

Navy Cross. His medal came nearly a half-century after he and his African American shipmates on Intrepid's Gun Tub #10 shot down a Japanese kamikaze plane. However, his odyssey began October 27, 1944, when the captain of the Intrepid, Joseph Bolfger, recommended all seven survivors for the Navy Cross, just short of the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award and conducted meritorious mast on board the ship for the men. Yet, when the commendations were sent on to Washington, they came back, with the men being given only Bronze Stars, or lower medals with no apparent explanation for the change.

Notwithstanding Swann's long, arduous and lonely court battle to receive the belated honor, it wasn't until 1997 that another of his shipmates Navy Petty Officer Robert Jones, by then 71, and a resident of Newport News, Virginia received his Navy Cross, again more than 50 years afterward in a stately ceremony held at the Capitol Building in Washington, DC, hosted by Congressman ROBERT "BOBBY" SCOTT (D-VA).

Furthermore, family testimonies revealed America in 1951 prior to the Brown versus the Board of Education decision was a very different place when Sgt. Charlton, who would have been 22, had he lived to his birthday, July 24, distinguished himself in battle to such an extent that he earned his nation's highest recognition for valor—the Medal of Honor. However, when his body was returned from Korea, his family was denied the right to bury his remains in Arlington National Cemetery with other Medal of Honor recipients. Sgt. Charlton was a war hero, but Cornelius Charlton was black.

Moreover, it wasn't until 1990, when the American Legion spearheaded an effort to locate the graves of all Medal of Honor recipients. Through their efforts Charlton's final resting place was identified as Bryant Memorial Park, which had become overgrown.

Yet, equally poignant, family testimonies revealed that it wasn't until 1997, a half century since WWII, and President Harry Truman who stood on the White House grounds and awarded 28 United States Medals of Honor to white soldiers for their outstanding valor that black soldiers who were denied the recognition accorded their white counterparts, were awarded the same honor—the Medal of Honor. During a White House ceremony former President Clinton presented the nation's highest military award for bravery to seven black WWII heroes, six of which were awarded posthumously. The only living veteran awarded the medal of honor during the ceremony was 77-year-old Vernon Baker, of St. Maries, Idaho. The other heroes finally awarded the Medal of Honor were: Edward A. Carter, Jr., John R. Fox, Wily F. James, Jr., Ruben Rivers, Charles L. Thomas, and George Watson. Attending the ceremony was retired Army General Colin Powell, who as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was the highest ranking African American in the military.

And now almost a century and a half after the end of the Civil War, a resurgence of interest and advocacy on behalf of legendary Harriet Tubman has gradually materialized, while on the other hand the first-ever memorials to honor black war heroes within: (a) the Commonwealth of Virginia is being planned; (b) the first national park monument was dedicated to

Mississippi Black Civil War soldiers; (c) a monument/memorial is being planned to honor the Seminole Negro Indian Scouts and their families; (d) a US Colored Troops USCT plaque dedication is being planned for Andersonville National Historic Site in southwest Georgia; and finally planning is underway for the North Chicago Memorial Park/Monument dedicated to the 100,000 men who went through the Great Lakes Naval Training Center during World War II.

Later that evening we gathered drenching ourselves in the richness of Black history and feeling mixtures of both pride and pain as we awarded, or publicly recognized, acknowledged and meaningfully remembered those who fought for people they had never even met. Something quite austere happened at the gala reception and award ceremony, which prompted many to say, 'I thought we did therapy that night,' and left others crying and emotional. We have given these awards annually over the course of the past ten years. This year our honorees included three categories: (1) individual awardees: Norma Baker, GSgt. Maurice Bingham, USMC, Ret., Celestine Caldwell Hollings, Paul J. Matthews, Cpl. Fred McGee, USA, Freddi E. Moody, Master Chief Vince Patton, USCG, Ret., Ed.D., Lt. Col. Charles H. Rucks, USMC, Ret., Isiah J. Williams, III, Master Chief Harold Wilson, USN, Ret., and Wallace Terry (Posthumous); (2) organizational awardees: the Center for Drug Abuse Research, Howard University, Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America, Harlem Youth Marines, Inc., Morgan State University, The Association of the 2221 Negro Volunteers, WWII, and the 1279th Combat Engineers Alumni Association; and (3) historic groups and/or sites: United States Colored Troops Institute and Olustee Battlefield Historical State Park.

Finally, as we prepare our special 15th Anniversary report, after-action briefs and legislative proposals we must reiterate now more resolutely than ever before from the very beginning of independence "We were there," and despite the adversity, "We served!" Simply read the missing pages of American history, or perhaps the footnotes and you will find the names of Crispus Attucks, Salem Poor, Sgt. William H. Carney, Cpl. Andrew Jackson Smith, Harriet Tubman, Freddie Stowers, Sgt. Henry Johnson, Mess Attendant Dorius 'Dorie' Miller, Josephine Baker, Pvt. William Thompson, Sgt. Cornelius Charlton, Cpl. Fred McGee, Captain Riley L. Pitts, Staff Sgt. Hilliard Carter, and others, as well as thunderous places like Breeds Hill, Fort Wagner, Honey Hill, New Market Heights, . . . , Kunu-Ri, Hill 188, Hill 528, Hill 543, Pork Chop Hill, Hamburger Hill, Heartbreak Ridge, and others looming as silent reminders of past deeds, and debts unpaid.

Therefore, let it be said, here, now and forever more that African Americans have not once, not twice, but repeatedly demonstrated throughout this country's long history an unwavering dedication towards the principles of freedom, liberty and justice for all. This is the true testament of African American patriotism and looms as an outstanding example for current and future generations of Americans nationwide, as well as freedom loving people around the world.

The struggle continues.

HOMEPORTING OF THE USS  
"RONALD REAGAN"

**HON. DARRELL E. ISSA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on the eve of the home porting ceremony of the USS *Ronald Reagan*, to welcome America's newest Aircraft Carrier and its crew to San Diego.

The USS *Ronald Reagan* CVN 76, our nation's ninth *Nimitz* class carrier, is the world's most advanced and most capable carrier ever built. The USS *Reagan*, along with its crew of 6,000 and its commanding officer Captain James A. Symonds, will give America greater capabilities to address threats to the safety of Americans and international peace and stability than ever before.

For most of the world's history, the oceans have been a dangerous and lawless place. For over 60 years, however, America's Navy has reigned supreme over the world's oceans. Today, our Navy ensures freedom of the seas for all nations who seek to use the world's shipping lanes for peaceful purposes. The USS *Ronald Reagan* enhances our Navy's ability to do its job.

For California, the USS *Ronald Reagan* will serve as a proud reminder of the legacy left behind by our former Governor and President. President Reagan understood the importance of maintaining a strong and effective military. Throughout his administration, which brought about a successful end to the Cold War, President Reagan rebuilt America's armed forces with a steadfast belief in the pursuit of peace through strength. Because of this legacy, it is entirely fitting that the most powerful and diplomatically visible symbol of the American Navy now shares both the name and home state of President Ronald Reagan.

The crew of the USS *Reagan* will find the San Diego community to be warm and welcoming. San Diego has a mix of many cultures and, as someone who moved my family here 20 years ago, I can assure the entire crew that San Diego is a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to recognize Mrs. Reagan who will participate in tomorrow's home porting ceremony. The USS *Ronald Reagan* is a testament to the many great things Ronald and Nancy Reagan accomplished together. Ronald Reagan gave our nation hope and reminded us that with hard work and determination we could do great things. President Reagan may have moved on, but his legacy is as strong and steady as the ship that now bears his name.

HONORING THE MOSES AND  
AARON FOUNDATION SPECIAL  
FUND FOR CHILDREN

**HON. JERROLD NADLER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a worthy organization, one committed to special children and their families. The Moses and Aaron Foundation's significant and enduring efforts deserve the highest praise, as do the philanthropists who have given of themselves to fulfill its mission.