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- Born August 9, 1940 in Dinwiddie County.
- Graduated from Southside High School in 1959
- Farmed until 1962 when he was drafted into the Army
- Served two years as part of the 25th Infantry Division – The Wolfhounds
- Began working for the Dinwiddie County Sheriff's Office in 1964 as a jailor/dispatcher.
- He received training as a jailor at the Richmond City Jail and as a road deputy at John Tyler Community College (this was before the days of the Crater Criminal Justice Academy).
- Married his lovely wife, Carolyn, in 1969.
- In 1995, while still working for the Sheriff's Office, Sam Shands ran and was elected Sheriff of Dinwiddie County.
- He was the first African American Sheriff in Dinwiddie.
- Sheriff Shands served as Sheriff of Dinwiddie County for 12 years and retired in 2007.
- Retirement has not exactly been a time of rest...
- Sheriff Shands continues to farm and currently has over 100 heads of beef cattle.
- He is a member of St. John's Baptist Church in Stony Creek, VA where he sings in the senior choir and is a church Trustee.
- Sheriff and Mrs. Shands have one daughter, Samantha, who lives in Columbia, Maryland with her husband and two year old twins (boy/girl).