



Pioneers of Lincoln Park

A Chronical of the individuals and families that have made a significant impact in the Lincoln Park Community.

Presented By:

Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources

And

Lincoln Park Main Street

Pioneers of Lincoln Park

Introduction to Pioneers of Lincoln Park

Pioneers of Lincoln Park concept originated in 1980 with the development of a park in what was known as northwest Fort Pierce at the northwest corner of Avenue M and 29th Street. The City of Fort Pierce was awarded a federal grant by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for the development of a park. Community Development Block Grant dollars were used to create such a park.

The Fort Pierce City Commission did not have a name for the newly developed park, so it was decided to be called Pioneer Park after the earliest African American settlers in Lincoln Park; the individuals who have made significant contributions to the progression of the community of Lincoln Park, and for the future leaders and trailblazers.

Residents of Lincoln Park have all participated in the discussions of the naming of the park over the years. Some 40 years later, the idea to install bronze plaques along the concrete walls of the entry into the park is what brought this project to life. The question then became who will be the honoree(s) of such a plaque and how will the individual(s) be selected. Thus, the City Commission tasked Lincoln Park Main Street with identifying individuals, developing a set of criterion for nominating, selecting, researching and vetting the backgrounds and civic/community involvement of the individuals. This process was used in this first edition of Pioneers of Lincoln Park.

While some may know the history of early pioneers in Lincoln Park, that group of individuals are seniors in age while the majority of people in Lincoln Park, Fort Pierce and St. Lucie County is unaware of this history. It is the intent of this project to bring to life, the past stories of the lives of individuals and families that helped to shape the community.

Pioneers of Lincoln Park is the beginning of preserving that history, heritage and culture through heritage education. This Lincoln Park Heritage Education project is made possible by the Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources, the City of Fort Pierce and Lincoln Park Main Street.

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Lyons Family (William; Wilson & Alice; Martin; Alonzo)

In 1902, Wilson and Alice Lyons, along with sibling William Lyons settled in Fort Pierce as one of eight black families. William opened the first co-op grocery store in the Lincoln Park area. Wilson and Alice owned the first house built on Avenue D. How the Lyons family ended up being one of the earliest families has an interesting, yet tragic history, according to the late Rufus Alexander, Jr., who was the great grandson of Martin Lyons. (Martin Lyons, pictured to the right.)



In 1868, after the end of the Civil War, the government began rounding up the Cherokee Indians living between Virginia and Georgia, and moving them west to Oklahoma. Martin Lyons and his family were among the Cherokee Indians being captured to walk the trek to a reservation, which eventually became known in American history as the Trail of Tears. Because of his love and marriage to a white Irish woman, Martin Lyons, a full-blooded Cherokee Indian, was the only member of his family who escaped perishing in the roundup. He and his wife raised their family in South Carolina, but the color of the skin of their two sons and daughter began to cause problems. So in 1902, Martin Lyons gave his son Wilson a pocket full of money and sent him along with his brother and sister to Florida.

Wilson and Alice built their home on the deepest, wooded site in the area and raised their four children: Abel, Emma, Walter, and Mary, who died at an early age.



First Historical Marker placed in Lincoln Park on February 7, 1982 at the home of the Wilson and Alice Lyons, the first home built on Avenue D in

1908. Walter Lyons, son of Wilson and Alice and his sibling, Emma Lyons Burns along with descendants gathered for the installation of the historic marker. Wilson and Alice built their home on deepest, wooded site in the area and raised their four children, Abel, Emma, Walter, and Mary, who died at an early age. (August 15, 1982 Fort Pierce News Tribune.)



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Emma Burns, 74 and Walter Lyons, 69, are children of the couple who built the cracker-style bungalow before World War I. The home of Wilson and Alice Lyons was completed in 1908, was once located on Avenue D. Five generations of Lyons descendants in the background, gathered for the installation of a historic marker on the house. (August 15, 1982 staff photo of Fort Pierce News Tribune).

William Lyons worked in pineapples and later opened the first co-op grocery store in Lincoln Park area. In 1903, William Lyons donated the land to build Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church and was one of the Church's first deacons. (Rufus Alexander family photo collection).



Sometime after 1903 Wilson purchased the property while working at the East Coast Lumber yard. He purchased material to build his home out of his weekly salary or pay for it on time, each night, he and his wife Alice would build or add on to the house. The house was completed around 1908 or before, according to deeds at the courthouse, this property was paid in full and Wilson received the deed in 1910.

There was no road to this address, Wilson had to cut a path from North 7th Street and now Avenue D to his home in order to carry the lumber on his bike. Later the kitchen and front porch was added. Wilson would purchase three more lots (Lot 3, 4, 5 Block F, Fee & Mays Addition). Wilson later went to work for Mr. P.P. Cobb and did so until he died. Wilson and Alice would care for Mr. Cobb until his death.



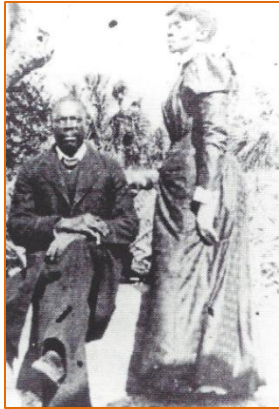
*Rufus Alexander, Sr.
married Emma Lyons after
moving to Fort Pierce in the
1920s. Rufus Alexander
family photo collection*



*Alonzo Lyons, son of William Lyons,
joined his father in 1919 after being
discharged from the United States Army
in 1918. Rufus Alexander family photo
collection.*

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Fred Charles Duval, Sr. (8/8/1891 - 1/1946) and Francina Duval, 4/24/1886 - 6/7/1975, Fred Charles Duval, Sr., was the first African American boy born in St. Lucie County in



1891. In 1845 After the Second World War, twenty-six counties had been identified in the state and in 1844 St. Lucia was formed which includes what is today's St. Lucie, Martin, and Indian River Counties. St. Lucie County extended into what is now Martin County, in particular Jensen Beach. So when Fred and Francina moved to Fort Pierce almost a year after their wedding in 1908. Fred left the pineapple plantation owned by his family in Jensen Beach to settle in Woodbine. His relatives had purchased some land in the area, but he and his new wife were prohibited from building in the area. Some years before the Duvals arrived in Fort Pierce, the area's first church, St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church had burned. The early white folks wanted to keep any other negroes from settling in that section of town, which is now known as Marvilla. So consequently the couple had to settle on a piece of land on Dundas Court to make their home.

During the early 1900s when there were only a few families living in Fort Pierce, the area's first families, led by Francina Duval, began a campaign to establish a school for their children. The first school that opened for blacks was located on North Eighth Street in the area known as Cobb's Bottom. The school was housed in a tin building which had been used by the school district to store supplies for the white schools. In 1906 a new school was built next to the old tin building. About 1921 the parents began setting its sights on establishing a full, four-year high school. The school served as the center of activity for the small, but growing community. Whenever there was a sporting event like a basketball game, it was heavily attended. At that time there was no place for the school to hold its basketball games so Francina Duval and members of the Parent Teachers Association secured Dreamland Theater until the group was able to convince the school board to build a basketball court for the school. To raise money to buy the land for the basketball court, Francina Duval sold 10-cent sandwiches to the students Monday through Friday, from noon to 1 pm. In 1922, the school board agreed to build a concrete court at the corner of Thirteenth Street and Means Court to raise money for the basketball court.

Francina was the owner and operator of the city's first milliner shop, making hats plain and fancy-tams, Panama hats, hats with veils and feathers. She also gave music lessons and continued teaching until she was 73. In later years, she and her husband operated a grocery store. The church was very important to her, Ms. Duval served as organist,

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Sunday School teacher, class leader trustee, stewardess, and President of the Missionary Society of the St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church. She represented her church as a delegate to general, district and state conferences and was past president of the Laymens' Organization, Fort Pierce district. While serving as President of the Federated Civic Club, before construction of a local hospital, the club furnished a building to house the sick and also provided a public playground on Eighth Street. The Civic club also launched the first voter registration drive in the black Lincoln Park area of St. Lucie County. She was also instrumental in organizing two groups a "Mothers Club" and a girl's club, "The Better Girls Club"

Fred Charles Duval, Sr. cast the first vote as an African American in St. Lucie County when blacks were granted the right to vote.

Frances Kay Sweet, XX/XX/XXXX - XX/XX/XXXX, will always be remembered as a very



loving and giving person. She lived for a while in Midway, Florida before she married. Shortly after her marriage to George Washington Sweet, the couple moved to Daytona Beach, to Indrio and then to Fort Pierce. Mrs. Sweet was a devoted housewife and mother. Her husband was a "truck farmer" and a school bus driver. They had eight children: two boys and six girls; but reared ten. Mrs. Sweet believed in education and encouraged all of her children to go to college. Five of her daughters took turns sending each other to college and became teachers.

Seven of the grandchildren became teachers also.

The Sweet family was caring and was always looking for ways to help others. So, when they learned that a family from Okeechobee needed a place for their daughters to live while finishing high school in Fort Pierce, the Sweet family opened their home to them. The young ladies completed high school, went away to college, and became teachers.

Mrs. Sweet was affectionately called Mother Sweet at her church (Mt. Moriah Primitive Baptist Church) and throughout the community. She took this title seriously. She walked the length of the city visiting those in need (especially those who lost loved ones); and attended various church services. She was an active member of the Pallbearers Lodge and the Independent Benevolent Aid Society.

During the 1930s, Mother Sweet served as President of the Parent Teachers' Association. She and the members worked diligently to raise the money needed to buy two lots adjacent to the Means Court School, these lots became the school's playground. The playground was fenced-in to protect the children from traffic hazards.

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Frances K. Sweet Elementary School was named in the honor of Mrs. Sweet in 1956. The following quotation is from a tribute appearing in the school's dedicatory pamphlet November 17, 1957: "Frances K. Sweet Elementary School stands as a lasting monument to a beloved housewife and mother whose life was devoted to the improvement of living and school facilities for the people of Fort Pierce.

Lewis 03/09/1890 - 12/25/1941 and Targie Monroe Sligh 05/29/1894 - 12/25/1952 moved to Fort Pierce in 1924 and built the first house in the Lincoln Park area. Before moving to the area, the couple lived in Dania Beach, Florida and before that Hawthorne, Florida where they were big farmers.

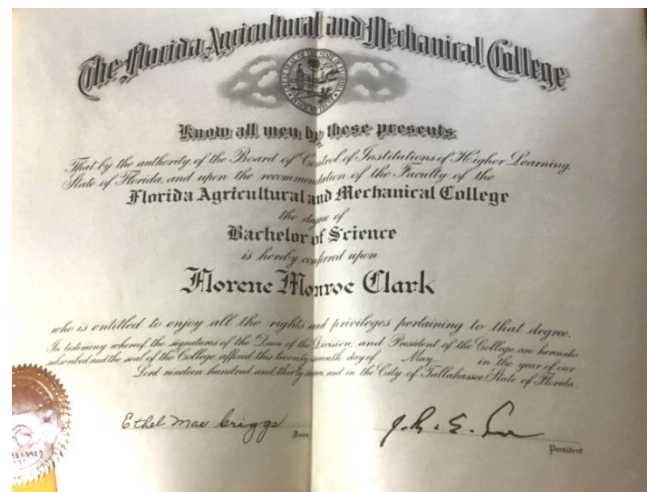


Lewis Monroe was the first black school bus driver for the Saint Lucie County School System and the first night watchman for Lincoln Park Academy. He also worked writing policies for Afro American Insurance company and with Stone Brothers Funeral Home before he died December 25, 1941.

Targie's vision for her children's college education has had a lasting impact on her descendants. Lewis and Targie's daughter Florence earned her first college degree in 1937 and then went on to earn a Master's degree in 1966.

Florence only child, Eileen Clark Thomas graduated from FAMU as well and was a school teach for several years. Eileen's three son attended college and two of them graduated from college with at least a bachelor's degree. Eileen's two grandchildren also graduated from college with bachelor's degrees. All of their descendants continue to do well for themselves.

Targie's vision for her children's college education



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Albert T. Stone (. /XXXX/1899-XX/XX/1967) **Julia Gibbs Stone**, The history of Stone



Brothers Funeral Home began somewhere around 1900 when a young man by the name of Edward Stone became interested in Funeral Service and the Embalming trade. In 1916 John Stone's oldest brother Edward opened the first funeral home in Tampa (Stone Brothers). After the business was established, he sent his brother Richard to school and his cousin Percy went to mortuary school too. This was the same year that another brother Albert left Melbourne and moved with his wife and young daughter to Jacksonville. After the second brother Richard went to Embalming School, Albert bought him a Packard Hearse to go into business also.

In 1925 Richard opens Stone Brother's in Cocoa, Florida. Albert wanted Richard to open up in Jacksonville, but to be closer to home; Richard left Jacksonville and opened the second Stone Brothers Funeral Home in Cocoa. During this time Albert was employed as a porter on the Florida



East Coast Railroad. His train run was from Jacksonville to Key West, with a layover in Fort Pierce. During his long layovers he became acquainted with several families in the Fort Pierce area, and was encouraged by them to help them organize a Methodist church. In September of 1926 with a flock of 11 believers the St. John Methodist Church became a realization. Rev. Albert Stone worked as writing insurance policies for Afro America Insurance from Vero Beach to Stuart.

In 1932, Albert opened Stone Brothers Funeral Home in Fort Pierce. Albert was not a licensed embalmer but a licensed Funeral Director. The State of Florida allowed Albert's Brother Richard to do the embalming. The Stone's owned not only the funeral home but Pine Grove Cemetery and Stone's Restaurant as well and was president of the Lincoln Cab Co., Inc. Albert was very active in the community, he was affiliated with the Fort Pierce Lodge No. 155, F & M; Cherokee Lodge No 7270, Order of Oddfellows, Silverleaf Lodge of the Knights of Pythias; Camp No, 80, American Woodsmen; Lilly Whites; Eastern Star; Independent Afro Relief Union; United Pallbearers of America, and the Grand United Order of Pallbearers of America and Nassau, Inc. of which he was state President.

Julia Gibbs Stone was co-owner of Stone Brothers Funeral Home in Fort Pierce, Pine Grove Cemetery and Stone's Restaurant. Julia was a member of the Gibbs family of

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Plant City, Florida and came to Fort Pierce in the late 1920s with her husband. She was active in the operation of Stone Brothers Funeral Home. She was a homemaker and a member of St. John United Methodist Church, Fort Pierce Federated Women's Club, Naomi Chapter 111, Order of Eastern Star, and Church Women United of St. John United Methodist Church.

Robert L. "Bob" Jefferson 4/20/1927 -12/22/1983 was born in Dunnellon, Florida one of seven children born to the late Tom and Frances Bell Jefferson. He moved from Dunnellon to Tallahassee at a very young age. He attended Lucy Moten Elementary School and graduated from Florida A&M high School. He was very likable and astute young man in



high school. After graduation from high school, he entered Florida A&M College (now University). He completed his freshman year as an outstanding student and left college to enlist in the United States Army serving his country in the Pacific region. After 18 months of distinguished military service, he returned to Florida A&M to complete his college education.

He majored in Health and Physical Education. He played football as a "split end" with the vaulted FAMU Rattlers. In addition to football, Mr. Jefferson played basketball as a guard. His ex-coach, Dean U.S. Jones of Southern University stated that "Bob" Jefferson was one of the most competitive players he ever had the opportunity to coach. "He gave of himself when he gave the gift of service." In 1950 after graduation, Mr. Jefferson married his college sweetheart, Zanobia Bracy of Chicago, IL and immediately after the marriage, he was offered a job as a teacher at Lincoln Park Academy (LPA) High School in Fort Pierce.

Mr. Jefferson started a new era of sports and spectators alike in St. Lucie County, especially in football and basketball. Bob Jefferson, as coach of the "Fighting and Fleeting Greyhounds" revolutionized those two sports. His name became a household word over the State of Florida. His teams were the first of their race to play at Jaycee Field. He purchased the first set of uniforms and he taught his boys and girls to be competitors. But more importantly, he instilled the desire to get an education and service to their community in his fellows.

The records show that in 12 years of coaching football, his teams won 105 games and lost 15. He won 8 conference championships and 2 state playoffs. In basketball, he installed the "run and shot" offense during those days. His teams over a six year period won 116 games and lost 13. He won the district championship four times and participated in the state tournament twice. Mr. Jefferson served as Athletic Director of all the "Greyhounds" teams

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for several years. "He Gave Of Himself When He Gave The Gift of Mind". (*Ideas, Purposes, Ideals, Principles*)

Mr. Jefferson loved coaching and the relationship with his boys. But the day came when he was called upon to use his talents to help improve all his students. He was appointed the first Dean of Boys at LPA in 1957. In 1962 when the position of Assistant Principal became available, Jefferson applied and was appointed first at LPA, later at Dan McCarty Annex. In 1970, he became Principal at LPA. The problems of integration and race relations at the recently formed Fort Pierce Central High School, once again gave Jefferson the opportunity to shine. Superintendent D.R. Seelinger and the St. Lucie County School Board made an unprecedented move which shook the minds of the community. Bob Jefferson was appointed Principal at Fort Pierce Central High School. The Southern Association Accreditation and Educational Standards termed his appointment and the immediate results as a "Miracle."

In the year prior to Jefferson being appointed Principal at Central, there was resistance from some of the students to desegregation, and one day a number of students walked out of class. There were disturbances, the police were called, and then school buses were called early, and the students sent home. There was sporadic fighting in the days that followed. It was an inauspicious start for school desegregation. The following year, Jefferson was named principal of Fort Pierce Central. Students of both races admired Jefferson. Jefferson was a strong disciplinarian and believed in respect for authority. His mere presence commanded respect. His ability to relate to students and raise their level of expectation, attributed to his success in calming the contentions of integration in high school and bridging the communities of white and black of Fort Pierce. He will forever be remembered for his contributions to the lives of youth, their families the Fort Pierce community and St. Lucie County.

Zanobia Bracy Jefferson 9/3/1926 - 1/2/2016 was born to Francis and Hattie Bracey in Chicago, IL. She attended the public school system of Chicago. After school and during the



summers during her junior and senior years, she attended the Art Institute of Chicago. After graduating from high school, she continued her education as a Biology major with Art as a minor at Fisk University.

She received her B.A. Degree from Fisk University in Nashville, TN., and M.S. from Nova University, and went on to study with Aaron Douglas (1899-1979), as well-known Harlem Renaissance painter. She has created commissioned works for public and private clients in and around Central Florida. Before most other art teachers of any color knew about African American artists and the rich art, music, and literature being

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created in Harlem at the time, Zanobia was tuned in. She knew that African Americans were breaking the color barrier in the arts.

She met her husband, Robert, in 1948 and they were married in 1950. Shortly afterwards, they came to Fort Pierce to teach at Lincoln Park Academy. When Zanobia started teaching at Lincoln Park Academy, there was no art department. It was due to her efforts that an art program was developed. She recognized Alfred Hair's potential as an artist and helped mentor him both inside and outside school. According to Zanobia, teachers liked Alfred, as he was personable and wanted to succeed. Because they didn't have paints in the school at the time, she taught him and her other students to work with pastels. Alfred showed artistic potential, and at his mother's request, Zanobia worked with Alfred on Saturdays. However, at that time, Alfred wasn't serious about becoming an artist. He had other things to do on Saturdays.

Zanobia taught some of the students who would later come to be known as the Highwaymen. While she saw the most promise in Alfred Hair, she also educated other future Highwaymen, including James Gibson, Isaac Knight, Carnell Smith, Johnny Daniels, Willie Daniels and one of the Buckner boys (she's not sure which one, since her students were identified by last name only).

Sometime later, Bean Backus went to the Lincoln Park Academy counselor offering his services as an art teacher. The counselor contacted Zanobia, and she suggested that Alfred become Bean's student. Alfred Hair was the only Highwayman who took formal lessons from the well regarded white landscape artist.

Zanobia Jefferson was both a sculptor and a painter. She enjoyed her relationship with Bean Backus as he welcomed her (and anyone else) into his studio. She once hung a painting she created of her daughter in one of his art shows. If asked, Backus was always open to critiquing her work. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, she took her students on field trips to the Backus Gallery, sometimes 100 at a time. At one time, Zanobia was on the Backus Gallery Board. She stopped painting around the time her husband died, in 1983.

Although Zanobia Jefferson was well aware of the toll that segregation had on her community, she tried not to let it bother her. When she went to the movies, she had to sit in the balcony, and she knew that she couldn't try on clothes in white-owned stores. But she recognized that Jim Crow mattered less in the areas of sports and the arts, and it was important to her that she had full access to the Backus studio. Although she could have, she didn't attend Bean's parties, which probably had too much drinking for her taste.

When the artists Zanobia Jefferson helped mentor were first called "Highwaymen," she disapproved of the name and was quick to say so. Regardless of the name that marked

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them, as her students gained national attention and grew as artists, she took pride in their accomplishments. She attended their exhibitions, hung their work in her home, and readily responded to invitations to talk about them. As a teacher, she always knew that their success was her success.

Detective Aaron Richardson 2/14/1923 - 5/2/2012 was born in Mayesville, SC and lived in St. Lucie County for more than 74 years. Detective Richardson was one of the early hires of black deputy's in the Sheriff's office and was transferred to the detective bureau in the midst of a reorganization of the department in 1973. He was well known while working as a Deputy and Detective for the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office where he began serving under then Sheriff Lanie Norvell. He was known to have compassion for all people in his life time.



Detective Richardson as he was fondly called, was a devoted Christian man in all of his dealings with life. He loved God and would spend hours telling anyone who wanted to listen about his faith and the fact that they should have faith in God like he did. He served as Chairman of the Deacon Ministry at First Bethel Missionary Baptist Church for many years. He was also President of the Brotherhood Ministry at First Bethel and President of the Citywide Prayer Band, a ministry that included deacons from several churches within the city. Detective Richardson was loved by many people and known as a peace maker. During his service with the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department, he was known to talk anyone who was breaking the law into giving themselves up without having to raise his weapon. He was loved and well respected.

By 1976, the Sheriff's Department had gradually hired other Black law deputies, and there were only 14 black employees in the Sheriff's department at that time including those who worked in the kitchen preparing food for inmates and school crossing guards. He retired from the Sheriff's Office as a detective. He was a veteran of the Army. He was a member of First Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, where he served as chairman of the Deacon Board, reviewer for the Sunday school and President of the Brotherhood.

Oliver Wendell Cox, 9/21/1943 - 6/2/2011, at the VA Medical Center of West Palm Beach. He was born in Colquitt, Ga., and was a lifelong resident of St. Lucie County. He attended the public schools of St. Lucie County and was a 1963 graduate of Lincoln Park Academy. He served in the Marine Corps. He attended Indian River Community College and received a degree in political science from Florida A&M University in Tallahassee. Before retiring, he was an officer in the Fort Pierce Police Department. He served 22 years and was an officer of the quarter, detective of the quarter and officer of the year. He was a member of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity. He was a member of New Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, where he was a deacon, Sunday school teacher and Senior Mission President.

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Detective Cox was a regular on the streets of Fort Pierce, where oftentimes, he walked as a community police engaging in dialogue and community relations. Detective Cox commonly interacted with the youth, young adults and elders of the community of Lincoln Park. When youth would be misbehaving or being problematic in the community, Mr. Cox would walk up to the youth and talk with them, encouraging each one to change their behavior or he was going to take them home to their parents.

Detective Jimmie Lee Blakely 7/8/1919 - 8/1/1995 was born July 8, 1919, in Quitman, Georgia to Henry and JoAnne Blakely. Affectionately called "Sarge" or "Blake", he attended public schools in Quitman and Blackshear Georgia. In 1937, he joined the United States Army and was Honorably Discharge in 1947. He received many military awards and decorations while defending his country. Some of the awards and decorations included: Army Distinguished Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Meritorious Unit Commendation and the Army Achievement Medal.

In 1947, he joined his father (who was one of the first fruit contractors) in Fort Pierce, Florida and began to assist with the business. Jimmie often told stories of the life in Fort Pierce when there were no African Americans police officers. It was explained that, during those times, of segregation, having an African American police officer was just unheard of. This is what made Jimmie apply for the position with the Fort Pierce Police Department. He became the first Black Police officer in 1952. The job was extremely difficult especially since he was required to work in only the northwest section of town. Jimmie worked for the Fort Pierce Police Department for twenty eight years and retired in 1980. During his tenure, he organized the Lincoln Park Police Benevolent Association. This Association and Mr. Baker (owner of Baker's Bar and Grill) were responsible for bringing many well known singers and performers such as Dee Dee Sharpe, Sam and Dave, and Redd Foxx to name a few. This Association was also instrumental in bringing annual fairs and carnivals to the community. These activities were the sole entertainment available to the northwest community during this period of time. Mr. Blakely also organized the first Mini City Junior Police program. Many youths practiced good safety habits and could be seen driving one of the four "little police cars" available to them on a driving range which was located on the now Lincoln Park Community Center site. Additionally, as a police officer in the northwest community, Officer Blakely was often called to act as mentor, disciplinarian, and surrogate father for many families. During this period of time, the adage "It takes a Village to Raise a Child" was indeed a way of life for the citizens living in the northwest community.

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Patrick Duval, XX/XX/1920 - 7/31/2020, was the first African American Sheriff Deputy in St. Lucie County and the first African American detective in St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department. Before 911, there was "knock-knock-knock." Pat Duval, who would serve St.

Lucie County for over 30 years, was one of just three sheriff's deputies when he joined the force in 1953.



That was an era before 911, and also an era when some people were less mindful of letting people have time to themselves when their off work. "People would come to the house all the time," Duval said in a 2005 interview recorded by the Sheriff's Office. "It made my family miserable. I would go stay at a friend's house and sleep on the floor so no one would see my patrol car at home."

"Protecting Lincoln Park" that's what Duval's niece, Wanda Cody Padilla, said she observed about her uncle's work as a deputy. "No one said, 'I am going to call the police.' They said, 'I am going to call Pat Duval!'" Padilla, now 65, said. "He always showed up in his sheriff's uniform and proudly wore his badge. Everyone knew him and had confidence he would get to the root cause of any and all disturbances because we trusted him to do the right and fair thing. We had true justice."

Duval was a grocery store worker in Fort Pierce when that job ended, he said in the 2005 interview. He decided to become a deputy based on the crime happening in his Lincoln Park community in 1953. Duval also led an effort in Fort Pierce that ended with the City Commission voting to hire the city's first two Black police officers.

Besides being short-handed on the sheriff's roster, Duval also maneuvered the rules of segregation in his early career. "When he would make a bust for moonshining, he could not arrest a white man," Padilla said. "He had to radio for a white officer to make the arrest. Still, none of these slights bothered him." Despite all that, Duval didn't feel the need to always carry his gun with him on patrol. When he responded to calls, he often left his gun in his car, he said.

Sheriff Ken Mascara credits Duval for helping him when he was a rookie deputy in 1976. "There were a handful of individuals during my first years at the Sheriff's Office who molded me into the person I am today and Captain Duval was one of them," Mascara said in a statement. "Captain Duval was a pioneer for this community and a leader within our agency." Mascara honored his mentor by naming a substation after him, located on Juanita Avenue in Fort Pierce. The Captain Pat Duval Community Substation is a short distance from where Duval lived. The captain spent his latter career years in the detective division. "He'd sit at my desk and that's when the storytelling would begin," said Dorothy Shaw, then the secretary in the division, now Mascara's secretary.

Shaw recalls Duval giving her an inside look at the early 1970s investigation into Gerald Schaefer, a convicted serial killer. In 1958, Duval was responsible for the county's second-largest seizure of illegal alcohol — 160 gallons of whiskey — and in 1976 he was part of a

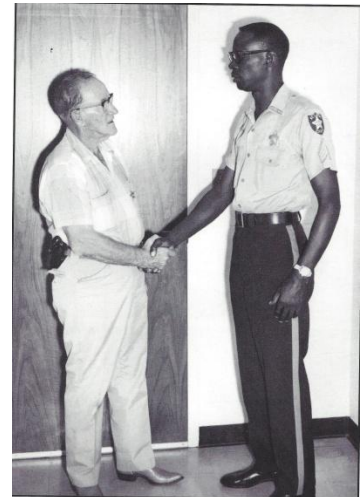
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team that recovered 4,000 pounds of marijuana and 86 pounds of hashish, worth an estimated \$2 million then.

Duval's actions as a deputy saved lives, but he may be most known for saving several pieces of paper. He responded to a trash fire in 1960 to find someone burning without a permit. Duval asked the man tending the fire what he was burning. He replied, "stuff out of the former home of Zora Neale Hurston." Fort Pierce's legendary author, teacher and filmmaker had recently died. Duval quickly pulled the papers, which turned out to be Hurston's manuscripts, out of the trash pile, extinguished the blaze and took them for safekeeping.

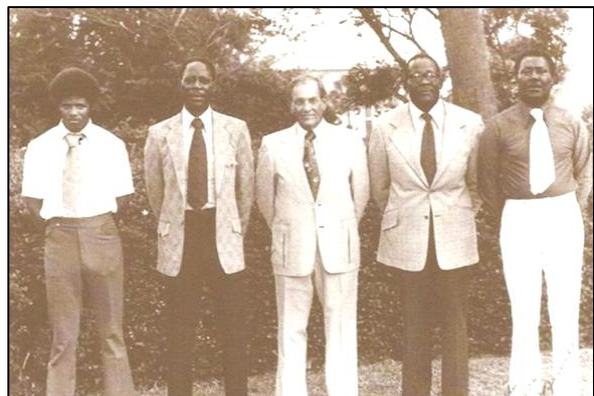
Early Pioneers in Law Enforcement

More than four decades after St. Lucie County had its first, and the county hired its first black officers. There were no black law enforcement officers in St. Lucie County until 1952. During that year three black men, Patrick Duval, Buster Morris Hagwood, and Howard Moore, mustered the courage to go to the Mayor and Fort Pierce City Commission to ask that blacks be hired as policemen. The City Commission later approved the mayor's recommendation by a 2-1 vote. Though the three had succeeded in getting black policemen hired, the black officers could not arrest anyone except blacks. They were not allowed to arrest whites if they were breaking the law. That was part of the white officers' job and a white officer had to be called to make the arrest. Two years later in 1954, the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department would hire its first black deputy sheriff, Patrick Duval. He was respected by members of the black community as well as most of the members of the white community. Parents and the schools would often call on him to come to their rescue when they had an unruly child who would not obey.



Pictured above, Sheriff Novell and Deputy Sheriff Duval.

There were only four black detectives in the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department in May 1976. They were from left to right; Detective Jimmy Robinson, Lt. Patrick Duval, Detective Aaron Richardson, and Detective Wilbert Boatwright. Sheriff C.L. Novell is in the center.



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Major Lillie R. Franklin Miller, 5/25/1944 - 3/23/2022 , a pioneer for women in Saint



Lucie County by having the distinguished honor of being the first African American female to achieve the rank of Major with the Saint Lucie County Sheriff Department. "Lillie Ruth," as she was affectionately called by her family, was born in Tallahassee, Florida and graduated from Old Lincoln High School in 1961 and later to Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University.

While at Mount Olive Baptist Church, Lillie served faithfully and was fully committed to being of service in whatever capacity needed. She served on several committees and was known for her work with the different anniversary programs. Lillie enjoyed creating flyers, programs, booklets, etc. Whenever there was a program, Lillie would burn the midnight oil printing memorable souvenir booklets; soliciting the help of family members, including her mother to assist with editing, collating, and binding materials.

After much thought, Lillie decided to make a career change and she entered the field of law enforcement on December 2, 1982 by joining the Saint Lucie County Sheriff Department as a Matron in the Corrections Department. With much determination and hard work, Major Miller set her goals and quickly moved through the ranks of the Sheriff Department. After serving as a Matron for approximately three years, she advanced to Shift Corporal and ten months later, she earned the rank of Sergeant. Continuing her hard work with the Department, in less than four years, Major Miller was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant where she served for two and a half years before being promoted to Captain and the Assistant Director of the Corrections Department. Three years later, Major Miller was promoted to the Director of Corrections where she served until being promoted to Director of the Administrative Department in 2002. Major Miller was recognized for her achievement during her many years with the Sheriff Department. At the time of her retirement from Saint Lucie County Sheriff Department in 2004, Major Miller was well known throughout the State of Florida for her work as a representative for the Saint Lucie County Sheriff Department.

In addition to her commitment to the Saint Lucie County Sheriff Department, Major Miller was a beacon of light within the community. She actively served in leadership positions with the NAACP and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Committee. While serving as Vice President of the NAACP, Major Miller organized the first NAACP Convention held in Fort Pierce, FL, which was the largest State Convention of the NAACP for the State of Florida. Major Miller also served with the American Red Cross Society, The United Way, The Exchange Club, The Charmettes of Saint Lucie County, and the Northside Bat and Ball League.

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Mr. Charles Edward Bolen - 3/28/1909 - 9/27/1995 Fort Pierce, FL. The lives of African



Americans came to life when C.E. Bolen, publisher of the first African American owned and operated newspaper began circulation in Fort Pierce in 1957, The Chronicle. Publisher Bolen's vision highlighted news, events, and critical issues facing the African American community. Bolen convinced noted author, folklorist, and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston to work for him writing a weekly column. Hurston's coverage included stories on community concerns, race relations, hoodoo, black

magic, as well as other local features. \n\n According to a February 14, 1990 Fort Pierce Tribune article, C.E. Bolen had this to say about his experience with Zora: "I found Zora in Cocoa, where she was doing some writing for the Pittsburgh Courier, I think. I said, 'Why don't you come to Fort Pierce and work for me?' and she did... She amazed me. You could learn a lot from talking to her... She carried a lot of useful information with her to her grave." For nearly 40 years, Mr. Bolen owned, operated and published the Chronicle Newspaper, reporting the lives, activities, events and history of the Black community in Fort Pierce and St. Lucie County. Everything news worthy was reported in the Chronicle first, it served as the black community's voice.

Horatio Grisby Sr. , XX/XX/XXXX-XX/XX/XXXX founded St. Lucie County's first



Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The Branch was organized in 1943. He also organized the St. Lucie County Voters League during that time. In 1951 the City of Fort Pierce opened the Horatio Grisby Sr. Athletic Park, a ten-acre park stretching from Avenue O to Avenue M and from 13th Street to 15th Street, this was the first park of this kind in St. Lucie County for Blacks.

Mr. Grisby, a member of Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church and a Deacon, owned a lot of property in Fort Pierce, was a champion of activities for youth and the Lincoln Park community. In 1967, the NAACP and the Quarterback Club partnered in a movement to repair the baseball field which grass was overgrown and full of sandspurs, making it difficult for the youth to play ball. Mr. Grisby played major role in the development of the Lincoln Park Recreation Center, raising money on the weekend along with Dr. Clem C. Benton, Mr. Gala Smith and others. They formed the Lincoln Park Board of Trustee, now Lincoln Park Recreation Board Inc. to oversee the Lincoln Park Recreation Center. Grisby later passed the torch to Havert Fenn, Ralph Flowers, Vernon Lee, Reginald Gordon, and Rufus Alexander, Sr. The mission is to support educational & recreational programs which build on the strength of children and families to they find hope & success in a safe environment.

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Cora Mae Lucas Monroe - 10/9/1926 - 2/2/2020 When you think of Cora “Mae” Lucas



Monroe, a number of communities, civic and educational memories come to mind. Born in 1926 in Boynton Beach, Florida the eldest of six children. After the family moved to Fort Pierce, Cora attended public schools in St. Lucie County graduating from Lincoln Park Academy and furthering her education on the highest of seven hills at Florida A& M University, receiving her Bachelor of Science degree.

Cora along with her late husband served the community of Fort Pierce in many capacities and also operated the first African American owned flora shop, “The Flower Patch” in Fort Pierce. The couple also owned and operated a restaurant, El Chico’s. Cora’s affiliations, awards, and recognitions include a charter member of Eta Eta Omega Charter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Charter Member and President of the Fort Pierce Chapter of the Links, Inc.; a member of the Library Advisory Board and Director of Club Utilitas Teen Center/Daycare and Tutoring Program.

In 1973, she was honored by the Florida Education Association and Club Utilitas for having received the highest honor in Human Relations Work in the State of Florida. In 1982, she received The League of Women Voters Service Award. The Democratic Women of St. Lucie County voted Cora their Woman of the Year in 1999 and was given the St. Lucie County Child/Advocate and Children’s Home Society Stand for Children Award in 2000.

After being a teacher and guidance counselor for 32 years, in 1980 Cora retired but even then could not leave her work with the students and continued on as a volunteer encouraging them to go on to college and helping to obtain the financial help they needed. Cora might have been retired but she wasn’t ready for the rocking chair yet, news reporter Ann McCollum from the Tribune stated. Seeing the great need for these students to be tutored and helped with their homework, she started working with groups of 20-25 teenagers, meeting them in the library using their own textbooks and serving them cookies and milk. Later space was found at C.A. Moore Elementary, then the Superintendent at the time stopped by to visit, liked what he saw she was doing and gave her the go-a-head and told the principal to give her whatever she needed. She set up a lab, used gerber food jars and hot plates, encouraged the youngsters to bring in their own frogs and tadpoles. Other members of Club Utilitas became interested and in 1986 they convinced the City Commission of the immediate need for a Teen Center. Land was donated and Cora’s brother, Ike Lucas volunteered to supply the labor. A public meeting was called to enlist pledges of financial assistance. Many clubs, individuals and businesses responded, and they have continued this support over the years thanks to Cora’s efforts.

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Vernon Floyd - 11/10/1927 Tallahassee, FL Indian River State College President, Dr.



Edwin R. Massey, recognized Vernon H. Floyd with an honorary diploma from IRSC at a IRSC District Board of Trustees Meeting in honor of his life-long commitment to higher education and to the community.

After graduating from Lincoln High School, Tallahassee, FL in 1945, Floyd pursued his college education with Florida A&M University and Indiana University, graduating with his master's of science degree in 1959. After his service with the U.S. Army Infantry from 1946 to 1954, he moved to Fort Pierce and was appointed as an Instructor with Lincoln Park Academy High School. In 1962, Floyd joined the faculty of Lincoln Junior College as an instructor teaching physical education.

“Lincoln’s faculty and student body made every effort to develop a well-rounded program of athletic, cultural and social activities to complement the academic program,” said Floyd. The varsity basketball team, under the direction of Coach Floyd, was a member of the Florida Junior College Athletic Association. When Lincoln Junior College and Indian River were combined, Floyd became a vital part of the faculty at Indian River and was promoted to assistant professor at Indian River Junior College in 1966. During his tenure with Indian River, he served as the department chairman of physical education, the assistant basketball coach and as the director of athletics prior to his retirement in August 1985. IRSC is proud to recognize and honor the contributions of Vernon H. Floyd to the institution, the community and to students during his many years of dedicated service.

Honorable Ralph Lorenzo Flowers - 1/23/1936 - 8/22/2014 in Palatka, Florida, Ralph was educated in the Public Schools of Palatka. He continued his education on the highest of



seven hills in Tallahassee at Florida A&M University on a Florida State Teacher’s Scholarship and was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Science in 1952 in Instrumental Music. Ralph was a recipient of the highly prized Florida A&M University’s “Most Distinguished Alumni” award. He greatly cherished this honor equally as much as being named the Florida Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity “Man Of The Year” in 1975.

He entered in the United States Army as a commissioned officer (2nd Lieutenant) in the Armor and Aviation Divisions from 1952–1959. After his discharge, he accepted a teaching position as Band Director at Lincoln Park Academy in Fort Pierce, Florida. He remained in that position until 1965.

Ralph decided to pursue a law degree from his Alma Mater, Florida A&M University Law School where he distinguished himself by maintaining the highest academic average in the

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Law School. He graduated in 1968 with the Juris Doctor degree and the Masters Degree in Administration and Supervision in Education.

In 1970, a St. Lucie County all-white cemetery offered to bury local casualties of the Vietnam conflict for free. The family of Poindexter Williams, a Fort Pierce man killed in action, was denied burial because he was black. Flowers won the case and went on to join the Law Firm of Cunningham and Cunningham of West Palm Beach. He served as a Prosecutor Ad Litem for the City of Riviera Beach in 1971-1972.

In 1970, the U.S. Justice Department filed suit against the district for its refusal to adopt a comprehensive integration plan. Flowers piggybacked on the federal suit with a case of his own, defending several black students accused of creating unrest about segregation. Federal Judge C. Clyde Atkins in August 1970 ordered the district to desegregate its schools, and a month later the new Fort Pierce Central High School opened for white and black students.

Atkins created a biracial committee of six whites and six blacks to oversee the integration process. For almost three decades, Flowers represented the group to the court. Its members came to be known as the "invervenors". During the battle for desegregation, Flowers sued the school board no less than seven times, according to Barry.

In 1972, Father Richard Marquess-Barry sought out Attorney Flowers and laid out his thoughts about the plight of Blacks in Fort Pierce and enlisted Ralph's help in righting the injustices Blacks had suffered for years. Attorney Flowers was 32 years old and Father Barry was 28 years old at the time. From that first meeting, a lifelong friendship developed between the two of them. Their friendship and work made life better for Blacks in St. Lucie County.

Later, in 1973 he was appointed as the last city judge in Fort Pierce, a position he held until it was phased out in 1976. Flowers was first black judge appointed anywhere in the 19th Judicial Circuit. His success in the Poindexter Williams case brought many phone calls. One was from a young Episcopalian priest, Richard L. Barry.

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Rufus J. Alexander, Jr. 10/24/1922 - 11/11/2000 Fort Pierce, FL a prominent leader in



the black community was a member of the pioneer Alexander Lyons family, the first black family to settle on Avenue D. Alexander was a native of Fort Pierce and was the first black postal employee in the county. He was a U.S. Army veteran, serving for 26 years during World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam.

According to his family and friends, Alexander organized, contributed, initiated and supported many causes within the community, the United States and abroad. He was a frequent contributor of letters to the editor published in the Tribune. Alexander was a Sergeant First Class in the United States Army and participated in the D-Day invasion of Normandy. He was presented the Normandy Medal of the Jubilee of Liberty from France and was a life member of the Disabled Veterans Association.

Alexander graduated from the Renard School of Embalming in New York, and received his bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Jones College. When Mr. Alexander returned home, he didn't just go to work and back home. Among the local projects that Alexander was involved in were the Sheraton Plaza Park and Lighting District; Paradise Park playground, swimming pool and clubhouse; the Lighting District of 25th Street; the enclosing of the Belcher Canal Bridge to protect school children; and the paving of Avenues R, S and T north of 25th street and most streets north of Moore's Creek.

Alexander participated in a program to raise funds to enlarge the child care center next to the Lincoln Park Community Center and to purchase playground equipment and toys. He organized the annual sickle-cell anemia fund-raising drive and was involved in other community activities and projects that focused on children and minority issues. Alexander engaged in numerous letter-writing campaigns to local, state and national political leaders to address individual and community issues and made countless contributions to promote higher education among minority youths in the community.

He got involved with the community and youth, in particular he advocated for the development of Pioneer's Park. He didn't just stop at writing letters to the City Manager and Mayor but to whomever would lend an ear. And once the park was developed, Mr. Alexander personally watched over the park, when kids were at play, he would often give them food and water. After hours when the park was closed and teens would try and engage in deviant behavior, Mr. Alexander would chase the would-be vandals away. He served as a self-appointed park keeper and trustee. His primary concern was to preserve the park and the for safety of the children.

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Willie J. "Britt" Stockton - 6/7/1921 - 6/19/1977 an ultimate community activist, always advocating for the rights of African Americans in the Lincoln Park community. A military veteran and fruit contractor, Mr. Stockton was President of the Quarterback Club and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The Quarterback Club had orange and black jackets and supported the Lincoln Park community and the school by raising funds, chaperoning at various community and school activities, served as Game Marshalls at football games. The school board appreciated the assistance @ football games. The Quarterback Club also sponsored dances at Baker's Flamingo Bar & Grill.

Mr. Stockton lead a boycott of Max Market, the corner of Orange Avenue and 23rd Street for not placing blacks in leadership roles. He organized a picketing of the A&P Grocery Store for not promoting blacks. Mr. Charlie Frank Matthews was already employed and was promoted, and eventually promoted to Store Manager for A&P stores. A&P management bought in two other blacks on cashier and in produce. Mr. Stockton fought county government for not having blacks on staff, often attended meetings, and speaking on the inequality of blacks in hiring and unfair treatment.

The Quarterback Club met with the Sheriff to set up Citizen Patrol in Lincoln Park and the Northwest section of Fort Pierce. They even had a car. Mr. Stockton was the driving force behind the Horatio Grisby, Sr. Field being cleared and organized for baseball with a diamond shape and bases. Before, the land was filled with sand spurs and overgrown grass. In this effort, he joined the forces of both the Quarterback Club and the NAACP to organize and appear in masses at the City Commission meeting with petitions in hand to demand the city set aside dollars in the budget.

Stockton organized a women's softball team in St. Lucie County that gave people in Lincoln Park area something to look forward to on Saturday and Sundays. He felt there was a direct role in keeping people in of participating in sports. He was instrumental in controlling block voting. Stockton endorsed candidates who would eventually win. It was believed the press was trying to influence the black community in elections, and Stockton let it be known that Lincoln Park community picks their own candidates.

Stockton's enterprising efforts reached beyond social issues, he was concerned about the whole community, economics, social, recreation, and transportation. He had a minibus line, the city developed routes for his bus system and placed bus stops in the Lincoln Park area. The focus was on 29th street and trips would be to the grocery store, drug store, and retail shops. The system also featured a schedule. Mr. Stockton and the Quarterback Club's impact on the Lincoln Park Community is evidenced some more than 40 years later.

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Charles C. Hayling, Jr. 7/2 /1928 - 2/4/2020 was born in Tallahassee, Florida, to Charles Cleaver Hayling Sr. and Cleo B. Hayling. He attended public school in Leon County, Florida enjoying the rich culture of being raised on the highest of seven hills at Florida Agricultural & Mechanical College. Both of Charles parents were deeply involved in education and instilled the value of education in him at an early age, something he believed in all his life. Upon graduating from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical College he entered the United States Air Force.



In 1962, he moved his family to Fort Pierce, Florida where he became the Head Basketball Coach at Lincoln Park Academy High School. Soon thereafter, he accepted an Assistant Principal position at Means Court Elementary School and later became the Principal. After several years, he became the Principal of C.A. Moore Elementary where he served until he retired in 1987. He had a respect for education, through teaching and sharing with others its importance in American culture. As an African American growing up on the campus of a historically black college, Charles knew firsthand the significance of culture and heritage in education. When asked to become the Administrator and Director of Bethune Cookman University Satellite Campus in Fort Pierce, Florida at the West High School formally known as Westwood High School, he answered the call. Under Charles leadership many Fort Pierce residents received post-secondary degrees throughout his 20 years with Bethune Cookman University.

Charles served on many local civic and governmental boards in St. Lucie County. Since 1962, Charles has been a member of St. Paul A.M.E. as a Trustee, St. Simons Episcopal Church, and later served as a Trustee with Goodwill Presbyterian Church. Charles never wavered in his love for God and served faithfully each day of his life. Charles was a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and the St Lucie County Chapter of The Florida A&M University Alumni Association. Most recently Charles was honored with the Key to the City of Fort Pierce (2018), The Village Keepers Award for Outstanding Service, and the Fort Pierce Florida A&M University Alumni Chapter Award of Merit in 2019.

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Charlie Frank Matthews, Sr., 5/3/1945 - Present was born in Brooksville, Florida, has resided in Fort Pierce, Florida since 1962, and graduated from Lincoln Park Academy the



following year in 1963. Mr. Matthews comes from a background that has carried him to forty-six states of the United States and has served on more than seventeen boards and committees. He is a high-profile leader who matriculated at Saint Augustine College in North Carolina, majoring in Business and Economics. Mr. Matthews has two distinct retirements, one in Banking with Bank of America and the other one in retail with twenty-five years of

service with Wal-mart.

Mr. Matthews has served on more than 20 boards and committees for the City of Fort Pierce, 14 as Chairman. During his leadership in the field of Civil Rights, he has served with great honor as a leader, 25 years as NAACP Branch President, convened under his leadership, three Florida State Conference Conventions were held in Fort Pierce. The branch was one of the most award-winning branches for large memberships; championing the causes of Civil Rights, Housing, Education, Unfair Labor Practices and Police Brutality.

He coached Little League and helped to develop a Charter known as Northside Bat and Ball League, which is still active. His love for the city's disadvantaged youth played a major role in the development of Horatio Grisby, Sr. Baseball field, coached a championship team named "The Challenger" (keeping with the Astronaut Space Program). He also served as Executive Secretary of the Northside Bat and Ball Club. He is presently a lifelong member of the Lincoln Park Recreation Board of Directors and serving as Chairman.

He has received over three hundred service awards with distinction during his professional career: The Outstanding Citizen of the Year, Most Active Citizen in the News, Black History Awards and Shakers and Makers of Political Affairs, Outstanding Congressional Achievement Award, and Who's Who of the South. There are many awards and achievements from his years of dedication and involvement in the area of Civil Rights, Civil Liberties, and Political and Voting Rights.

Mr. Matthews currently serves as President of the Lincoln Park Recreation Board. He is the past Chairman of the Fort Pierce Utility Authority, the past Chairman of the City of Fort Pierce Community Redevelopment Advisory Board and Past President of the Saint Lucie County NAACP serving longer than any other President.

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Annie Kate Jackson 6/7/1937 - 7/1/2015 David and Alma Johnson moved their family from Georgia to Fort Pierce, Fl. in November 1942 when Annie Kate was only five years old. She attended schools in St Lucie County, however due to family hardship she was force to drop out at an early age to work to help feed the ever growing family.



Never-the-less, that did not stop Kate (as she is affectionately called by her sibling) from returning to school later and earning her GED. Before taking that step she met and married JC Jackson and to that union, seven children were born into the world. Kate would later adopt another daughter and have an even four sons and four

daughters.

Kate held many First positions in her life. She was a First black woman to be employed with the City Clerk's office in Fort Pierce, First black account clerk for Fort Pierce Utilities Authority, First black legal secretary in the State Attorney's office of the 19th Judicial Circuit of Florida, First black female personnel director for the public defender's office of the 19th Judicial Circuit of Florida and the black female from SLC to serve with the third statewide grand jury of Florida.

Kate retired from DOT in 2012, but she continued to work within her community as an after school tutor, and within her church as the church clerk. Throughout Annie Kate's life in Fort Pierce, she served the community through various associations such as a reporter and editor of the Chronicle Newspaper (the first newspaper owned and operated by an African American), a member of Member of Treasure Coast Charmettes since 1971.

Annie Kate served as: President, Recording Sec., Corresponding Sec., Financial Sec. and National Sgt.-at- Arms. She was the founder of local chapter's fund raiser, 'The Purple Tea'. Funds raised go to Local Chapter of American Cancer Society along with wigs for cancer patients. At the 60th convention she received an award for 45 years of service to the organization.

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Clarence Brown -1944 - Present Family moved from Dublin, Georgia to Fort Pierce, Brown would attend Lincoln Park Academy and graduate in 1963; and 1965 graduate of Lincoln Junior College, and 1967 graduate of Florida A&M University (FAMU). Upon graduation from FAMU, he enlisted into the United States Army. Mr. Brown would return



to Fort Pierce and begin working for the City. When the City of Fort Pierce decided to redevelopment of the Northwest Section of Fort Pierce, it was a huge undertaking. The decision to move forward with revitalization efforts began in 1978, when the City Manager and Director for Building and Zoning (now Planning) came together with Planner and Grant writer Clarence Brown to devise a project approach and plan. The infrastructure revitalization program encompassed four components: comprehensive street lighting; housing rehabilitation; fire hydrants; and recreation.

Mr. Brown would team up with City Engineer to identify streets to be repaved and/or resurfaced, and the respective costs to be implemented in the upcoming fiscal year. The work created a Street Pavement Plan for northwest Fort Pierce, especially Avenue M and Avenue D. Although Avenue D was and still is a county road, because it was located in the city limits, the City maintained Avenue D then and now.

From 1978 - 1986, 33-miles of infrastructure improvements were made, including street paving, storm drainage, sewer lines, water mains, curb and gutter, and standard five feet wide sidewalks. The workload called for 6 1/2 miles of road paving per year and a total of 15 miles of sidewalks. The target area was east to west from U.S. Highway 1 to Angle Road; and north and south from Orange Avenue to Avenue Q. The housing component offered five thousand dollar grants to homeowners to make improvements that would be forgiven after five years provided they remained in the property for at least five years. If the property owners moved, they were responsible for repaying the grant. The second part of the housing program was a three thousand dollar loan to be used for home improvements.

The installation of fire hydrants was the next phase of the project. The UA worked with the contractors to insure that every hydrant with a pumper truck would have a 600 feet circumference. The next phase was the comprehensive street lighting; this included all streets in the target area and especially Avenue D. Beautification and streetscape improved the area, but a nice recreation park was needed west of 25th Street in the target area. In 1979 the City used federal funds to purchase 4.1 acres of property at the northwest corner of 29th Street and Avenue M known as Pioneer's Park. The funds were also used to develop the park: \$60,000 for the land, \$350,000 to build the park; the city designed the facility, Utilities Authority installed the lighting; and the underground sprinkler system was installed by the City.

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Mr. Brown received a Proclamation from the City of Fort Pierce with distinction as Housing Program Supervisor and as Community Development Coordinator for the acquisition and administration of over 6.67 million dollars in Community Development funds. He also received District XV Health and Human Services Board, Health and Rehabilitative Services – SLC appointed Clarence Brown to serve as a founding member of the board to assist with the organization of an entity that was community based, community owned and responsive to the needs of the citizens of District XV.

Earl Little 10/11/1926 – Present is a native of Fort Pierce graduating from Lincoln Park Academy in the class of 1944. Upon graduation from LPA, Mr. Little entered Hampton Institute (now University) and spent one year before being drafted in the military. His



military service was 1945-1950 in the Medical Corp division. In 1951 he graduated from Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Ohio before his teaching role began at Southern University. In 1955, Mr. Little returned home to his Alma Mata LPA in what will be a 40-year run of educational brilliance in chorus.

Mr. Little's interest and love for music and opera started at LPA, there in the 1930s participating in drama and operetta. In the 3rd grade, he would lead an operetta yearly. It was that experience that Mr. Little wanted to impart with his students. Every year, he would have music field trips to West Palm Beach to see Passion Plays, Lake Wells and Miami. The students enjoyed the musical plays and the exposure to the world of arts through music. Mr. Little felt the love of music and the arts instilled values in the students.

From 1951 – 1991, Mr. Little received numerous awards and several "firsts" in categories such as the First Black Chorus Director Judge in St. Lucie County; First Black State Approved Adjudicator for Choral Music in Florida. He served as Florida Vocal Association District Chairman and President; voted Teacher of the Year in St. Lucie County; Associate Master Teacher Award, FDE; National Association of Negro Musicians Designation; Inducted into Florida Vocal Association Hall of Fame.

During the course of his 40-year choral career, Mr. Little in 1951 prepared the first Christmas program for the community and would later produce a Christmas program every year for the next 68 years with the last Cantata in April 2019 in Jensen Beach. He established a Performing Arts Scholarship for local students attending college in one of the areas of singing, instrument, or drama. Mr. Little is an active member of Mt. Moriah Primitive Baptist Church

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Charles Oliver Hines (1/11/1930 - 9/7/1992) was a native of Tallahassee, FL and had been a resident of Fort Pierce for 57 years. Mr. Hines received his elementary and high school education in the public school system of St. Lucie County. Before he completed his high school studies, he enlisted in the Army and served a tour of duty of two years during the Korean conflict. After discharge from the Army, he returned to St. Lucie County and received his high school diploma from Lincoln Park Academy and enrolled at Florida A&M University. Aactively involved in athletics since the age of 12, either as an athlete or a supervisor. All of his athletic career was in the state of Florida with the exception of the two years he spent in the military service.



Hines has made outstanding achievements as an athlete in high school, college, and the army. As a coach he garnered many district and conference honors. He has served as a super role model, encouraging many athletes to further their education as well as athletic abilities. He has served St. Lucie County in athletic for 33 years. During his tenure he was football coach at Lincoln Park Academy and Dan McCarty High School; football coach, wrestling coach, and athletic director at Fort Pierce Central High School; and football coach, athletic director, and assistant principal in charge of athletics at Fort Pierce Westwood High School.

While at Fort Pierce Central High School, Hines started the first wrestling program in St. Lucie County, culminating a record of 94-11. He also was selected to serve as one of the coaches for the South All-Star football team in 1972. As athletic director at Fort Pierce Central High School, he was instrumental in bringing girls sports back to the county. During his second year as football coach at Fort Pierce Westwood High school, his team was selected as one of the most improved teams in the state of Florida by the Coca-Cola/Dunkel rating system. In his third year at Fort Pierce Westwood High School, his football team won the district and Suncoast Conference championships, which entitled the team to be in the first round of the state playoffs. Hines has been active in many community organizations dealing with the youth of St. Lucie County. His numerous successes have been credited to his affiliation with these youths as an elementary school teacher, scoutmaster, little league coordinator, recreation director and YMCA director.

In 1991, Coach Hines was inducted into the Florida High School Athletic Association.

A product of the St. Lucie County school, he graduated in 1954 from Lincoln Park Academy, received his Bachelor's degree from Florida A&M University and his Master's degree from Florida Atlantic University.