

# First black Marines sacrificed, persevered, trailblazed

**Lillian McMorris**  
*Special to Sentinel-Voice*  
I share this story because the Montford Point Marine Association is a part of African-American History that our people are not exposed to in their history classes.

This bit of information should be shared, adding to the abundance of facts that encourage young African-Americans to feel proud of their heritage. It is both exciting and educational because the Montford Point Marines were the first Black Marines.

They experienced ridicule and prejudice but endured to be the best, therefore forming a lifelong bond. Being an African-American I constantly consciously and sub-consciously remember that there were and continue to be brave souls paving the paths. The Montford Point Marines changed the thought patterns of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Being the Public Affairs Director for KVVU TV FOX 5 affords me many opportunities to meet people

The sea of uniforms, ribbons and gray hair was a reminder of years of dedication and respect. I

Again in 1999, the Montford Point Marine Association held their annual reunion in Las Vegas. They invited me to co-emcee their installation gala and awards, celebrating their 34th annual reunion. I found this quite an honor to be invited to share in living history.

The Montford Point Marines were the first Black Marines; they changed the face of the U.S. Marine Corps. Today's generation of Marines serve in a fully integrated Corps where African-Americans constitute one-fifth of the strength of the corps.

African-American officers, non-commissioned officers and privates are omnipresent; their service is a normal part of Marine life. There was a time when there were no Black Marines, thus the importance of the awesome men of Montford Point.

As Marines, they fought the enemy, integrated the



*Photo special to Sentinel-Voice*  
**Eddie Hicks and wife Jo-Ann celebrate during the banquet.**

Armed Services and changed our country. On land and in the sea, the Marines have led the way.

At home the fight was within the corp. Tremendous barriers fell because of the Montford Point Marines and President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was in 1942 that President Roosevelt signed the Executive Order that

established the Fair Employment Practice commission prohibiting racial discrimination by any government agency and thus opening up the U.S. Marine Corps to African-Americans.

The integration of the Marines was the beginning of the end for officially sanctioned segregation in (See *Marines*, Page 7)



*Photo special to Sentinel-Voice*  
**Beverly Starkey and his wife Olivia enjoy reunion activities.**

from all aspects of life. In 1995 I was invited to give the welcome address to the Montford Point Marine Association Annual Reunion.

spoke of the continuous growth in Southern Nevada, not only in population but also in the establishment of new business opportunities.

## Mayor touts efforts to secure FEMA funds, block grants

**John T. Stephens III**  
*Sentinel-Voice*  
Mayor Oscar Goodman returned home this week after spending several days in the nation's capitol pushing for block grants funds for downtown and inner city redevelopment and lobbying Federal Emergency Management Agency officials for funds to repair

damage from the 100-year flood that ravaged parts of the city. Goodman, who was guest of Sen. Harry Reid, also talked to Environmental Protection Agency officials about Las Vegas' air pollution woes, networked with representatives of the U.S. Conference of Mayors and met with representatives for

the local Housing and Urban Development department. "Washington wasn't a pleasure trip," Goodman said. "We need community block grants for downtown and communities that are decaying or (are) not up to snuff." Goodman used to the trip to help spur interest from high-tech firms to bring their

industries to Las Vegas and to discuss the impact of downtown sports arenas. Goodman supports an idea by Mirage Resorts Inc. chairman Steve Wynn to build a taxpayer-funded sports arena on Union Pacific land abutting downtown. Some critics bemoan public sports arenas as a waste of taxpayers money.

"My vote will always be with what's best for the city. I plan to go through the whole city and shake hands and meet people," Goodman said, adding that "anybody who thought I would hurt the image of the city was wrong." Goodman will host his first open house from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday in council chambers.

and run on format similar to a talk show. Goodman said he has filled nearly all available seats on all but one volunteer committee and claims that the volunteers represent the community — different ethnicities, religions, beliefs and lifestyles. "People like the prestige of being on boards but they don't want to attend meetings, (but) if people don't show up, I'll replace them," he said. "To get the city work done, a lot of hours are needed."

**Madison**  
*(Continued from Page 1)*  
Mims, who runs Jumpstart from an office on 1111 N. Nellis Blvd. "This (accusation of violence) is coming from outside of Madison Terrace."

Mims said the low-income housing development has been condemned for having rats and roaches, broken pipes and collapsing ceilings. The property was purchased and reopened by a

private investor who agreed to keep it low-income and available for Section 8 renters. "I had it condemned once and now its worse," Turner said. "Take them (the children) to a day care outside of the environment. They already know what's waiting for them when they go home." "There is no room or space

available," said Mims about the notion of sending children to day cares outside of Madison Terrace. "They have a waiting list and there is never any space." "I have mixed emotions," Ward 3 Councilman Gary Reese said. "If they (apartment management) run it right and it is secure I favor it, if it's not, we'll have a problem."

**SCLC**  
*(Continued from Page 1)*  
flag flown at the statehouse have failed. State Sen. Robert Ford, a SCLC member who has worked for years to remove the Confederate flag from the statehouse, said he couldn't support the move. "A boycott means somebody is going to be hurt," he said. Also, leaders of South Carolina's African Methodist Episcopal churches said the group would relocate its statewide youth conference from Columbia, S.C., to Charlotte, N.C., because of the flag controversy.

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