

ARTS & LIFESTYLE

Of Interest ...

Ken Rhodes Trio will perform at Reynolda House

The Ken Rhodes Trio will perform its special blend of jazz standards and original compositions at Reynolda House Museum of American Art on Friday, May 23 at 8 p.m. Pianist Ken Rhodes will be joined by bassist Matt Kendrick and percussionist John Wilson in concert in the auditorium of the Mary and Charlie Babcock Wing.

Rhodes is a classically trained pianist who has performed both classical music and jazz during his career in the United States and in Europe. Also a teacher and a composer of two successful cabaret musicals, Rhodes has performed with orchestras such as the Bavarian Radio Big Band and the Al Porcino Big Band. He is the staff pianist-composer for the Drama and Dance Schools of the North Carolina School of the Arts.

Composer and double bassist Kendrick is a North Carolina native who studied at the North Carolina School of the Arts and spent many years performing in New York City. Following studies in jazz education at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, he returned to North Carolina and a career in performance, composition, and as an instructor of jazz improvisation and electric bass at Wake Forest University.

Wilson is a graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts who continued his graduate studies at the Manhattan School of Music. While in New York he played percussion with major orchestras, including the Glen Miller Orchestra. Now in Winston-Salem, he accompanies dance at NCSA and is in demand with jazz ensembles.

The Ken Rhodes Trio recorded "Live at Reynolda House" in 2000, and Wilson and Kendrick have taught a series of jazz improvisation courses at the museum in the Portals of Discovery continuing education program.

Admission to the concert is \$12, \$8 for museum members and students. Tickets will be available at the door, or in advance by calling 336-758-5150.

Greensboro country singer is promoting adoption

Lisa Dames, a country music singer and Greensboro resident, has partnered with Children's Home Society of NC (CHS) to support children awaiting adoption.

Through this partnership, the organization will launch a series of concerts at MUSE Restaurant, located in Greensboro's Friendly Shopping Center, through the summer and fall months.

The first concert will be sponsored by Wachovia. Dames will serve as the emcee for the events along with guitarist Sam Frazier. They will also headline the first scheduled concert on June 5 with their band The Hall Monitors.

This partnership will support CHS's mission of promoting the right of every child to a permanent, safe, and loving home. The concert series will feature some of the best and brightest musical acts in Greensboro. The concerts are scheduled to occur the first Thursday of each month outside at MUSE Restaurant.

Dames has a long history of supporting causes in her community. She has proven to be a tenacious performer who touches the hearts of thousands through her music.

"I'm so pleased to be able to help CHS with this project," she said. "As a mom, I know how critical it is for children to have a strong family to rely on and I want to do everything I can to help children awaiting adoption find forever families of their own."

The partnership kicks off Thursday, June 5 at 5:30 p.m. Each month, live, local, and original music will be performed from a wide variety of performers. Tickets are just \$5 per person, kids 12 and under are free.

For more information, visit www.chsnc.org.

Vanessa Williams receives her degree from Syracuse

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP) — Vanessa Williams has received her bachelor of fine arts degree from Syracuse University, nearly 25 years after she dropped out to become the first black Miss America.

The 45-year-old actress-singer, who stars in ABC's "Ugly Betty," also delivered the convocation address Saturday to graduates of Syracuse's College of Visual and Performing Arts.

She encouraged her fellow graduates to "treasure this moment." "These days are irreplaceable and are the beginning of the rest of your life," she said, according to the Web Site of The Syracuse Post-Standard.

When she accepted her diploma, Williams raised it to show her mother and children.

Williams attended Syracuse's drama department as a musical theater major from 1981-1983. She earned the remaining credits for her degree through industry experience and performances on stage and screen.

She became the first black Miss America in 1983. Over her career, Williams has sold more than four million albums, won critical praise for her performances on Broadway, made dozens of TV appearances and starred in several movies.

She has won a Tony, received two NAACP Image Awards and nine Grammy nominations.

In 1996, Williams received the George Arents Pioneer Medal, the university's most prestigious alumni award.

Educator honored with N.C. Symphony award

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Greensboro resident Jesse L. Suggs Jr., has won the North Carolina Symphony's 2007-08 Maxine Swalin Award for the most Outstanding Music Educator in North Carolina.

Annually, the award is presented to a North Carolina music teacher who makes a lasting difference in the lives of students of all abilities and backgrounds; serves the community in an exemplary manner as a role model in music education; instills a love for music in children; and inspires students to reach high musical standards.

Teachers are nominated through letters of recommendation by former students, parents, colleagues and principals. The committee selected Suggs, a graduate of North Carolina Central University with 39 years of teaching experience. He retired in June 2000 and taught part-time in Guilford County until the fall of 2003 when he returned to teaching orchestra full-time until 2005. Currently, he gives private



Jesse L. Suggs Jr., with Maxine Swalin.

lessons.

As the former director of Ben L. Smith High School Orchestra, founder of the Jamestown Middle School Orchestra and the Northwest Middle School Orchestras, Suggs extended the organizations' musical ambassadorship over 63,258 miles

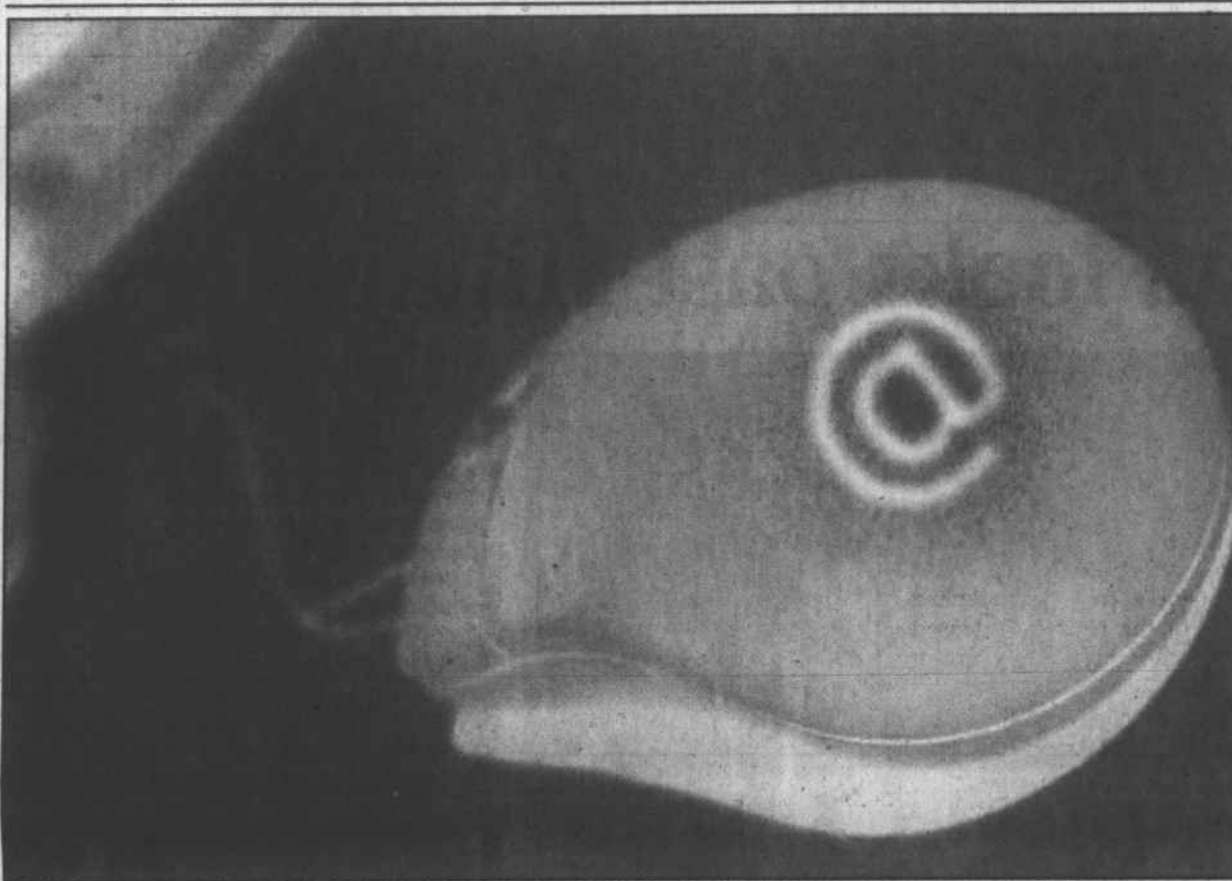
including the Bahamas, Jamaica, Hawaii, Australia and Singapore.

He also was founder and past Music Director of the Jamestown Civic Orchestra. Suggs has served as Assistant Conductor for the Greensboro Symphony Youth Orchestra and was co-founder of

North Carolina's first Western Region Junior All-State Orchestra in 1992. He has served as Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer of the Orchestra Section and Member-at-Large of the North Carolina Music Educators Association.

In selecting Suggs, the committee was particularly impressed by the large number of letters from former students who have very successful careers in music performance and music education, creating a legacy of music through his work. Suggs and his fellow nominees were honored and recognized at a May 24 Spring Teacher Workshop. They will also be feted at the June 14 "Classical Storytellers" Summerfest performance.

The award honors the contributions of Maxine Swalin to the North Carolina Symphony. She and her husband, Dr. Benjamin Swalin, led the North Carolina Symphony from 1939 until 1972, transforming a struggling orchestra into one fully committed to statewide service and music education.



MyCityofWS has more than 3,000 users currently.

City Web site feature recognized

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Public Technology Institute has honored the MyCityofWS feature of the city's Web site with a Special Achievement award in its 2007-2008 Solutions Awards. The annual competition honors local governments that apply technology to improve service delivery, reduce operating costs and create new revenue opportunities.

The Public Technology Institute is a national, non-profit, member-supported organization that works with local government officials to identify opportunities for technology research, share best practices, offer consultancies and pilot demonstrations, promote technology development initiatives and develop educational programming.

MyCityofWS gives citizens a source of information customized to their interests and delivers that information to them by e-mail. For example, local

businesses can be notified when the Bids page is updated. Citizens can be notified when minutes for City Council meetings are posted. Members of Recreation Department athletic leagues can be notified when the latest league standings are posted.

Citizens can also use MyCityofWS to sign up to receive electronic newsletters from various departments and can be sent reminders in advance of calendar events that interest them.

Currently there are almost 3,200 registered users for MyCityofWS. On an average day, the system sends out more than 230 e-mails to registered users.

To become a MyCityofWS member, user should click on the "Sign In" link under MyCityofWS (at left). Then click on the register link and fill out the form. After registering, new members are sent an e-mail with a link to confirm their registration. The process keeps pranksters from signing up people without their permission.

Easley makes Franklin a trustee at NCSA

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Governor Mike Easley has appointed Denise Franklin of Winston-Salem to the North Carolina School of the Arts (NCSA) Board of Trustees.

Franklin has spent more than 25 years in the field of communications with an emphasis on broadcast journalism. Currently, she is the General Manager of 88.5 WFDD, the National Public Radio affiliate that serves 32 counties in the Piedmont Triad area of North Carolina.

She joined 88.5 WFDD in 2001 as Senior News Host and shortly thereafter became News Director. In 2004, she was promoted to Associate General Manager. She also hosts "Voices and Viewpoints," an interview program highlighting individuals living in the Triad who are achieving national and international recognition.

Prior to joining WFDD, Franklin was a news anchor and investigative reporter at WXII, the local NBC affiliate. She also worked in television news in Kansas City and Wichita, Kansas. Franklin graduated from the Babcock Graduate School of Management in 2006.

In addition, Franklin developed and coordinated a journalism ethics conference, Ethics and Leadership in the Media, which was held at Wake Forest University and attracted students from several area universities. She has been an adjunct college instructor at Wake Forest University and Winston-Salem State University. Franklin also is an active community volunteer. She currently serves on the board of the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce and the New Winston Museum.

The NCSA Board of Trustees is composed of 19 citizens with eight members elected by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors and four appointed by the governor of North Carolina. The membership also includes a representative of the North Carolina Symphony, the secretary of the Department of Cultural Resources, the president of the NCSA Student Government Association, and liaisons from the NCSA Foundation and Board of Visitors.



Franklin



Dames

Miss UNCF accepts her crown

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

UNCF — the United Negro College Fund — recently announced the winner of its 50th Annual Miss National UNCF competition.

Natasha Sherrill Lawton, a sophomore majoring in Business Administration at Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, one of UNCF's 39 member institutions, has claimed the title.

A native of Dallas, Texas, Lawton will receive a \$3,000 scholarship. An active member of the Wiley College student body, her affiliations include the Student Union Advisory Board, United Methodist Women, president of the Pre-Alumni Council and residence assistant for Johnson-Moon Hall.

"UNCF means possibilities: for young people: education, career opportunities, accomplishment and service," said Lawton. "I am honored to represent this organization that is committed to helping young scholars get their degrees and achieve their dreams," she continued. Lawton participated in her first event as the reigning Miss National UNCF on March 7 at UNCF's 64th Anniversary Dinner in New York where Denzel and Pauletta



Natasha Sherrill Lawton with Pauletta Washington.

See UNCF on A11