom and sides; mix until all is combined. Put your mixer on low; add the boiling water slowly, until all ingredients are combined. The batter will be thin.

3. Divide the batter between the 2 prepared pans. Bake for approximately 18-20 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean.

4. Cool the cake for 10 minutes in the pan; flip out onto a wire rack to complete the cooling.

5. For filling: Mix the butter and peanut

butter together. Add the powdered sugar gradually. Add 1/4 cup milk. Mix well; scrape the bowl, as needed, until the mixture is creamy. Add more milk, if needed, to get your desired texture. Use the filling as one layer between the two cake layers.

6. For frosting: Combine the butter, cocoa powder, powdered sugar, vanilla and hot water. Mix until the frosting comes together and is smooth. You may need to scrape the bowl and mix again. Allow the frosting to cool for 15 minutes before covering the cake.

7. Once the cake has been frosted, garnish the top with the chopped peanut butter cups and a few of the mini-chocolate chips. Use the rest of the mini-chips to garnish the sides and bottom of the cake.

Yummy Chicken Pasta

- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 pkg. dry Italian salad dressing mix
- 1/2 cup white cooking wine
- 1 10 1/2-oz. can condensed golden mushroom soup
- 1 8-oz. tub cream cheese with onion and chives
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 6 chicken breast halves, skinless and boneless
- 1 lb. angel hair pasta
- 2 cups water

1. Preheat the oven to 325 F
2. In a saucepan, melt the butter over low heat. Stir in the dressing mix; blend in the wine with a whisk. Mix well.
3. Add the soup; mix in the cream cheese. Whisk to make sure all large clumps are melted; add the chicken broth.
4. Arrange the raw chicken breasts in a single layer in a 9x13-inch baking dish. Pour the sauce over the chicken.
5. Bake for 1 hour. During the last 20 minutes, before chicken is done, boil the pasta in water. Cook until al dente, about 4-5 minutes; drain the pasta.
6. Serve the chicken with the sauce over the cooked pasta.

Chicken Enchilada Soup

- 6 cups water
- 3 cups boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 14.5-oz. cans chicken broth
- 2 chicken bouillon cubes
- 1 19-oz. can red enchilada sauce
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 15 corn tortillas, torn into pieces
- 1 cup cheese, shredded
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 bag tortilla chips

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1. Bring a large pot of water to a rapid, rolling boil; add the chicken. Boil for 10 minutes. Take chicken out; save half of the water.
 2. Cool the chicken slightly. Once you are able, cut meat into bite-size pieces; set aside.
 3. Add the chicken broth to the same pot with the water that you saved, as well as both cubes of bouillon, enchilada sauce, salt, onion powder and cumin. Bring to a boil.

4. Once the soup is boiling, add the torn pieces of tortillas. Boil for 5 minutes, using a whisk to help the tortillas fall apart. (This will help thicken your soup slightly. If you like your soup thicker, add more tortillas and repeat.)
 5. Return to a boil; add prepared chicken. Reduce heat to low; simmer for about 30 minutes.

6. Garnish with shredded cheese, sour cream and tortilla chips.

Cheddar Jalapeño Corn Bread

1 cup all-purpose flour
 1 cup yellow cornmeal
 1/2 cup white sugar
 1 tsp. salt
 3 tsp. baking powder
 2 Tbsp. butter
 1 egg
 1 1/3 cups milk
 1 cup cheddar cheese (divided use)
 1 7-oz. can La Costeña Sliced Jalapeños

1. Place the first 5 ingredients in a bag; mix well.
 2. Heat the oven to 400 F. Grease a 9-inch pan by placing the pan in the oven with butter until it melts in the bottom. You want your pan hot when you add the corn bread mixture.
 3. Combine the dry corn bread mix with the egg, milk, 3/4 cup cheese and as many of the jalapeños, as you like. Mix well; pour into the hot pan.
 4. Top with the remaining cheddar cheese; bake for about 20 minutes, or until a toothpick in the center of the corn bread comes out clean.



Peanut Butter Chocolate Cake

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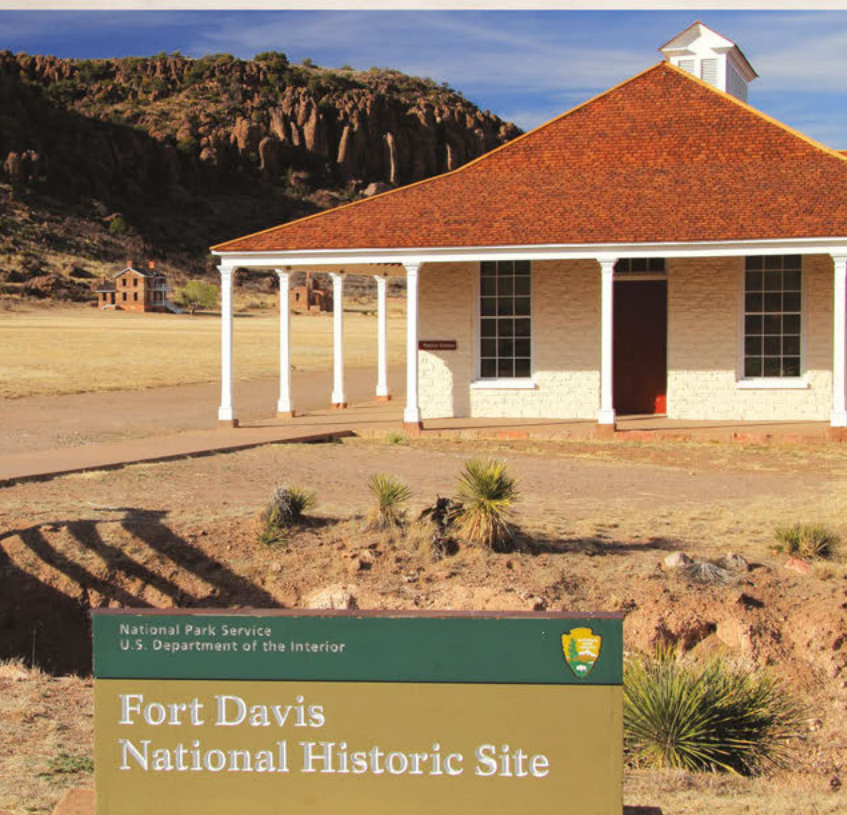
While the first regular Army regiments made of African-American soldiers are officially celebrated on July 28 with “Buffalo Soldiers Day,” it is fitting to recognize them during Black History Month, as well. The U.S. Army’s first peace-time, all-Black regiments were established by Congress in July 1866, honoring the significant contribution of some 200,000 Black volunteers to a Union victory in the Civil War.

About a year-and-a-half after the war, six peace-time regiments for Black enlisted men were created: “The 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 38th, 39th, 40th and 41st Infantry regiments (consolidated in 1869 into two infantry regiments, the 24th and 25th),” as documented by blackpast.org.

“Soldiers of these regiments between the Civil War and World War I have come to be called ‘Buffalo Soldiers,’” the site notes. It outlines that while most of the regiments’ officers were white, they were also led by five Black men, including Henry Flipper, who was not only the first Black West Point graduate, but also the first African-American commissioned officer of the Buffalo Soldiers. He went on to earn a 2nd Lieutenant Army commission.

In 1999, Henry was posthumously pardoned by

• Tales of Texas • **REMEMBERING BUFFALO**



President Bill Clinton for an “unduly harsh and unjust court martial and dismissal from the Army,” according to the National Veterans Memorial and Museum.

Buffalo Soldiers helped win dozens of battles against Native Americans, and served in Cuba with Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders. Buffalo Soldiers protected National Parks, served as park rangers, guarded roads, settlements and stage coach stations, among numerous other efforts.

History.com reports that “about 20 percent of U.S. troops participating in the Indian Wars were Buffalo Soldiers,” battling in at least 177 conflicts. Buffalo Soldiers also went on to defend the U.S. border with Mexico during World War I. Between the Civil War and World War I, records suggest 23 Buffalo Soldiers received the Medal of Honor.

In the last decades of the 19th century, the Buffalo Soldiers regiments formed a special kinship with the state of Texas, where Fort Davis became their Regimental Headquarters. The 9th Cavalry was first to occupy the fort, which was abandoned by the Union during the Civil War.



Photo courtesy of Huntsville-Madison
County Public Library.

SOLDIERS

— By Angel Morris

Soldiers spent the summer of 1867 constructing a new fort and protecting travelers. Joined by three Buffalo Soldier units over the next eight years, the men proved invaluable in many ways, not the least of which was “constructing over 91 miles of telegraph line west from Fort Davis,” blackpast.org notes.

“They arrived at the post in 1867 when western Texas was still very open to attack by raiding Apaches and Comanches. When the 10th Cavalry left in 1885, peace largely prevailed,” the site explains.

While trained for overseas combat during World War II, Buffalo Soldiers were deactivated in 1944, and in 1948, racial segregation in the military was eliminated by executive order of President Harry S. Truman. According to history.com, the Buffalo Soldiers proved their worth with “the lowest military desertion and court-martial rates of their time.”

Those numbers speak to the lore by which these Black men garnered the name Buffalo Soldiers, with some suggesting they were so dubbed by Native American tribes who held the buffalo in high regard. According to history.com, another theory is that the soldiers bore resemblance to buffalo with their dark skin and curly hair. Whatever the origin of the name, it led to the 10th Cavalry adopting the buffalo upon its crest in 1911.

Today, the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum in Houston is “dedicated to exploring and displaying the stories and contributions of African-Americans in the military by way of performing and visual arts, educational programming and exhibitions.”

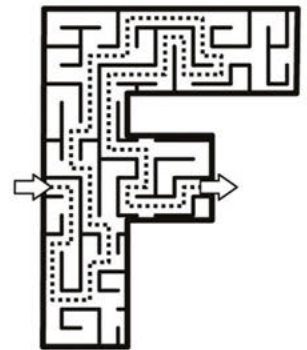
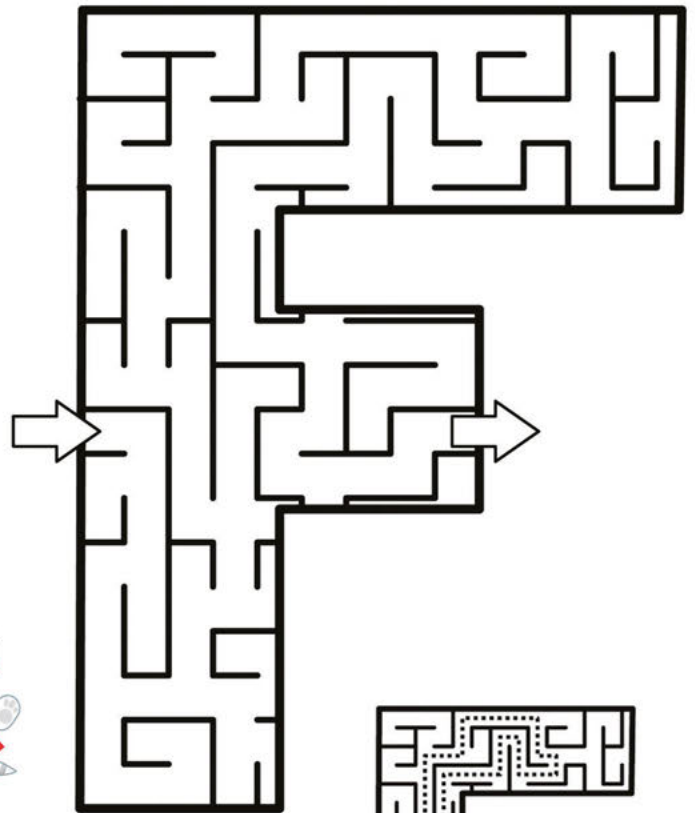
When open, the museum offers educational programs exploring the contributions of African-American military personnel, such as the Buffalo Soldiers. Historical re-enactments, military-inspired art exhibits and group tours are just some of the ways the museum continues to keep the spirit of the Buffalo Soldiers alive. The reggae song, “Buffalo Soldier,” also commemorates the efforts of these men, who were slaves or descendants of slaves, fighting for a country that stole them from their own. **NOW**

Sources:

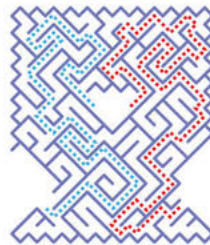
1. <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/buffalo-soldiers/>
2. <https://www.history.com/topics/westward-expansion/buffalo-soldiers>
3. <https://nationalvmm.org/>

Kids' Fun Page

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FEBRUARY

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2/13

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2/20

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2/20, 2/26, 2/27

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Wednesdays-Mondays

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Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to melissa.rawlins@nowmagazines.com.



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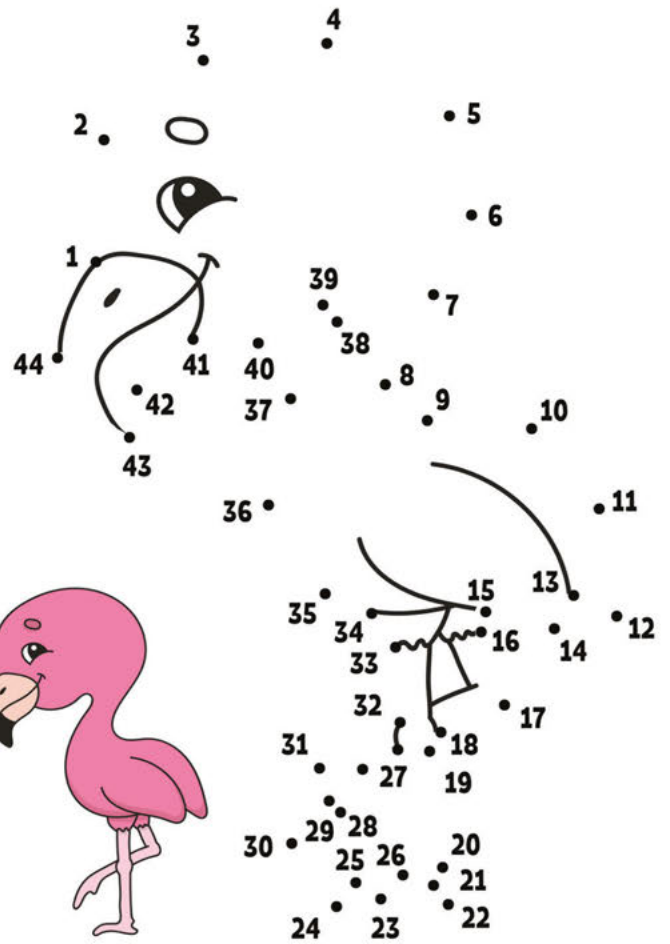
Wednesday: 8am - 1pm

Friday: 7am - 3pm

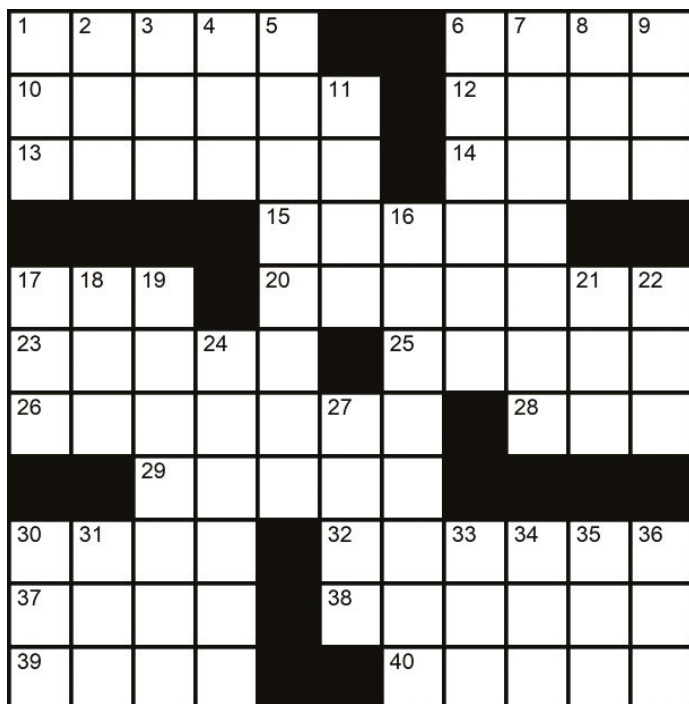
Saturday: 8am - 1pm

Kids' Fun Page

Which one is missing



Crossword Puzzle



CrosswordSite.com Ltd

Across

- 1 "I'll eat --- if I'm wrong!"
- 6 "Shane" star Alan ---
- 10 Eccentric old fellow
- 12 Type of race car
- 13 Cloak mental confusion
- 14 Franklin flew one in a storm
- 15 Alleviates
- 17 Big Blue
- 20 Rely on
- 23 Drain by percolation
- 25 Commodious
- 26 Food company in Battle Creek, MI
- 28 Panthers and Rams group
- 29 Ocean capsized this small boat
- 30 Hammer god
- 32 Reply to "Have a good day!"
- 37 After stating your intentions, --- the -
- 38 Oil-rich former Portuguese African colony
- 39 "I guess the joke's ---"
- 40 Dumps

Down

- 1 Studio with lion logo
- 2 Assenting vote
- 3 Coop layer
- 4 Antiviral drug
- 5 Marathon TV program
- 6 In this manner
- 7 "Mother's Day" actress Jennifer ---
- 8 One of Rachel Carson's targets, now banned
- 9 Coloring material
- 11 Raise
- 16 "Go get him ---!" (Shakespeare, Macbeth)
- 17 Class
- 18 Social gathering
- 19 --- X, assassinated activist
- 21 Global financial body
- 22 Largest US city
- 24 "2001: A Space Odyssey" author
- 27 Painter of "La Maja Vestida"
- 30 Snake eyes
- 31 Chinese dynasty at the time of Christ
- 33 "Gross!"
- 34 End of a golf club
- 35 Former
- 36 Western Hemisphere political forum

Solutions on page 36

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Sudoku Puzzle

Easy

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					2			
5	3					7		
2		4			8			9
		9	7					4
7	6							1
	5							6
					6		8	
		7	3			5		

Medium

3	4							1
	2			6				
					8			
	1			7		4		5
6								
5				1	2		6	
4	3	1	9					7
	9	5				2	3	
		7						

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Solutions on page 36

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Crossword - Sudoku Solutions

1	M	Y	H	A	T		6	L	A	D	D			
10	G	E	E	Z	E	R	11		12	I	N	D	Y	
13	M	A	N	T	L	E		14	K	I	T	E		
							15	E	A	S	E	S		
17	I	B	M			20	T	R	U	S	T	I	N	
23	L	E	A	C	H		24		25	R	O	O	M	Y
26	K	E	L	L	O	G		27	G		28	N	F	C
							29	C	A	N	O	E		
30	T	H	O	R			32	Y	O	U	T	O	O	
37	W	A	L	K			38	A	N	G	O	L	A	
39	O	N	M	E			40	S	H	E	D	S		

Easy

1	9	8	6	7	5	2	4	3
4	7	6	8	3	2	1	9	5
5	3	2	9	1	4	7	6	8
2	1	4	5	6	8	3	7	9
3	8	9	7	2	1	6	5	4
7	6	5	4	9	3	8	2	1
8	5	1	2	4	7	9	3	6
9	2	3	1	5	6	4	8	7
6	4	7	3	8	9	5	1	2

Medium

3	4	8	2	5	7	6	9	1
1	2	9	3	6	4	5	7	8
7	5	6	1	9	8	3	4	2
9	1	2	6	7	3	4	8	5
6	7	4	5	8	9	1	2	3
5	8	3	4	1	2	7	6	9
4	3	1	9	2	6	8	5	7
8	9	5	7	4	1	2	3	6
2	6	7	8	3	5	9	1	4

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