

# 9th & 10th (Horse) Cavalry Association, San Diego Chapter Buffalo Soldiers



## BOBBY CHEATOM

When he was 16 years old, a young Bobby Cheatom joined the Army. Young men had to be at least 17 years old to enlist, but his aunt signed the consent papers. His first assigned was in Fort Gordon, CA for military police school, then to Denver, Colorado where he was one of two black men in MP unit. In 1950 he went to Japan, joined the 212th MP Battalion (all black) company. *"It was an honor to be in that outfit"- "We were sharp even though we didn't have any black officers in Korea"*. Bobby was a prisoner of war during the Korean Conflict, where he suffered burns on his hands and face when the Chinese and North Koreans blew up his check point. Fortunately, Bobby later escaped and spent time on a hospital ship, where he underwent skin grafting. Bobby later returned to Korea, earning the Silver Star and Purple Heart for bravery for saving fellow members of his unit and capturing some of the enemy. Bobby's most interesting career was when he became a crime investigator. Bobby was one of the first black men to go to the FBI school. His education really began, when he went to the NCO Academy, Chief of Police School.



Through the years Bobby learned to take all of his experiences in stride. *"I have no regrets ... I got my education"*. Bobby retired from the US Army as 1st Sergeant in 1975 after 27 years of service and after 36 years of faithful service at Weapons Training Group Pacific. *"The services today are much better than they used to be"*. *"You can achieve whatever you want. I enjoyed being in the service...wouldn't trade it for anything else. I'm not a war hero; I was just the best MP doing the best job for my country"*



Bobby credits his military career, to the training in the ROTC and his nurturing in Kansas City, Missouri. Today, is happily married with six children and spends most of his time with family and enjoys gardening. The San Diego Chapter, Buffalo Soldiers are proud and admire the sacrifices made by many Americans, especially Bobby. Trooper Cheatom is a lifetime member of the 9th & 10th Cavalry (Horse) Association.



Medals of Honor:

National Defense

Bronze Star

Overseas Service

Purple Heart

Army Good Conduct Medal

Army Commendation

Koran Presidential Unit Citation

WW II Occupation Medal Army

Korean Service Medal

50th Anniversary Korean Commemorative

Army Forces Expeditionary

National Defense Service

U.S. Vietnam Service

Korean Defense Service

Republic of Vietnam Service Commemorative

U.S. Army Commemorative

United Nations Korean Service

ROK Korean War Service

Civil Action Honor Medal 1/C & 2/C

Vietnam Campaign Medal

Saudi Arabian Liberation of Kuwait

RVN Gallantry Cross

United Nations Medal

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Comm.

Presidential Unit Citation Commemorative