

# Greensboro mayor will talk about careers

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Honorable Yvonne J. Johnson, the mayor of Greensboro, will be the keynote speaker at N.C. A&T State University's Office of Career Services 34th Annual Career Awareness Banquet on Tuesday, Sept. 9 at 6:45 p.m. at the Sheraton Four Seasons. Under this year's theme, "Creating Tomorrow's Success Today," Johnson will address an anticipated crowd of more than 500 company representatives, students, faculty, staff and alumni. Johnson, a Greensboro native and Aggie alumna, began her political career as a city council member in 1993. She served in that office



**Mayor Johnson**  
until 1999, when she was re-elected and rose to the ranks

of mayor pro tempore (1999-2005). She was elected as mayor in 2007, making her the first African-American to serve at the city's top helm. Johnson earned her undergraduate degree in psychology from Bennett College and a master's degree in guidance and counseling from North Carolina A&T State University. She is married to Walter T. Johnson Jr. They have two sons, two daughters and six grandchildren. This banquet is by invitation only, but the school's annual career awareness fair is open to the public. It is on Sept. 10 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. in Corbett Sports Center on the school's campus.

## CD

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first of three that will be made to benefit the Negro League's Baseball Museum, each of them in the urban music genre.

Stadium Entertainment, the company releasing the CDs, was formed two years ago with the idea of producing music and giving a portion of the proceeds to charitable causes.

Camille Barbone, a founding member of Stadium Entertainment, said the company's first project not only will provide a big monetary boost for the museum, but also will give the artists on the CD a chance to "give something back."

"It's important in that the individuals we're asking to work on the projects, they need to see that there's a reason for it that goes beyond ego, goes beyond making money, goes beyond spending for marketing. Everything needs to be multifaceted now," Barbone said.

Along with helping pay operating costs at the museum, much of the money from the CD will go toward the \$15 million Buck O'Neil Education Center, Kendrick said.

Until his death in 2006, O'Neil was the museum's chief fundraiser and most popular voice. The former Negro League player was the first black coach in the major leagues and had a knack for charming audiences while remaining an authoritative voice for the museum.

"Buck was a renaissance man," Kendrick said. "When you started talking about Buck O'Neil, here was a man who knew Charlie Parker and LL Cool J. He was excited about this project. For a man well into his 90s, he never lost touch. He was comfortable in any environment and had an appreciation for all art forms. Hip-hop, rock and roll ... in his estimation it was all jazz. All jazz."

"True to the Game" is heavily geared toward young people who might not realize the significant role Negro Leagues baseball had on changing a segregated society and, ultimately, their lives, Barbone said.

"The struggle for rap and urban music to be accepted in the music industry was similar to black players being acknowledged as players and not black people," she said. "There's a big gap between young people today understanding this and understanding how their struggles paralleled."

As for the artists, the CD is an opportunity for them to be recognized for doing something to help others, not the negative things people often hear about the industry, Barbone said.

"We want them to make news based upon good things as opposed to a shootout at a club," she said. "These people are doing good things."

And she notes that there are no explicit lyrics on "True to the Game."

"It's 100 percent bona fide G-rated," Barbone said.

Kendrick said the artists - some of them relatively unknown but working with big-name musicians on the CD - will have their own place in the museum because of their participation.

"One of the things we talked about was approaching young people about the project," Kendrick said. "How many times in your life do you truly have a chance to make history?"

Neither Kendrick nor Barbone would estimate how much money the museum would receive through the CDs, saying that depends on how many copies are sold.

Musicians on the CD include T-Pain, Rick Ross and Tay Dizm; GLC featuring Kanye West; Chingy featuring Ziggy Nina; Raiyn featuring Talib Kweli; Young Cash featuring Akon; Sam Christ featuring Big Boi of Outkast; Tone BlacQ, featuring Snoop Dog; and Yung Joc.

## Bookmarks

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Arts Movement of the 1960s, won an American Book Award for "Homegirls and Handgrenades."

Charlotte resident Tyree is the author of bestselling novels like "Flyy Girl," "A Do Right Man" and his latest, "The Last Street Novel." Tyree has attended a past Bookmarks Festival.

"They appreciate the fact that we're celebrating the written word," Harlee said of the authors' willingness to participate. "They appreciate the fact that we take good care of them and treat them well."

Some of the other well known authors slated to attend include Marisa de los Santos, whose "Love Walks In" will soon be a Paramount Pictures film; and "Golden Girls" actress Rue McClanahan, who will tout her autobiography, "My First Five Husbands."

D.G. Martin, host of UNC-TV's "North Carolina Bookwatch," is the event's honorary chair. In that role, he will introduce authors, talk with attendees, and provide insight on author invitations.

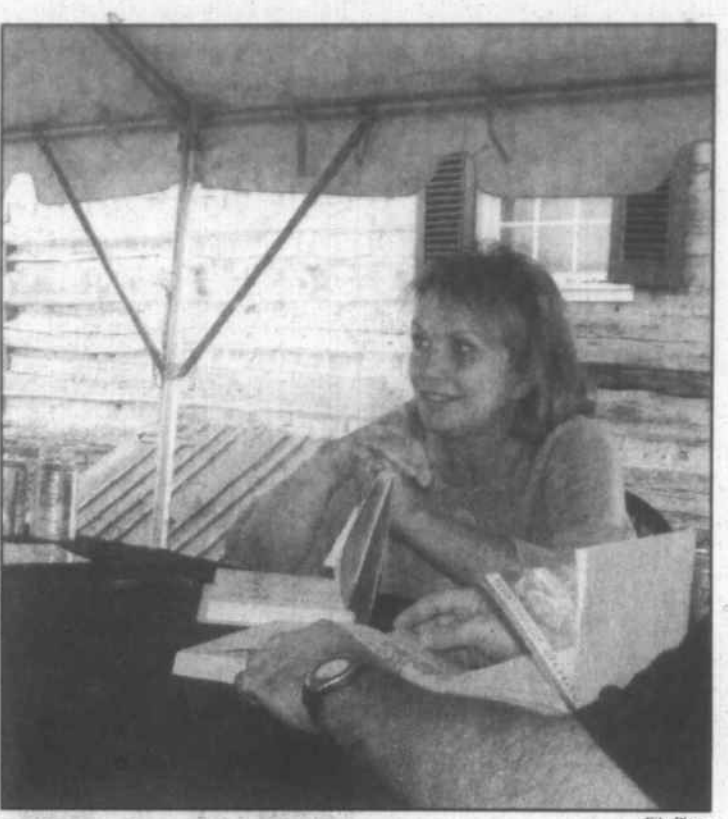
Bookmarks began in 2004, as part of the Junior League's "Read to Me" program and became an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 2006. The festival has gained momentum in recent years, drawing more than 7,500 people to the Twin City for the 2007 event.

"It's been humbling to see this happen," remarked Harlee, who conceptualized the festival more than seven years ago. "It's been very rewarding to me to see that this idea actually worked."

The festival has earned the respect of many in the literary community as well, Harlee says.

"Our reputation, our presence is getting more and more ingrained with the publishing companies and they're contacting us about sending authors," she revealed.

As is the Bookmarks tradi-



Elizabeth Edwards chats with a fan during last year's festival.

tion, the Forsyth County Public Library will launch its On the Same Page community read at the festival, which this year focuses on Ray Bradbury's "Fahrenheit 451."

Several chefs will also be on hand, demonstrating recipes from their cookbooks for festival goers to sample. The cooking tent is always a crowd pleaser, Harlee says.

The free workshops, which were extended from their traditional time of 45 minutes to a full hour and a half this year, are also a favorite among attendees, she added.

"We're making them longer and more in depth because we've found that they were so popular," she explained.

Caron Armstrong is coordinating the Young Readers Corral, which includes the young adults "All That and Then Some" tent, for the second year in a row. A former educator, Armstrong says the genre has always been near and dear to her.

"Young adult literature has always appealed to me because it brings out big topics for little people," she said.

Armstrong enlists the help

of her three children to make the young adult and children's sections relevant and enjoyable to youth.

"They really get excited about it," she reported. "They ask their friends about (which authors) they want to see at the festival."

An author hailing from a new genre is slated to appear at the Children's Corral this year. Novelist Ben Towle, a Greensboro resident whose book "Midnight Sun" features graphics, will be among the young adult authors on hand for the event.

The 2008 Bookmarks promises to be a memorable experience for those who attend, Harlee says.

"Until you've been, you can't really understand how engrossing it is when you get here and how much you can immerse yourself," she commented. "I think if people come and sample it, they'll just be hooked."

To learn more about the festival and for a listing of all authors who will attend, go to [www.bookmarksbookfestival.org](http://www.bookmarksbookfestival.org).

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