

THE SPOTS HISTORIAN

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2nd Quarter, 2012

From Her Desk

Terry Miller, Executive Director

Where have we been? So glad you asked. At times it is worthwhile to take a break from writing and really get down to business. Even though we have missed you too, we have researched in dusty archives, rewritten our strategy, taken inventory of our permanent collection, traveled with the members of the 23rd Regiment U. S. Colored Infantry, and begun preparations for our 2nd anniversary on Sept 6th.

Our singular focus is EDUCATION and we will have fun doing it. We will continue to develop groundbreaking exhibits that bring NEW information to the public. We will host forums that address tough topics such as **We Have No Leaders** (coming in mid-September). We will figure out how to effectively apply our exhibits directly to the Virginia SOLs so that students are helped. We will support membership growth of the 23rd Regiment U. S. Colored Infantry. We will believe in our continued success. We have only one question: **will you do these things with us?**

Look What's Coming



Last seen on the battlefield May 20th is Kevin Williams Sr., medical officer of the 23rd Regiment U. S. Colored Troops Infantry. Want to see some blood and guts? Want to bite down on a towel while your leg is amputated? Want to learn what it takes to get into the modern healthcare field?

Saturday, June 9 at 12 noon Officer Williams and his fellow soldiers will host a talk and demonstration, **OUCH! Medicine**

during the Civil War: How Familiar? After his presentation, Officer Williams and his fellow soldiers will take interested attendees outside for a few treats and other surprises. You won't know what those surprises are unless you come. Free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: An Open House for the 23rd Regiment U. S. Colored Infantry will be held at the museum, 12 noon on Saturday, July 14th, including a drum and fife corps and games with prizes.

Thank you for your contributions Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site); A. L. Bennett Funeral Home; Mt. Hope Baptist Church; National Assn of Retired Federal Employees; John & Bernice Easley; Alvilidia McCaskill; Willie Conyers

Super Volunteer

If you visit the museum any Friday or Saturday, you will be greeted by Clinton Braxton. He has been a dedicated volunteer since the museum's opening in September 2010. "I am always amazed how he anticipates things. He seems to know the questions guests will ask. (see "Braxton," pg 2)

Clinton Braxton accepts his gift from the Museum as Volunteer of the Year. He is a 1956 graduate of the John J. Wright Consolidated School



Braxton *(from pg 1)*

I look up and he is making sure the exhibit cases are clean. I get thirsty, and coffee miraculously appears on my desk. When it is time to shut the museum for the day, he has already gathered the signs from outside and put them away. There are too many tasks for me to name — all of them get done by him. We want him to know that every effort is appreciated,” said Terry Miller, the

museum’s executive director and curator. “We wanted to present him with a gift in front of a huge audience, but



we knew he’d find someplace to run and hide. So we decided to surprise him privately,” she continued.

Clinton is a native of Spotsylvania and active member of Sylvannah Baptist Church where Rev. Dennis Woodard is pastor. His parents were the late Elnora Stannard and Clinton Braxton Sr. He is an avid bowler, member of several civic organizations including the National Association for Retired Federal Employees, and he promotes the museum wherever he goes. Come by and congratulate him.

John J. Wright Educational & Cultural Center Museum, Inc.
7565 Courthouse Road
Spotsylvania, VA 22551-2706

June 9, 2012, 12 noon
OUCH! Civil War Medicine

Museum Hours

Thursday-Saturday
10am - 3pm

Groups by appointment

Searching for a Photograph

Preston Despot (b. 1875), black farmer, husband and father, was a member of Branch Fork Baptist Church when, in May 1911, he tried to register to vote. After reviewing his handwritten application, precinct captain J. H. Biscoe pronounced him OK to vote and then asked him a series of irrelevant questions. After answering what he could, Mr. Despot was denied his right to

register without being given a reason. Unmoved, he hired a lawyer, sued Mr. Biscoe, and won.

We are looking for a photograph of Mr. Despot for our September exhibit titled, *The Psychological Power of Voting*. Our new exhibit opens September 6th as part of our gala second anniversary celebration. Contact us at 540-582-7583, ext 5545 if you can help us locate this courageous and proud man’s photo.

New in Store

Do you know the answer?

JOHN J. WRIGHT
EDUCATIONAL & CULTURAL CENTER MUSEUM, INC.

**Who was the Supervisor of Colored
Schools for Spotsylvania from 1929
until 1954?**

New in our gift store are our very own History Conversation Cards. One set contains 55 questions with answers on the back to keep you talking for days. Get yours for only \$5.