

# Classroom Spice

Vol. 17, Issue 1 • USAO Multicultural Resource Center • Dr. Jeanne Ramirez Mather, Ed.



Washington's Slave	Oklahoma Civil Rights Activist	
<p>George Washington was conflicted over the issue of slavery. He was raised in the culture of slavery, inheriting 10 slaves when he was only 11 years old. Over subsequent years he acquired more, some through gifts or inheritance, and others through purchase. When he married Martha, she was a wealthy widow who brought to the marriage an additional 80 slaves of her own. This brought the total number slaves (men, women, and children) at Mount Vernon to about 150.</p> <p>Ona Judge, born around 1773, was the daughter of one of Martha's slaves and a white indentured servant. Ona, also known as Oney, worked as a seamstress in the Washington house starting at the age of nine, and later became Martha's personal maid and part of Washington's presidential household when they moved to Philadelphia.</p> <p>Philadelphia was a thriving abolitionist stronghold and according to Pennsylvania law any slave who stayed in the state more than six months could establish residency and ultimately their freedom. The Washingtons, aware of this law, would take their slaves in and out of the state every six months to avoid the slaves establishing residency. Oney endured this six-month transport for more than five years. One day however, Oney became aware that Martha was plan-</p> <p><i>(Continued on page 3)</i></p>	<p>Clara Shepard Luper, an Oklahoma schoolteacher, became a leader in the American Civil Rights Movement and led one of the first sit-in protests, <i>18 months before</i> the famous Greensboro, N.C. sit-in. She was born and lived her entire life in Oklahoma. Her father was a World War I veteran and laborer, and her mother was a laundress. Clara received a B.A. in mathematics with a minor in history in 1944 from Langston University. In 1950 she was one of a group of African-American students who integrated the University of Oklahoma, the first African-American admitted to the graduate history program, and earned her M.A. in History Education.</p> <p>Starting in 1957 she taught history at Dunjee High School in Oklahoma City, and also advised the Oklahoma City NAACP Youth Council. Inspired by the work of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, she wrote and staged a play, <i>Brother President</i>:</p>	<p><i>The Story of Dr. Martin Luther King</i> about his nonviolence philosophy. She and her Youth Council were invited to present it at a national freedom rally in New York City.</p>  <p>NewsOK (<a href="http://newsok.com/gallery/3258/pictures/77148">http://newsok.com/gallery/3258/pictures/77148</a>)</p> <p>The experience of the rally and the performance were memorable to Clara and her students, but so too was the bus trip. It took them from areas where African Americans could not eat at lunch counters with whites or use the same water fountains, to regions where they could, then back again to where they could not. This was a time of</p> <p>Jim Crow laws in the South; a time when coloreds had to drink out of separate water fountains, use separate restrooms, ride in the back of the bus, and could not stay in a hotel. Reflecting on the trip Clara Luper said, "It gave my young people a taste of freedom."</p> <p>That taste led to one of the nation's first ever sit-ins. In preparation for that sit-in Luper taught her students four steps of nonviolent resistance. Those steps included 1) investigation (making sure there really was an injustice to fight); 2) negotiation, 3) education; and 4) demonstration. She stressed the importance of protesters recognizing there would be suffering in the struggle for justice, and they must be ready to sacrifice with dignity.</p> <p>On August 19, 1958, inspired by comments from the children, 13 children (ages 6 to 17), Clara Luper and other advisors went to the counter in Katz Drug Store in downtown Oklahoma City and sat down and</p> <p><i>(Continued on page 4)</i></p>
<b>Table of Contents</b>		
	<b>Oklahoma Civil Rights Activist; Washington's Slave</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Professional Athletes with Physical Challenges</b>	<b>2</b>
	<b>Literature Connection; World War II Heroine</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>Hallway Education?</b>	<b>4</b>

**Professional Athletes with Physical Challenges**

(Match the number to the correct athlete.)

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Rocky Bleier</b>             | 1. This Major League Baseball (MLB) pitcher was born without a right hand. He won a gold medal in the 1988 Summer Olympics and pitched a total of 888 strikeouts in his MLB career.   |
| <b>Bethany Hamilton</b>         | 2. This athlete's legs were badly burned in an accident when he was a child, losing all the flesh on his knees and shins and all the toes on his left foot. He suffered through intense physical therapy but later went on to compete in the 1500m event in 1932 and 1936 Summer Olympics, win the Silver medal in the latter and was considered the greatest American miler of all time. |
| <b>Glenn Cunningham</b>         | 3. This ESPY Award-winning mixed martial arts athlete became the first quadruple amputee to ascend Mount Kilimanjaro without the aid of prosthetics in 2012.  |
| <b>Jim Abbott</b>               | 4. This athlete was injured during the Vietnam War when a grenade sent shrapnel into his lower right leg. Although told that he would never play football again, he went on to become a Super Bowl champion with the Pittsburgh Steelers four times over.   |
| <b>Matt Stutzmann</b>           | 5. This Polish athlete was born in 1989. She was born without a right hand and forearm. She is a table tennis player who takes part in competitions for able-bodied athletes and athletes with disabilities, and competed in the London 2012 Olympic women's table tennis.  |
| <b>Natalia Partyka</b>          | 6. When this athlete was 13 years old her left arm was bitten off by a shark in a surfing accident in 2003. She went on to place 1st at the NSSA National Competition in 2005 and had a movie about her life released.  |
| <b>Anthony Robles</b>           | 7. American track and field athlete described as the "fastest woman of all time" suffered from epilepsy. She set world records at the 1988 Olympics and the 1984 and 1988 Olympics for the 100- and 200-meter runs. She also won a total of three gold medals and two silver medals during the latter.  |
| <b>Florence Griffith Joyner</b> | 8. This athlete was born with only one leg. He won a national championship as a high school senior, finishing his high school wrestling career with a record of 129–15. He finished his Arizona State wrestling career with a record of 122–23, a three-time Pac-10 wrestling champion, as well as being named a three-time All-American in the 125-pound weight class.                   |
| <b>Kyle Maynard</b>             | 9. This world-class archer was born with shoulder stumps, but no arms.  |

**Answers:** Bleier—4; Hamilton—6; Cunningham—2; Abbott—1; Stutzmann—9; Partyka—5; Robles—8; Joyner—7; Maynard—3

(Washington's slave—cont'd from page 1)

ning to give her away as a wedding gift to her granddaughter, regardless of Oney's years of loyal service. Oney then began to plan her escape. On May 21, 1796, while the Washingtons were dining, Oney slipped out of the house and with the help of members of the free black community boarded a ship headed to Portsmouth, N.H. In Portsmouth she was helped by the local free black community and found work as a domestic. Unfortunately, one day she was recognized by a friend of the Washingtons and Washington was notified. Over time Washington was becoming uncomfortable about the institution of slavery and believed in a gradual abolition of slavery, but his angry feelings over his perceived betrayal by Oney made him demand her return. However, circumstances made the attempt to retrieve Oney of lesser importance, so gradually she felt safe. She kept observant and eventually she married and gave birth to a baby girl. When an agent finally came looking to recapture her, she fled to another town with her daughter and successfully hid. When Washington died four months later, he freed all "his" slaves, but Oney was Martha's slave and was not legally freed. However, Oney managed to avoid being captured and was never returned to Martha.

Oney had three children and was widowed in 1803. She lived all her adult life in poverty, but still managed to teach herself to read and write. As her children grew her son left home to become a sailor, and her two daughters were forced into indentured servitude, both dying before their mother.

Surprisingly it was not unusual that Martha, a white woman, owned slaves. Many slaveholding parents and relatives gave girls, even young girls, slaves as gifts or as inheritance rather than land. It is estimated that white women made up approximately 40% of all slave owners. It has also been shown that white women were active in the buying, selling, managing and seeking return of slaves, and often more violent in dealing with slaves.

## The Literature Connection

*Someday is Now: Clara Luper and the 1958 Oklahoma City Sit-ins*, by Olugbemisola Rhuday-Perkovich, ISBN 978-1-63322-498-8, introduces 6-9 year olds to the inspirational story of Clara Luper. It shows the power of believing in justice and activism. It highlights the resilience and determination of young students who truly made a difference in the civil rights movement. The information at the end of the book will be particularly appreciated by middle school students.



Clip art—<http://staff.camas.wednet.edu/blogs/larablair/2014/01/08/302-news/>

*She Stood for Freedom: The Untold Story of a Civil Rights Hero, Joan Trumpauer Mulholland*, by Loki Mulholland (Joan's son) and Angela Fairwell, is available in two editions. ISBN 13:9778-1-62972-176-7 is for lower elementary and ISBN 13: 978-1629721774 is written for middle

schoolers. Both tell the story of Joan Mulholland who as a white 10-year old living in Virginia in 1952 recognized the injustice of how blacks were treated. As she grew up her philosophy of justice and injustice solidified and in 1960 she openly joined the Civil Rights Movement to the horror of many in her family and to the college she attended, Duke University. Her activity in sit-ins, protests, marches, and freedom rides resulted in being threatened, arrested and jailed. Once released she enrolled in an all-black college in Mississippi which was not well received by many blacks and whites. See related educator resources at [www.anordinaryhero.com](http://www.anordinaryhero.com).

*Anthony Burns: The Defeat and Triumph of a Fugitive Slave* by Virginia Hamilton, ISBN 0-590-42893-4 is most appropriate for middle school and older students. It describes the true story of Anthony Burns a 20 year old escaped slave in 1854. His freedom is in question and a court case ensues based on provisions of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. This act made escape to the free northern states invalid and essentially only escape to Canada was then grudgingly recognized. A powerful, informative read with lots of historical information.

## World War II Resistance Heroine

Nancy Wake, born in New Zealand, spent most of her impoverished youth in Australia. At 16, she ran away from home and worked as a nurse. After receiving a small inheritance from her aunt, she traveled abroad and eventually got a job as a newspaper reporter in Paris. In 1939 she married Henri Fiocca, a wealthy Frenchman.

After the German invasion of France in May 1940 the pair joined the resistance movement helping thousands of Jews and Allied servicemen make it to safety. Nancy was named White Mouse by the Germans for her ability to escape traps and was a primary Gestapo target, having a 5-million-franc bounty on her head. Her husband was arrested, tortured and executed by the Germans for his part in the resistance and his refusal to inform on his wife. Nancy made it to Spain and then Britain safely, where she

was trained as a spy and guerilla operative. In 1944 after parachuting into France she coordinated attacks on German troops as a part of the D-Day invasion, leading 7,000 resistance fighters. At one point she biked 310 miles in 72 hours thru German territory to deliver radio codes for the Allies. Acting as a spy and saboteur, her bravery and dedication to the resistance made her the most decorated service woman of WWII and earned her the George Medal from Britain; the Medal of Freedom from the U.S.; and the French Legion of Honour, Médaille de Résistance and (3) Croix de Guerre. After the war, she served in the British Foreign Office and as an intelligence officer. She died in 2011 at the age of 98. Her ashes were scattered in Montlucon in France where she had led a raid in 1944 on Gestapo headquarters.

University of Science &  
Arts of Oklahoma  
Multicultural  
Resource Center  
1727 W. Alabama  
Chickasha, OK 73018

[facmatherj@usao.edu](mailto:facmatherj@usao.edu)

Current and archived issues are  
available at our website:  
<http://usao.edu/classroom-spice>

**In This Issue...**

Oklahoma Civil rights Activist; Washington’s Slave; Prof’l Athletes; WWII Heroine; Lit. Connection

**A Hallway  
Education?**

Clara Drisdale was born in Texas in 1885 when segregation was thriving. After graduating as valedictorian from Prairie New Normal & Independent College, a black school, she taught in New Mexico in a segregated school. She loved learning and took graduate courses. But as she was not allowed in most New Mexico State University classrooms she had to *stand* in the hall taking notes. She graduated with a B.A. and MA in English in 1937 at the age of 51. She died at the age 108.

She shared her love of learning with her children and all three graduated with medical degrees.

*(Luper—Cont’d from page 1)*  
waited to be served, knowing they were not going to be welcomed. The protesters had been taught to react nonviolently to violence and taunts. They took books to read and study as they sat silently waiting to be served. They waited hour after hour. They sat quietly as white neighbors, even those they thought were white friends, yelled at them, taunted them, threatened them, and threw food and drinks at them. When the store closed, they left, only to return the next day with more protesters. Even as the police surrounded them, the protesters sat quietly reading and waiting to be served. Two days later Katz desegregated its lunch counters, not just in Oklahoma City, but in 37 other stores as well. All Katz’s stores in Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas, and Iowa were desegregated. This success led Luper and

her Youth Council to go to other restaurants conducting more sit-ins staying for 3-4 days then moving on to another location. Some, but not all, restaurants desegregated after the sit-ins Some called the police in to arrest protesters for trespassing.

Over the next six years Luper was arrested 27 times for her involvement in the civil rights movement. Her actions included sit-ins, protests, marches, and boycotts. She participated in the March on Washington in 1963; the Selma march to Montgomery; the Oklahoma City Public School integration fight; the “Freedom March in Tulsa to desegregate public accommodations, and many more. She led campaigns to combat discrimination in various areas including banking, employment, housing, stores, swimming pools, and voting rights. Her fight for Civil Rights was an integral part of the radio show she hosted from 1960-1980 and

was chronicled in her acclaimed autobiography, *Behold the Walls*.

She was awarded over 150 honors over the years including induction into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame, the National Voter Registration Award, National Education Association’s Rosa Parks Memorial Award and even a street named after her, the Clara Luper Corridor in Oklahoma City.

Clara Luper died on June 8, 2011 after a life of service in the cause of equality. She was an author, activist, magazine publisher, radio host, and teacher in Oklahoma City schools for over 40 years. She lived her life according to her tenets: “Anything you can dream, you can achieve,” and “You make your changes in this world.” She shared her philosophy with many students and colleagues, who carry on her work and their dreams of a world of peace and equality.