

Hon. Rufus A. Lewis Celebrates 92nd Birthday

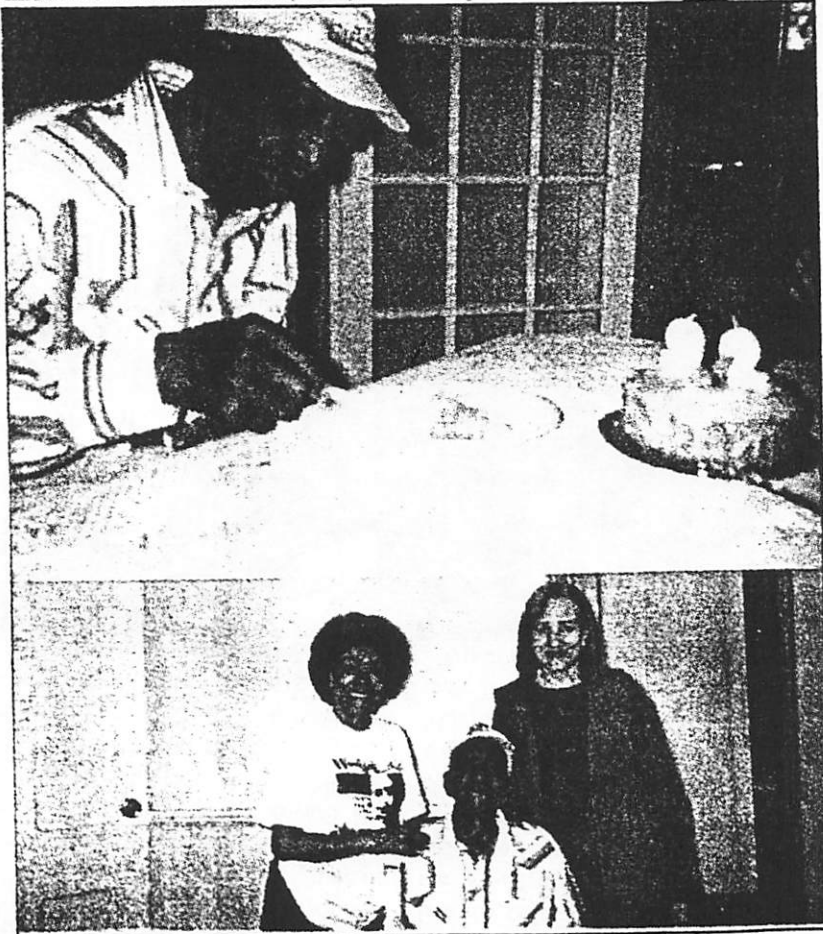
Affectionately called Coach Lewis (b. 11/30/1906), a Montgomery native, is known as the "Father of Montgomery's Voting Rights Movement." He was owner of the Citizens' Club (1952) and Chair of the Citizens' Steering Committee during the late 1940s and onward. He, along with the late Dr. E.D. Nixon, was instrumental in selecting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to serve as Chair of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA).

MIA was the organizing vehicle for the 1955 Bus Boycott. Coach Lewis served as Chair of the crucial Transportation Committee during the Bus Boycott. Coach Lewis was one of the two African-Americans, the other is James Hall, to serve on the Parks and Recreation Board (1971). In 1976, U.S. President Jimmy Carter appointed Mr. Lewis to serve as a U.S. Marshal, the first Black marshal ever in Alabama.

Upon celebrating his 92 birthday,

Coach Lewis said, "I have at least 8 more years to go before I retire."

On hand to celebrate his birthday were his daughter, Mrs. Eleanor L. Dawkins, Trenholm State Technical College (TSTC) Library Director, Mrs. Zenobia Blackmon and Archivist, Dr. Gwen Patton. TSTC is the repository for the Lewis' papers and small artifacts.



Coach Lewis celebrates 92nd birthday in his home on 11/30/98.
Left to right; Dr. Gwen Patton, Coach Lewis, Mrs. Zenobia Blackmon

Hon. Rufus A. Lewis Celebrates 92nd Birthday

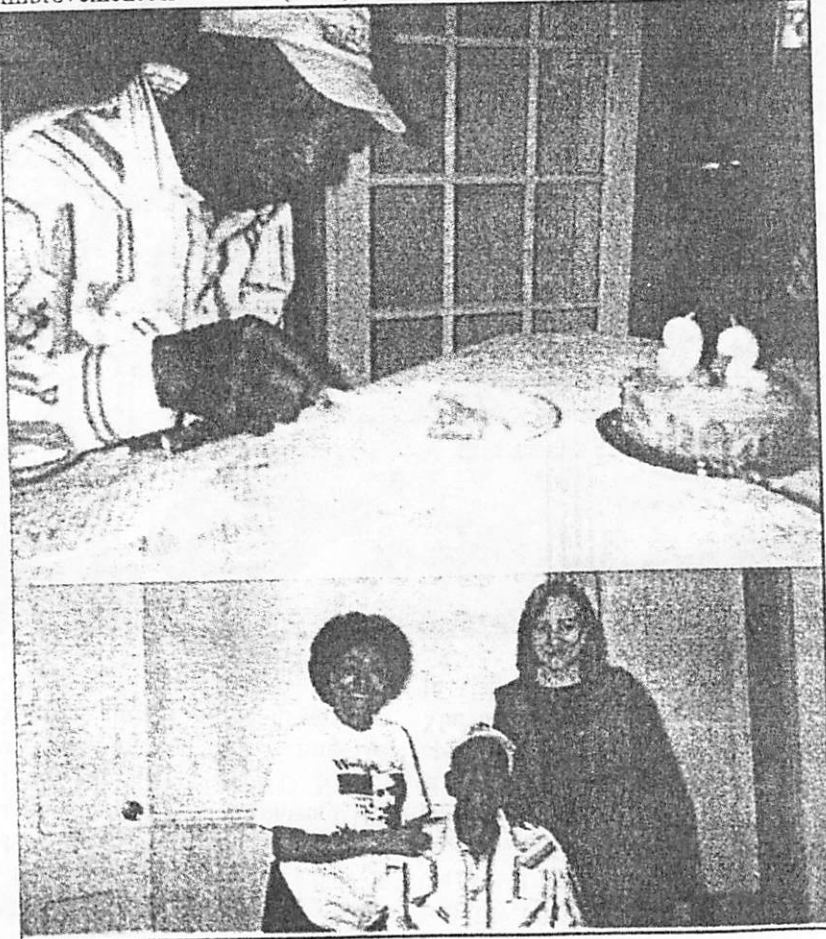
Affectionately called Coach Lewis (b. 11/30/1906), a Montgomery native, is known as the "Father of Montgomery's Voting Rights Movement." He was owner of the Citizens' Club (1952) and Chair of the Citizens' Steering Committee during the late 1940s and onward. He, along with the late Dr. E.D. Nixon, was instrumental in selecting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to serve as Chair of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA).

MIA was the organizing vehicle for the 1955 Bus Boycott. Coach Lewis served as Chair of the crucial Transportation Committee during the Bus Boycott. Coach Lewis was one of the two African-Americans, the other is James Hall, to serve on the Parks and Recreation Board (1971). In 1976, U.S. President Jimmy Carter appointed Mr. Lewis to serve as a U.S. Marshal, the first Black marshal ever in Alabama.

Upon celebrating his 92 birthday,

Coach Lewis said, "I have at least 8 more years to go before I retire."

On hand to celebrate his birthday were his daughter, Mrs. Eleanor L. Dawkins, Trenholm State Technical College (TSTC) Library Director, Mrs. Zenobia Blackmon and Archivist, Dr. Gwen Patton. TSTC is the repository for the Lewis' papers and small artifacts.



Coach Lewis celebrates 92nd birthday in his home on 11/30/98.
Left to right; Dr. Gwen Patton, Coach Lewis, Mrs. Zenobia Blackmon



Elizabeth Via Brown

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

Voting rights pioneer honored

Rufus A. Lewis is 92 years old and still active. A native of Montgomery, he often has been called the father of the local voting rights movement because he and the late E.D. Nixon were instrumental in selecting the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to serve as chairman of the Montgomery Improvement Association, which was the organizing vehicle for the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955.

Called "Coach" Lewis by his many friends, he served as the chairman of the transportation committee during the boycott, and in 1976 he was appointed by President Jimmy Carter as the state's first black U.S. marshal.

Beginning in the late 1940s, he was chairman of the Citizen's Steering Committee, and in 1952 he owned the Citizens' Club.

Helping Coach celebrate his birthday recently were his daughter, **Eleanor L. Dawkins**, and **Zenobia Blackmon**, director of the library at Trenholm State Technical College, which is the repository for his papers and artifacts. **Gwen Patton**, library archivist, also was among the well-wishers stopping by.



Special to the Advertiser

Rufus A. Lewis, often called the father of the local voting rights movement, recently celebrated his 92nd birthday.