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Humanitarian Award
presented to
FITZGERALD "FRITZ" DEVONISH

[[image - Fitzgerald Devonish]]

Fitzgerald Devonish, affectionately known as "Fritz", though not born in New York, considers himself a product of the Harlem Community. He became a Harlem resident at a very early age and attended the New York City public schools. As a matter of fact, Fritz was athletically inclined and was a track star when he was a student at P.S. 139.

"Fritz" Devonish was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1942, served honorably and was discharged in 1945. He has been an unsung humanitarian for many, many years. Always interested in helping children, "Fritz" has quietly provided momentary assistance to many organizations for the benefit of the younger members of the human family.

One summer many youths were hired to clean the playground on Lenox Avenue between 139th and 140th Streets. Because of reduction in finances, these youths became unemployed almost as soon as they were employed. Fritz, learning about this, personally kept every youngster on payroll and hired someone to supervise them. A two-fold result developed - the youths were employed for the summer and the playground was cleaned and kept clean.

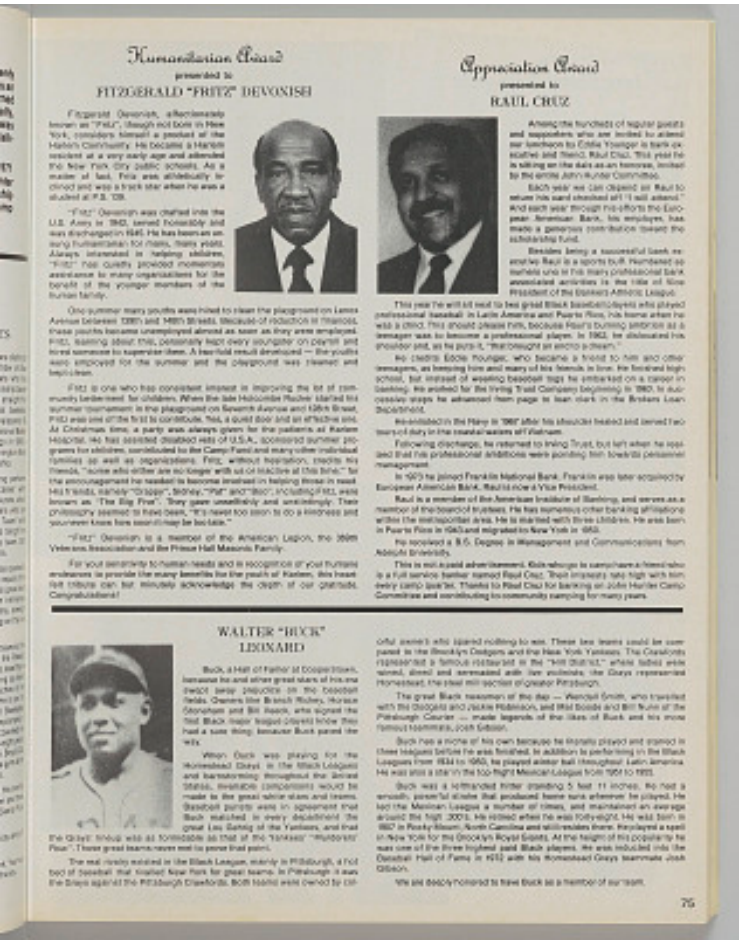
Fritz is one who has consistent interest in improving the lot of community betterment for children. When the late Holcombe Rucker started his summer tournament in the playground on Seventh Avenue and 128th Street, Fritz was one of the first to contribute. Yes, a quiet doer and an effective one. At Christmas time, a party was always given for the patients at Harlem Hospital. He has assisted disabled vets of U.S.A., sponsored summer programs for children, contributed to the Camp Fund and many other individual families as well as organizations. Fritz, without hesitation, credits his friends, "some who are no longer with us or inactive at this time," for the encouragement he needed to become involved in helping those in need. His friends, namely "Crappy", Sidney, "Pat", and "Boo", including Fritz, were known as "The Big Five". They gave unselfishly and unstintingly. Their philosophy seemed to have been, "It's never too soon to do a kindness and you never know how soon it may be too late."

"Fritz" Devonish is a member of the American Legion, the 369th Veteran's Association and the Prince Hall Masonic Family.

For your sensitivity to human needs and in recognition of your humane endeavors to provide the many benefits for the youth of Harlem, this heart-felt tribute can but minutely acknowledge the depth of our gratitude. Congratulations!

Appreciation Award
presented to
RAUL CRUZ

[[image - Raul Cruz]]



Among the hundreds of regular guests and supporters who are invited to attend our luncheon by Eddie Younger is bank executive and friend, Raul Cruz. This year he is sitting on the dais as an honoree, invited by the entire John Hunter Committee.

Each year we can depend on Raul to return his card checked off "I will attend." And each year through his efforts the European American Bank, his employer, has made a generous contribution toward the scholarship fund.

Besides being a successful bank executive Raul is a sports buff. Numbered as numero uno in his many professional bank associated activities is the title of Vice President of the Bankers Athletic League.

This year he will sit next to two great Black baseball players who played professional baseball in Latin America and Puerto Rico, his home when he was a child. This should please him, because Raul's burning ambition as a teenager was to become a professional player. In 1962, he dislocated his shoulder and, as he puts it, "that brought an end to a dream."

He credits Eddie Younger, who became a friend to him and other teenagers, as keeping him and many of his friends in line. He finished high school, but instead of wearing baseball togs he embarked on a career in banking. He worked for the Irving Trust Company beginning in 1963. In successive steps he advanced from page to loan clerk in the Brokers Loan Department.

He enlisted in the Navy in 1967 after his shoulder healed and served two tours of duty in the coastal waters off Vietnam.

Following discharge, he returned to Irving Trust, but left when he realized that his professional ambitions were pointing him towards personnel management.

In 1973 he joined Franklin National Bank. Franklin was later acquired by European American Bank. Raul is now a Vice President.

Raul is a member of the American Institute of Banking, and serves as a member of the board of trustees. He has numerous other banking affiliations within the metropolitan area. He is married with three children. He was born in Puerto Rico in 1943 and migrated to New York in 1950.

He received a B.S. Degree in Management and Communications from Adelphi University.

This is not a paid advertisement. Kids who go to camp have a friend who is a full service banker named Raul Cruz. Their interests rate high with him every camp quarter. Thanks to Raul Cruz for banking on John Hunter Camp Committee and contributing to community camping for many years.

WALTER "BUCK" LEONARD

[[image - Walter Leonard]]

Buck, a Hall of Famer at Cooperstown, because he and other great stars of his era swept away prejudice on the baseball fields. Owners like Branch Rickey, Horace Stoneham and Bill Veeck, who signed the first Black major league players knew they had a sure thing, because Buck paved the way.

When Buck was playing for the Homestead Grays in the Black Leagues and barnstorming throughout the United States, invariable comparisons would be made to the great white stars and teams. Baseball purists were in agreement that Buck matched in every department the great Lou Gehrig of the Yankees, and that the Grays' lineup was formidable as that of the Yankees' "Murderers' Row". Those great teams never met to prove that point.

The real rivalry existed in the Black League, mainly in Pittsburgh, a hot bed of baseball that rivalled New York for great teams. In Pittsburgh it was the Grays against the Pittsburgh Crawfords. Both teams were owned by colorful owners who spared nothing to win. These two teams could be compared to the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Yankees. The Crawfords represented a famous restaurant in the "Hill District," where ladies were wined, dined and serenaded with live violinists; the Grays represented Homestead, the steel mill section of greater Pittsburgh.

The great Black newsmen of the day - Wendall Smith, who travelled with the Dodgers and Jackie Robinson, and Mal Goode and Bill Nunn of the Pittsburgh Courier - made legends of the likes of Buck and his more famous teammate, Josh Gibson.

Buck has a niche of his own because he literally played and starred in three leagues before he was finished. In addition to performing in the Black Leagues from 1934 to 1950, he played winter ball throughout Latin America. He was also a star in the top-flight Mexican League from 1951 to 1955.

Buck was a lefthanded hitter standing 5 feet 11 inches. He had a smooth, powerful stroke that produced home runs wherever he played. He led the Mexican League a number of times, and maintained an average around the high .300's. He retired when he was forty-eight. He was born in 1907 in Rocky Mount, North Carolina and still resides there. He played a spell in New York for the Brooklyn Royal Giants. At the height of his popularity he was one of the three highest paid Black players. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1972 with his Homestead Grays teammate Josh Gibson.

We are deeply honored to have Buck as a member of our team.



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