

## Outstanding Black Women of Yalobusha County

# Letters From Vietnam Bring Memories – Love And Respect For Veterans Should Bring Us Together

In developing this project, Black Women of Yalobusha County, I have written to at least 25 churches in the county. I have reached out to my high school classmates, cousins and friends soliciting their support. As shared in a previous article I continue to receive comments and encouragement from a wide range of readers and other individuals. The total responses have been overwhelming, and my heart overflows. The project is rapidly developing and growing larger than I ever imagined. I hope you will continue to join me on this journey.

While the purpose of the project is to honor black women of Yalobusha, past and present, who have had a positive impact on the community, as Veterans Day approaches I want to share letters that my brother, Floyd Alfred Chapman, wrote to our mother, Helen, from Vietnam.

If my memory serves me correct, he was drafted in the Army while working in Davenport Iowa, sometime after his high school graduation in 1967. He found himself in the military with three first cousins, brothers, E.L Chapman (Army), Ronnie/Raymond Chapman (Army) and Willie James Chapman (Marines).

Perhaps these letters prompt us to reflect, particularly during this time when America is so divided, and we are literally days away from the mid-term elections. I love and respect our veterans and our country and always will regardless of the issues that so often now are misinterpreted, misrepresented and are pulling us apart.

My oldest son is a second lieutenant in the Army married to a sergeant in the Air Force. My middle son completed four years at West Point Military Academy.

my. I have a host of friends and second cousins active, disabled and retired military. I thank them and all veterans and active duty personnel.

Reprinted below are two letters written by my brother, (Gabby):

April 17, 1969  
Dear Mother,  
How is life? don't never be worrying about me. If anything bad happen to me the Red Cross will let you know. I just got a little cut or nick it was not bad enough to worry about. I just told Aunt Mary Hester something to be talking about. I just got all of the pictures and was they nice. I am



By Dottie Chapman Reed

Excerpts from a second letter:

Hello Mother how is everything I am fine, don't have much time, am a little sleepy. I been sitting up here arguing with a boy about the Church

Reed is a native of Water Valley and graduated from Davidson High School in 1970. She has launched a project to collect bios, pictures and other info about women in the county who have made an impact on the African American community.

She can be reached at (678) 825-2356 or reed2318@bellsouth.net



Floyd "Gabby" Chapman and Ronnie Chapman are pictured in Vietnam.

still showing them to peoples. They was real nice send some more if you have the chance.

I could use 2 box too. Tell daddy to send me a picture of him. All the boys want to see a picture of him and his little red truck. Your car is pretty. I want forget you on Mother's Day.  
Floyd

of Christ. Today is the 18th I know you are getting ready for Christmas. On Christmas Day at 12 o'clock you send up a prayer for me and I will do the same at the same time how did you like my pictures. Today we walk 4 miles in about 30 or 40 minutes to help a company out I was point man and I really made them boys behind me walk. When we get there jets had kill most of them

Page 2: they had drop booms on them and we caught 8 and they gave up without a

fight I was glad of that

Page 4: I have wrote you too much now will send you extra money the last of this mt. Do what you want with it Keep your car in good shape I will send the church some money soon I would give a million dollars to see Tomie kids now Well this is about all for now. O yes! I dream the other night that daddy and Mr. Edd Wright came over here (Smile) but daddy was not looking well. tell him to drink some milk for me wish I was there (Floyd) Merry Christmas.

It had been a while since I read these letters, and again I come away with even more mixed emotions. As you see, Gabby was not great with punctuation and grammar. I had forgotten about the boxes of canned foods and things we mailed out almost weekly as I am sure most military families, organizations and Americans also did. Postage from the soldiers was free then, and I hope that holds true today.

Gabby and my cousin, Ronnie, were able to get together while in Vietnam for some R & R (rest and relaxation). They both made it home with no physical injuries and so did E.L. and Willie James. However, like so many of our Vietnam veterans, Gabby and Ronnie clearly exhibited mental and emotions scars.

Gabby died the fall of my senior year in college, 1973, of carbon monoxide poisoning emitted from a television in his apartment in Davenport, Iowa. Ronnie left us early as well. Rest in peace you guys!

## Pastors Will Sing To Raise Funds For Disaster Relief

MinistryUp, the ministry consultant business of Charity Ware (daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Larry W. Ware and granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln and Mamie Shields) will be hosting "The Pastor's Sing" on Nov. 4 at 4 p.m. at Bethlehem M.B. Church. This program will raise money and items for the Florida Disaster Relief project in Panama City, Florida.

The Pastors who are scheduled to sing include Rev. George Forrest (Coffeeville), Rev. Sammy Townes (Water Valley), Rev. Jerome Johnson (Gore Springs), Rev.

Darryl Booker (Charleston), Rev. Darvis Purnell (Grenada), and Rev. Leroy Carter (Cleveland), Rev. Larry W. Ware (Coffeeville). Any Pastors in the area who would like to participate, please contact Charity ASAP.

Disaster Relief items needed include water, diapers, toilet paper, paper towels, baby wipes, canned goods, shampoo, conditioner, first aid kits, hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies, towels, etc.

Please make all checks payable to MinistryUP.

For more information, please contact Charity at 662-709-7175.

**Christmas Open House**  
Thursday Evening  
Nov. 1 – 4 to 8  
Friday, Nov. 2 – 9 to 5  
Saturday, Nov. 3 – 9 to 5  
Sunday, Nov. 4 – 1 to 4

**Created Designs Christmas Shop**  
by Tammy Hellums  
276 Hwy 9W Bruce – 9 mi. south of Calhoun Lafayette line on left  
Ph. 662 413-4046

**BRUCE Unwrapped Christmas Open House**  
Saturday, November 3rd - 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

<b>Artifacts</b> Lots of Goodies Throughout	<b>Noelle's Boutique</b> November 3 & 4, Giveaways both days
<b>Body Canvas Boutique</b> First 10 Customers receive 10% off Total Purchase	<b>Patchworks</b> November 3rd & 4th November 10th & 11th
<b>Connie's Flowers &amp; Gifts Boutique</b> Celebrating 30 Years with Sales Inside and Out	<b>Pizza Palace</b> Greek Style Pizza Season's Greeting Host
<b>Created Designs Christmas Shop</b> Sale - November 1st - 4th	<b>Southern Chics</b> Don't Miss This Sale!
<b>Cut-N-Up Salon</b> Mani & Pedi Duo \$40.00 plus Product Sales also	<b>Tedford's Treasure &amp; The Snack Box</b> Stop In And Enjoy A Snack and The Savings
<b>Jeffrey's</b> Sale - Nov. 3rd & 4th	<b>The Junk Joint</b> Flowers, Gifts, Unique Vendor Spaces

**Shop Bruce, Mississippi This Holiday Season**  
Recapture the fun of small town shopping!  
Stop by the Bruce Chamber of Commerce and pick up your Free Map and a cup of Hot Chocolate or Apple Cider.  
For more info go to Bruce Chamber of Commerce Facebook page.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Lions Club Pancake Breakfast Is Second Saturday In November

Water Valley Lions Club has rescheduled their next pancake breakfast for Saturday, Nov. 10, due to the power outage planned for the electrical grid in Water Valley for the first Saturday. Serving will begin at 6:30.

### Private Applicator Training Is November 9 In Coffeeville

The Mississippi State Extension Service will host a private applicators training at the Multi-purpose building in Coffeeville on November 9th at 1 p.m. The cost for this class is \$20. In addition to the Private Applicators class there will also be a Sprayer Calibration class.

### DAR Will Welcome State Regent

The David Reese chapter of the DAR will welcome State Regent, Cynthia Cleveland McNamara, as guest speaker on Thursday, Nov. 8 at 11:30 a.m. This luncheon is scheduled at The Blake at 100 Ed Perry Drive. Guests are welcomed. Lunch is \$12. McNamara's project: "Gardens, Publicity and Signage" are adding value to DAR's historic Rosalie Mansion, our "Lady on the Bluffs" in Natchez. RSVP by Nov. 5 to Linda at migrantlady@hotmail.com.

### Arts Council Seeks Artists For Renasant Bank Lobby Display

The Water Valley Arts Council is looking for artists to display their work at Renasant Bank. Paintings, photography, drawings, collages, quilts and needle work are acceptable. All work must be ready to hang in frames (or dowels for quilt work). All sales go to artists. For more info please call 318-655-2623. Remember, art makes the world a more colorful and inspiring place.

### Valley City Lodge Will Have Next Stated Communication On Nov. 1

Valley City Lodge No.402 will have their next stated Communication Thursday, Nov. 1, in the Masonic Temple on Champion Circle. Members are reminded that the meeting time is 7:30 p.m. during daylight savings time.

### Annual Christmas Parade Will Roll Down Main On December 1

The annual Water Valley Christmas Parade, "Christmas In The Valley," is scheduled Saturday, December 1, starting at 1 p.m. The rain date will be the following Saturday if needed. All churches, businesses, factories, school groups and individuals are urged to participate in the annual tradition. Contact J.C. Womble at 473-3190 or email jcwomble53@yahoo.com. to register your entry for the Christmas Parade. There is no entry fee.

### VFW Announces Weekend Plans

Bingo will be played at VFW Post 4100 Friday, November 2. Doors open at 5 p.m. and games begin at 7. Providing music for the regular Saturday night dance on Nov. 3 will be the Bobby Hood Band. Music will begin at 8 p.m. and conclude at midnight. Post 4100 is located at 11535 Highway 315, west of Water Valley.

### School Board Meeting Is Nov. 5

The Water Valley School Board of Trustees have scheduled a school board meeting on Monday, Nov. 5, at 6:30 in the central office. The public is invited.

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