

GARBO History

Presented by: Donny Ambush and Larry Plummer

Garbo was founded in December 1979 by a group of baseball players from the Germantown Giants and softball players from Montgomery County who played in the Gaithersburg City league. Since 1979 was the last year that the Germantown Giants played baseball in the Maryland State League, the team felt a pressing need to continue the camaraderie they shared for over 20 years playing baseball. These men decided to organize a softball team and play in the City of Rockville League. In the early 1980's, The softball team decided to become an organized Social club and elected its first Officers and developed a verbal outline on how the organization would be structured. The rules were clear; the social club and ball team would be self-supportive while each member was to be a respectable person on and off the ball field.

At the first official membership meeting, the members decided that the club needed a name. They agreed on the name of "Garbo" which stands for garbage or old funky baseball players (hence the trash can logo). The members later decided that the name Garbo would serve as an acronym for "Great and Respectable Black Organization".

By 1980, many of the Black entertainment establishments had closed in Montgomery County, Md. Meeting people and having a good time socially became increasingly difficult for Black people residing in the county. Garbo quickly recognized the need to sponsor quality social events through its own need to raise money and to bring the Black community together to have fun. They began to sponsor picnics, ballgames, dances, and cruises. All of these social events were very successful so the membership decided to give back to the community that was so supportive to them.

Garbo played softball in the City of Rockville League for 16 years playing against other black teams such as Skill Hill, Snowdens, and A.J. Trucking while winning several division titles and one City championship. They also sponsored many successful dances at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds, which now has been replaced by the classic Anniversary Dance held each spring since 1990. The Anniversary dance is now recognized as the premier social event for Black people in this region.

A major highlight for the organization was the sponsoring of three cruises, the first in 1987 and two in the early 1990's. All the family and friends of Garbo who went on these cruises said they had the best time of their lives.

Garbo is most proud of the Gospel Singers, which has been singing since 1990. Members of the Gospel Singers are comprised of Garbo Social members, their families and close friends. The choir is interdenominational with member of the Catholics, Methodist and Baptist faith. The Choir performs in many of the local church sponsored events in the region to help raise needed funds. The Garbo Singers also enjoy performing at their friends' parties singing oldies but goodies.

Our members are equally proud of our scholarship program that has been in existence since 1981. Thousands of dollars have been donated to deserving students in Montgomery and Frederick Counties. The Scholarship Fund has been renamed in honor of three of our most dedicated members who have passed on, Craig Hackey, Wellington Page and Eugene Plummer. Garbo family recently lost family member; Linda Thomas, and now followed in eternal rest by member Chester Selby. Their Spirits will live in our hearts always.

Garbo also supports youth groups, churches and families in need. It has been a long-standing tradition of the organization to give Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets to needy families each year.

Only three Charter Members of Garbo still remain active in this great organization and have made significant contributions to its success over the past 35 years. They are Francis Beckwith, Angelo Perkins and Larry Plummer. Their enthusiasm toward the mission of Garbo has lead to an outstanding current membership of Brotherhood. The current 19 members and four honorary members stand ready to keep the Garbo tradition alive for many years to come.

Garbo's 35 years of success is attributed to its motto of "God first, the family second, then the community". For God, our families and the community have been most supportive.