

**AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY**

# FRANK GRANT (BASEBALL PIONEER)

by Gwen Walker

Frank Ulysses Grant was born in 1867 at Pittsfield, Massachusetts. At the age of seventeen, Grant played baseball with the Pittsfield Graylocks in 1884.

In 1901 while training with the Baltimore Orioles team in Hot Spring Arkansas, John McGraw was fascinated by the way young Frank Grant played. McGraw couldn't break the "gentlemen's agreement" by allowing a Black man to play in the American League.

When Frank Grant first entered organized minor league play he was with Meriden Connecticut of the Eastern League in 1886.

He came to prominence, however as a member of the Buffalo team of the International League in 1887, another minor league at the time.

On May 8th of that year the Rochester Democrat reported: "the main interest was centered on two colored second basemen, Frank Grant of the Buffalos and Fowler of the Binghamptons."

At the time some claimed



GWEN WALKER

Frank Grant was the greatest second basemen playing the game.

It is interesting to note that both Bud Fowler and Frank Grant wore shin guards while playing second base.

Baseball catchers did not wear shin guards at the time because they stood or crouched six feet to fifty feet in the back of the batter.

Fowler was the first to wear wooden splints around his legs and Grant followed. The reason was that white racist ball players

wearing sharpened spikes deliberately tried to maim them in their sliding.

In spite of these tactics, Grant at five feet seven inches, weighing only about 155 pounds was proclaimed "the greatest second basemen playing the game." In 1887, though he played in only 105 games, batted .336, stole 40 bases, and hit 11 home runs.

Light skinned Blacks players

were often passed off as Portuguese, Spanish, or Italian; the managers felt this would cause less problems for the players, but everyone knew they were Black. The crowds were known to yell "Kill the nigger" during games; it was this that caused the managers who really wanted to win to change their national-

ity. The managers knew that they had to have Black players to win.

Grant died in New York City on May 27, 1937 and was buried at the East Ridgelawn Cemetery.

Read more about Black baseball players at the West Las Vegas Library.



Nevada Beverage Company, in conjunction with Anheuser-Busch, Inc., will offer the Anheuser-Busch Community Health Mobile Unit to Nevada area residents on January 17-18, from the hours of 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. The location of the free health testing will be at Smith's Food King, 2255 Las Vegas Boulevard North, on January 17, and on January 18, the Health Mobile will be located downtown as a participant in the Martin Luther King Jr. Parade.

NNPA FEATURE

## COPING

by

Dr. Charles Faulkner



### "THE MURDER CAPITAL"

"Dear Dr. Faulkner:

I am a white middle-class man and I take issue with some of the statements that you so often make about the issue of racism in this country. I actually do not think that the situation is nearly as bad as you say it is. My opinion is that the Blacks who are treated badly by white people (and by others) deserve to be treated badly. I am white and I think I know what I'm talking about.

Signed, Mr. R., Wisconsin."

"Dear Dr. Faulkner:

I just returned to Chicago after having spent three weeks visiting Washington D.C. On the first day of our visit all of the guests in the hotel in which I was staying were called to an early morning meeting, by representatives of the hotel, before we went sightseeing in the city. Most of those at the meeting were white, just like me, but several Black hotel guests were present also.

"We were told to be extremely careful about where we went in Washington because D.C. was the "Murder Capital" of the world (not just the country). We were told that 95% of the crime was committed by Blacks and that we should always be observant and suspicious of Black people, because they could hurt us.

"We were told that most young Black men (and some women) carry guns and will shoot you if you even if you bump them by mistake. We were told that bums were all over downtown D.C. begging for money, and that some of them are emotionally sick - therefore they are dangerous. The other panhandlers, we were told, were just con men who could get jobs if they really wanted to.

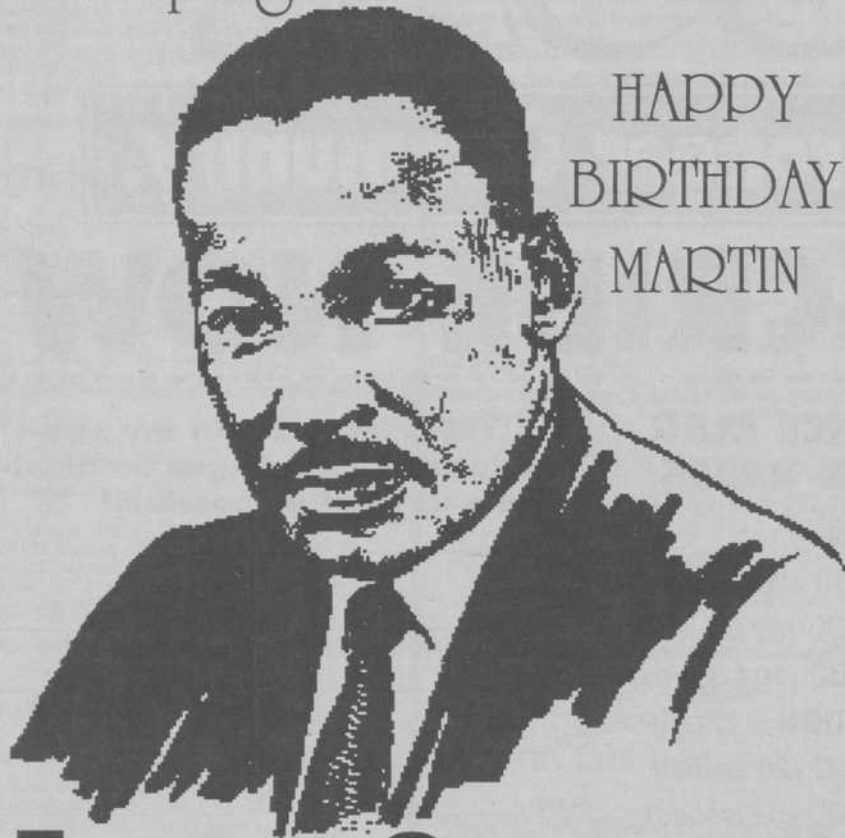
"This, then, was our indoctrination and you can imagine how frightening it was for most of us. My wife and kids did not venture out of the hotel after dusk. During the day, we tried to stay close to our hotel, and visit only museums and other public places. We did ride the subway when we had a group of no fewer than ten people. Some of the people in our party were so scared that they stared at every Black person who got on the subway, whether he was well-dressed and well-behaved or not.

"Two young men in our group said that they were not afraid of any Black man. They were very macho. I can recall two incidents where these two fellows (both of whom are white) actually deliberately bumped into Black men. They were trying to show everyone in our group that they were tough. When they bumped into the Black men, the Black men actually apologized even though the collision was not their fault. They were not intimidated at all. They were complete gentlemen. I was amazed because if someone had bumped into me, I would have been very angry. The two young men in our group made themselves look foolish.

"I think that the managers of hotels should not indoctrinate people who visit hotels. They should not instill fear of Black people into their guests.

Signed, Mr.B, Chicago."

"Keeping The Dream Alive"



HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARTIN

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### SISTERS - CAN WE TALK SO MO?

The Professional Black Women's Alliance of Las Vegas presents an Afrocentric Workshop created specifically to enhance self-esteem, create a "Healing" atmosphere for emotional wounds and develop a stronger understanding of self through shared experiences, nurturing and active participation.

This powerful workshop will be facilitated by Mrs. Marie Wakefield - A Administrative Specialist of The Guidance and Counseling Division of Curriculum and Instructions of The Clark County School District.

This workshop will be held Saturday, February 2, 1992 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - KCEP Radio Station - Alumni Room - 330 W. Washington Avenue - Las Vegas, Nevada.

### ANNUAL BLACK HISTORY PROGRAM

The City of Las Vegas Dolittle Community Center, 1901 North "J" Street, is currently seeking talented groups and individuals to participate in their 15th Annual Black History program. Those interested in performing should call 229-6374 before the Jan.. 31 entry deadline.