

# Black History Month



Robert S. Abbott fought a long battle to establish the Chicago "Defender." His commitment to succeed with the city's only "Black" newspaper drove him to sell the first editions door-to-door.

## Did you Know?

### Questions

1. Six of our nation's Presidents were part black. Can you name any of them?
2. Nine African Americans have won Nobel Prizes. Who were some of them?
3. There are many musicians, singers, and songwriters of all races, creeds and colors throughout the world today. Who was the first black recording artist in America?
4. Were the first black people in America slaves?
5. When did the first Africans arrive in America? How did they get here and did they come straight from Africa?
6. Who was the first African American to die while fighting for America's freedom?
7. Was the President of the United States really arrested by a black police officer for speeding?
8. Did a former black slave really live to an age of 137?
9. One story tells of a Northern black seaman stealing a Confederate submarine in 1862. Could this possibly be true?
10. Are black slaves from the South really responsible for bringing rice to our dinner tables? Union officers promoted Small to a captain, made him the commander of the sub, and sent him back to Charleston to attack the very port where submarine was originally docked. The attack was successful and Robert Small eventually became a Brigadier General in the Union Army.

### Answers:

1. Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Warren G. Harding, and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Lincoln's first term vice-president, Hannibal Hamlin was also part black. It is also known that Calvin Coolidge was part Indian. Now some historians believe that he may have had black ancestry too.
2. Nobel Prizes are awarded each year to people who have made valuable contributions to the "good of humanity." Dr. Ralph J. Bunche became the first black person to win a Nobel for his work as a United Nations mediator, which led to an armistice agreement between Arabs and Israel in 1949. Other blacks to receive Nobel honors were Albert John Luthuli in 1960; Martin Luther King Jr. in 1964; Sir William Arthur Lewis in 1979; Bishop Desmond Tutu in 1984; Wole Soyinka in 1986; Derek Wolcott in 1992; Toni Morrison in 1993; and Nelson Mandela in 1993. Toni Morrison was the first black woman to receive this prestigious award.
3. There were actually two African American men who recorded several records for the old Victor Talking Machine in 1900.
4. People often think all black people who came to America hundreds of years ago were slaves. Actually this is untrue. The first Africans in America were indentured servants. Indentured servants would work for three to seven years to pay for their trip to America and their living expenses while here, after which time they were set free. Many poor white Europeans also



Ralph J. Bunche was an American diplomat and political scientist who became the first black person to win a Nobel Prize.

worked as indentured servants as a way to get to America where they would eventually buy their own property and start a farm.

5. 1619. The first Africans in the colonies appeared mysteriously on

a Dutch boat called a frigate. They were traded for much needed food and the boat with its white crew sailed away, leaving the Africans in a strange land. The black men became indentured servants. After they worked their way to freedom many got jobs in cities working for white people, bought a home, and started a family. Some began farming.

6. During the "Boston Massacre" in 1770, at the beginning of America's Revolutionary War with the British, a black man named Crispus Attucks was not only the first black man to die in the war, he was the first American of any color to die a war hero.

7. This is true. In the late 19th century a black policeman in Washington D.C. named Officer William West saw a speeding horse and buggy dangerously zooming

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## Nightclub Stampede Kills 21

*continued* ▲ from Front

Firefighters responding to the scene found a number of locked or blocked doors and used sledgehammers and pry bars to open some of them so that people could be rescued. Fire Commissioner James Joyce said at a late morning briefing.

"There are people trying to get out that could not get out," Joyce said. "Locked and blocked doors are a contributing factor. We can't explain how management or ownership would allow that."

The locked doors are a fire code violation, Joyce said.

Twenty-one people were confirmed dead in the tragedy at the Epitome Night Club, Chicago Police spokesman Pat Camden said. Hospitals reported treating at least 50 for everything from critical injuries to asthma-like symptoms.

"Everybody smashed, people crying, couldn't breathe," said club-goer Reggie Clark. "Two ladies next to me died. A guy under me passed out."

Witnesses reported that panic broke out after the guards used pepper spray or Mace to break up a fight, but authorities did not immediately confirm that.

There were more than 1,500

people in the two-story nightclub when someone released a chemical spray into the air sometime after 2 a.m., officials initially estimated. They could not immediately say what the legal capacity of the building was.

"It appears a disturbance from within led to a mass chaos where people headed for the door. Most of the fatalities appear to have been crushed or had injuries due to suffocation," said police Officer Ozzie Rodriguez.

The club is located in the Near South Side, a commercial district near the McCormick Place convention center.

Cory Thomas, 33, went to the club to pick up two friends. As he waited outside, he saw people inside the club start to back up against the glass front door.

"You could see a mound of people. People were stacking on top of each other, screaming and gagging, I guess from the pepper spray. The door got blocked because there were too many people stacked up against it," he said.

"I saw them taking out a pregnant woman," Thomas said. "She was in bad shape. I saw at least 10 lifeless bodies."

Kristy Mitchell, 22, was one of the people trampled on the stairway.

"People were stomping my legs," she said. "When they pulled me up, I was dizzy and I

couldn't breathe." Amishoov Blackwell, 30, was checking his coat on the second floor when people started rushing past him. The flow of the crowd pushed him back down the stairs and he fell on top of several people, he said. He was trapped on top of the others until firefighters rescued him about 30 minutes later.

"It wasn't nothing but two girls fighting," Blackwell said. "Why'd they have to spray Mace?"

Hours after the disaster, Chiquita Rhodes was still searching for her 19-year-old sister, Charita.

"I've been to every emergency room," Rhodes said. She was told by officials to return to the medical examiner's office around noon, when the bodies would be available for relatives to identify.

She said Charita was holding onto a friend, but they were separated in the crush. A firefighter found Charita's cell phone, she added.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson arrived at the scene early Monday and urged community members to help each other.

"We are asking area ministers to go to hospitals," Jackson said. "My people are overwhelmed with the suddenness of this. At a time like this, you have to lean on your faith."

## New Ambulance for Heavy Lifting

In an effort to further improve service to the Portland-metro area and its citizens, American Medical Response has developed a new "Bariatric" ambulance to better meet the transportation needs of patients weighing up to 1,000 pounds.

The word bariatric stems from the Greek word barros, which translates to heavy or large.

Standard equipment in the ambulance industry is pressed to accommodate these larger and heavier patients. This has been a potential safety hazard for patients and the crews who transport them. AMR developed this new system to significantly decrease the risk, and increase the comfort and dignity of these patients.

The new ambulance is larger, providing additional room for the patient and crew in the back of the unit. It will carry a flat cot that

is wider than a standard ambulance gurney.

AMR also has designed aluminum ramps to use when loading or unloading the patient. These ramps will allow for a smoother and more comfortable lift for the patient.

The ramps will also prevent the crews from needing to manually lift the patient, which could potentially risk unnecessary inju-

ries. Also on the unit is a specially designed winch system to help the crews load and unload the patient. This will reduce the strain on the crews and act as a safety to prevent the gurney from getting out of control.

AMR anticipates running up to two calls per day in the Portland-metro area with the new Bariatric Unit.



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