

THE MEDIUM

a message from the people...to the people

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Black Heritge

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NATIONAL BLACK HISTORY WEEK

Black history is a Black record of the Black past -- a chapter that was deliberately left out of white history books. It is our way of finding out who we are.

When we search the past, we go all the way back to the tribal villages of Africa, back to the slave ships, and up through slavery, emancipation, degradation, segregation, discrimination, and intimidation. And what we see, despite some shameful chapters, is the survival against the greatest of odds of a people who just would not give in. We see the word 'Black' tearing away from dirty dishwater, scrubbing floors, attending masters' plantations. But most of all, we see the word 'Black' becoming a badge of courage worn by a people enslaved into the lands once owned by Indians, but exploited by whites.

Our history needs telling. Although it has come from a long line of sit-ins, boycotts, protest marches, court trials, and riots lead by such greats as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass, Rev. Jesse Jackson, and others who risked their lives in order to retain manhood, no other group has fought as hard as Blacks in the bid for freedom.

Some say attention needs to be focused on the future, rather than the past. In order to get to the future we've got to know from "whence" we came--although unfortunately, some of us have forgotten the past.

It's unfortunate that Black contributions are thrown into one week of the year. But, at this time, we are able to let historians know that we did invent, write, read, become soldiers, journalists, scientists, actresses -- that we contributed something other than our domestic and sports abilities or our 'soulful' moves. White America is able to see that we are human and the only difference in them and us is us and them.

So as THE MEDIUM and the Black community honored 36 Unsung Heroes and Heroines and one National Unsung Hero on Black History Eve, we still share with other Blacks across the country in recognizing such greats as Charles Drew (inventor of blood plasma which saved millions of lives); Representative Shirley Chisholm (among other things -- the first Black to seek presidency); Hanibal (Black Roman King); Ralph Bunche (first Black Nobel Peace Prize winner); Angela Davis (brilliant Black leader); Coleman Young and Maynard Jackson (Black Mayors of major cities); and to Blacks who have remained Black despite the power of money . . .

Carole Ennette

Editor

