

St. Louis County Library **News Release: January 23, 2007**
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Author Writes About African American Soldiers of World War II

St. Louis County Library Foundation will host an evening with author Jeffrey Copeland, who will discuss his book, "Inman's War: A Soldier's Story of Life in a Colored Battalion in WWI," on Monday, Feb. 5, at 7 p.m. at Library Headquarters, 1640 S. Lindbergh Blvd. The program is free and open to the public. Left Bank Books will sell copies of the book at the event. The author will be available to answer questions and sign books following his presentation.

Copeland's book provides important insights into a previously untold story of World War II. There are existing accounts of the contributions of African Americans during the great conflict of WWII. However, most of these are group histories related to units such as the Red Ball Express, Tuskegee Airmen, and the Buffalo Soldiers. Individual accounts of life and service in what were called the "colored battalions" are almost non-existent.

This story is based in part upon the nearly 150 letters written by Sergeant Inman Perkins that details his day-to-day life and his marriage while on leave to a St. Louis school teacher named Olivia. This book presents a look into an important war and a past that many thought locked away and forgotten forever. The book presents the story of an individual, Perkins, and also the story of the other Africa American heroes of this era.

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Copeland is the head of the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Northern Iowa, located in Cedar Falls, Ia. Copeland received his doctorate degree and bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Program sites are accessible. Upon two weeks notice, accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities. Contact St. Louis County Library by phone 314-994-3300, (TDD/TTY) 314-994-9255 or e-mail www.slcl.org.

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