

# BUFFALO SOLDIERS

**TROOPER SAMUEL STONE** - Chief Engineer for Military Sealift Command. Stone is a native of Texas City, Texas, educated in the Texas City Public school system. While on a class field trip to a Russian Ship USSR, he was introduced to the shipping industry, that's when Stone chose follow a new path. Stone attended the College of the Mainland in 1970 for one and a half years, where he studied Mechanical Engineering. This is where he decided to work for the Texas Highway Department, as Inspector of highways and bridges, included calculating the formula mixture of concrete to be poured for highways and bridges. He had beam concrete sampled taken for each job for that day, which he tested the following day. If the beam didn't break properly, that section had to be removed and re-poured the next day! He stay with the Highway Department for four months. Then decided to work for Lockheed Martin in NASA as a Material Handler, responsible for getting all the material to the Engineers so they could perform their jobs daily.

Stone remained with NASA for approximately six months, then he decided to change his geographical location to Opelousas, Louisiana and open a Cleaners. He operated his cleaners for a year, while working construction at the same time in Morgan City, Louisiana, this was a 180 miles round trip. January 1976 moved to San Francisco, California, joined the Cleaners Union to continue working for cleaners until January 1978, and family business in Hitchcock, Texas. Stone began his career as a Merchant Seaman with Military Sealift Command, his career with Military Sealift Command began with the Pacific Fleet in February 1978, on board the USNS Taluga. He was initially employed as a wiper, hired to clean, paint and maintain the engineering spaces on board the ship. Six months later, in September 1978, Stone had acquired his Fireman, Oiler/Water Tender and Junior Engineer endorsement through the Coast Guard Testing Center in San Diego, California. Within the next year, he received a promotion to the position of oiler, Fireman/Water Tender. This was the position that he held for the four years. In 1983, Stone made the decision to broaden his experience by excelling to the next level of an engine utility man. During this time, he mastered the skill of overhauling pumps, doing plumbing repairs and performing daily maintenance on various types of machinery throughout the ship.



In October 1986, Stone obtained his license for 2nd Assistant Engineer and in January 1987, received his first assignment in a supervisory capacity. On board the USNS Navasota, he held the position of Day Third Assistant Engineer, responsible for the maintenance and operation of the AMR (Auxiliary Machine Room) and supervised personnel as to the proper operation and maintenance of machinery while on watch. As a Third Assistant Engineer, Stone received a Special Performance Award as recognition of his diligence and hard work. From Third Assistant Engineer and continued to move upward to the position of Second Assistant Engineer, supervising twenty individuals. Stone was also responsible for ensuring the completion of necessary jobs and projects throughout the engineering department. He also maintained the ship's operations in the absence of the First Assistant Engineer. By November 1991, Stone had obtained his license to sail as First Assistant Engineer in addition to his supervisory duties, he began to design and to implement training programs for the restoration, the operation and the maintenance of the ship's electrical, Auxiliary and Propulsion system. He developed detailed scheduling of maintenance through commercial contractors and vendors to facilitate expedient repairs. He also trained personnel in basic fire-fighting and damage control to include the familiarization of the vessel for evacuation, should the need arise. Later in Mr. Stone's career as

First Assistant Engineer, he started preparing his self for the Chief Engineer position. Chief Engineer Stone received his Chief Engineer License October 1997 and began to serve as Relief Chief Engineer to cover personal leave as needed. August 1999, Chief Engineer Stone excepted a ship-to-ship emergency relief from the USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194) to USNS Navajo (T-ATF 169) as temporary Chief Engineer for nine months. Mr. Stone implemented several projects during his tour onboard the USNS Navajo. As the Navajo served as the platform for the making of the movie, "Men of Honor", it was Mr. Stone's Engineering Department onboard the ship that supplied the electrical power for the filming of that movie, actually saving the filming company thousands of dollars. Stone was awarded with a letter of appreciation along with a cash incentive. October 2001, Chief Engineer Stone was utilized for emergency relief on USNS Tippecanoe (T-AO 199) for one month. March 2003, Chief Engineer Stone was recommended and selected to activate USNS Henry J Kaiser (T-AO 187) which was in ROS 30 for several months and had not performed any underway replenishment for almost eight years.

Mr. Stone managed a \$745,000.00 Quarterly M & R Budget of the ship for all departments, to insure the preservation and up keep of the ship for thirteen (13) months. Chief Engineer Stone's personal awards include the MSC Shipmate of the Year Award, May 2003 and the MSC Mariner Award of Excellence, May 2003. Additionally, Mr. Stone was nominated for the following awards: MSC Distinguished Career Achievement Award, Black Engineer of the Year Award, and the Special Acts Award during 2003. Chief Engineer Stone will be eligible to retire February 2008, after correcting his medical problems, were caused on the job during his career as an engineer with Military Sealift Command (MSC) for thirty years. October 06, 2008, started a construction project on my house in San Diego, CA which will take about four (4) months. Stone retired February 2014, has been blessed with this journey so far in this life and though, had a few stumbling blocks thrown in the path, include this COVIC-19, but not ready to stop tis not over!