

His Life Journey

“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”

Leo S. Taylor was born in Houston, Texas on February 5, 1932, to the late Johnnie Mae Punch. He graduated from Phyllis Wheatley High School and also received an Associates degree from the Houston Community College (HCC).

He enlisted into the United States Marine Corps, on January 20, 1950 and received basic training at Camp Del Mar, located in the state of California. His first duty station was to Inchon, Korea, to serve during the Korean War. He was attached to a Motor Transportation unit where he performed the tasks of an Amphibious Asset Operator. Returning stateside in 1954, he found himself stationed at Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, once again in California. After serving there for approximately 6 years, Leo received orders to report to Okinawa, Japan for his next tour of duty. During his 20 year career as a Marine. Leo was stationed in Okinawa-5 times, serving one year on the Naval Air Station, which was located in Okinawa, as well. He also, spent time in Taiwan, China, the Philippines and Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. After his last tour of duty in Japan, in 1965, Leo returned stateside once again, to serve at the Naval Air Station, in Corpus Christi, Texas. In 1968, Leo began the process of retiring from the United States Marine Corps. He was honorably discharged in 1970 after serving twenty (20) years, with the rank of Staff Sergeant.

Personal awards that he earned/received as a Marine, are as follows: the Purple Heart for being wounded in combat, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the United Nations Medal, the Viet Nam Service Medal, the Viet Nam Campaign Medal, the Good Conduct Medal w/5 stars and the National Defense Medal. In 2009, Leo received the National Congressional Medal of Honor and was inducted into the Hall of Fame. He also qualified as a Rifle Expert and Pistol Sharpshooter.

He was a member of the National Montford Point Marines Association, Inc., since 1980 and served as the National Veteran's Affairs Officer for approximately twenty (20) years. From 1970 to 1985, he was employed at the Johnson Space Center, working within the GSA transportation department. He worked an additional eighteen months with the GSA Federal Supply section and was later employed by the Veteran's Administration Hospital (VA), until 1993.

Leo and Lou V. Lockett were united in Holy matrimony in November, 1965. Two children were born to this union, Kimberly Taylor-Harbin (Cornelius), and Leonard D. Taylor. Two additional children were also born to a previous marriage. They are Diane Taylor/Presley from Humble, Texas and Le'Roy Darnell Taylor from Barstow, California. Five grandchildren are left to mourn his passing. They are Brittani Lane, Kayla Harbin, Leonard Taylor Jr., Malik Taylor and Taijane Taylor.

Leo is united with the Zion Hill Missionary Baptist Church, located at 4120 Crane Street, in Houston, Texas. He has served as a Trustee and currently serves as a member on the Board of Deacons and works as an Usher, providing guidance and leadership to the church staff and congregation.