

ARTS & LIFESTYLE

Of Interest ...

Lathan to judge film festival

Tony Award-nominated actress Sanaa Lathan has been named president of the 2009 American Black Film Festival's (ABFF) Grand Jury.

Founded in 1997, the ABFF was born out of the need to generate distribution opportunities for independent black films. This year's festival will take place in Miami from June 24-27. Home Box Office, Inc. (HBO), is the festival's founding and premier sponsor.

Lathan, who succeeds last year's jury president Dennis Haysbert, can be seen starring alongside Matthew Broderick in the upcoming film "Wonderful World." She has also starred in films and television programs such as "A Raisin in the Sun," "Something New," "Nip/Tuck," "Love and Basketball" and "The Best Man."

"I'm thrilled and honored to serve as the jury president for the 2009 ABFF. I've had the pleasure of attending the festival over the years, and have been so impressed by the work they do to nurture and encourage our up-and-coming filmmakers," said Lathan. "The world of independent film is key to pushing the boundaries of our industry, and I find lately the films that excite me the most are coming out of the film festivals. I look forward to helping discover and showcase the future artists of Hollywood."

Festival and registration information is available online at www.abff.com.

Old Salem drops admission prices

Old Salem Museums & Gardens has lowered prices for adult tickets for the summer in an effort to make its historic attractions more affordable for visitors during the economic downturn.

Adult admission price for the all-in-one ticket to the historic attraction in Winston-Salem is \$17 for adults, a decrease of almost 20 percent. A two-stop ticket for those short on time allows entrance to any two museum stops within Old Salem for just \$12, nearly a 15 percent decrease, while the Sunday ticket price is just \$14, a 12.5 percent drop. Regular admission price for children ages 6 - 16 years old is \$10 and children under age 6 are admitted free.

"We realize vacation funds may be limited this summer and we hope those who are on day trips to our city and local residents who want to re-discover Old Salem will enjoy the fact that they are receiving an incredibly great value as well as supporting our numerous preservation initiatives," said Lee French, president and CEO, Old Salem Museums & Gardens.

For more information, call the Visitor Center at 336-721-7350 or go online at www.oldsalem.org.

Cyrus to play G'boro

Miley Cyrus, television's "Hannah Montana," will play the Greensboro Coliseum on Nov. 22 with special guests Metro Station.

Cyrus also stars in the feature film "Hannah Montana: The Movie," which topped the box office its opening weekend. Next, she will begin filming "The Last Song" scripted by Nicolas Sparks. She is a multi-platinum-selling recording artist and the youngest-ever recording artist with four #1 albums in less than three years.

Cyrus is also the best-selling author of "Miles to Go," her first book that shares her inspiring story, spanning from her Southern roots in Tennessee to the excitement of her record-setting triumphs in TV, music and film.

Tickets, which are \$39.50 - \$79.50, go on sale to the public beginning Saturday, June 13 at 10 a.m. American Express cardholders can buy tickets now. For tickets, go to www.ticketmaster.com/mileycyrus or call 1-800-745-3000.

'Outstanding Arts Teacher' honor goes to Plemmons

Wanda Plemmons has been named "Outstanding Teacher in the Arts" by the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA).

Plemmons received her award at the school's annual commencement ceremony, held May 30 at the Stevens Center. She was presented her award by Ryan Hill, assistant dean and general manager of the UNCSA School of Dance.

Plemmons serves as director and owner of the Academy of Dance Arts, Inc., where she studied ballet at a young age.

She served as a dance consultant and has choreographed numerous pieces for local concerts including RJR's "The Vantage," the City of Winston-Salem, Disney's "Kid Jam" starring Sam Wright and Raven-Symone, and Paramount Studios.

She has also been a guest teacher for Wake Forest University and the North Carolina Governor's School. Currently, Plemmons serves on the board of The Associates of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. She assisted in founding the Alumni Association and served as the president of the Alumni Association for several years.

HBCU to bring in star-power to raise funds

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Salisbury-based Livingstone College will host its 4th Annual Celebrity Faith-Based Scholarship Golf Tournament later this month.

The tourney has been a successful fundraiser for scholarships for deserving students who attend the historically black private institution.

Members of the public are invited to tee off on Friday, June 26 alongside a slate of notables. This year's host is actor/singer/songwriter Clifton Davis, who has acted on stage and the big and small screen since the 1970s.

Davis' breakout role came in 1974, with the ABC sitcom "That's My Mama." In the 1980s, he starred in the hit series "Amen." Davis wrote "Never Can Say Goodbye," which was a monster hit for the Jackson Five.

Davis, who is an ordained Seventh-Day Adventist minister, is the former director of institutional advancement at North Carolina's Elizabeth City State University.

Actor Stack Pierce will also take part. A former MLB player, Pierce has been a regular on television shows like "Mannix," "Marcus Welby, M.D." and "Hangin' with Mr. Cooper" since the 1970s. Also scheduled to play are former NBA player Joe Ward, who runs a basketball-centered ministry; Billy Ray Barnes, a former Demon Deacon who played in the NFL for the Eagles, the Redskins and the Vikings; Roland Moss, a former NFL star; Kenneth Huff, who played at North Carolina before joining NFL teams like the Baltimore Colts and the Redskins; and John Carter, a popular anchor at Charlotte-based WBTV 3.

Tournament registration begins at 7:30 a.m. at the Country Club of Salisbury, 747 Club Drive. Tee off is at 8:30 a.m. The fee for individuals is \$200, and \$800 for teams of four. For more information or to sign up, call or e-mail Leslie M. Jones: 704-216-6046, ljones@livingstone.edu.



Lathan



Davis

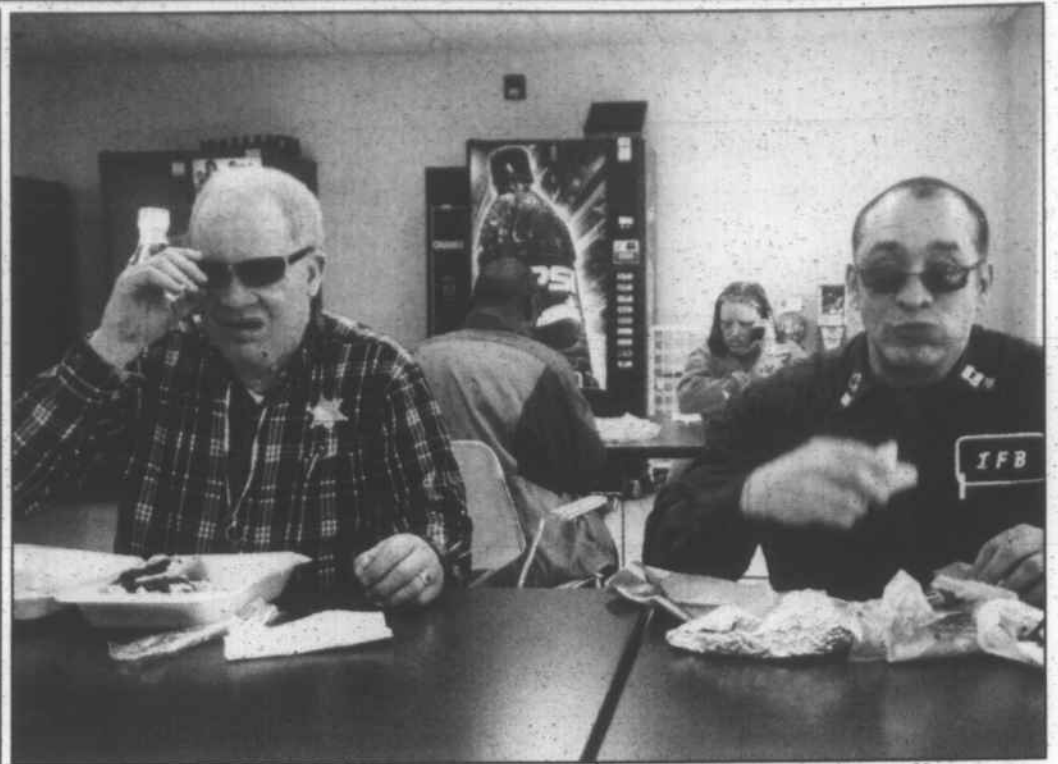


Photo courtesy of Jeff Gildardo

Eugene Alexander, left, in a scene from "The Sheriff."

UNCSA alumni films to air

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Beginning this month, UNC-TV, the state's public television station, will air several films by University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA) alumni.

The films are part of UNC-TV's North Carolina Visions, a popular independent film series that is now in its 14th season. The series opened on May 30 and is

scheduled to air every Saturday at 11 p.m. through July 4.

On June 13, the series will feature "Dr. UnDead's Frightfest," a 2006 homage to the late-night horror anthologies directed by Adam Tate, a who graduated with a BFA in directing in 2006; "Early Mourning Showers," a 2005 animated film written, directed, animated and edited by Michael

DeWeese, who graduated with a BFA in screenwriting in 2006; "Cody," a 2007 film that probes a child's journey into the comprehension of death directed by Ben Wolf, 2008 directing graduate; "Outside the Box," a 2007 film about a woman stuck in a room without logic and without an exit directed by Justin Hantz, a 2007 directing grad; and "So It Is," a

See Films on A10

A SUMMER OF BOOKS



Photo courtesy of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources

Musician Branford Marsalis, a Durham resident, poses with N.C. Department of Cultural Resources Secretary Linda A. Carlisle, a Greensboro native, in this promotional photo for the State Library and North Carolina's summer reading program, which encourages kids to use some of their summer break to dive into good books. This year's summer reading themes are "Be Creative @ your library" for children, and "Express Yourself" for teens.



PTA Photo

CeCe Peniston performs "Above Horizons" at a Chicago school.

'90s pop diva returns with theme song for PTA

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

CeCe Peniston, the 1990s R&B and pop star, has recorded the theme song for the National PTA.

"Above Horizons" is available for downloading at www.PTAmusic.org. Peniston, whose hits include "Finally," "Keep on Walking," and "We Got A Love Thing," performed the song last week at a school in Chicago, where the National PTA is headquartered.

"I'm definitely happy to be part of an organization that helps children reach their dreams," said Peniston. "When I was younger, my parents always dared me to dream and I haven't stopped. So this is my tribute to the families, teachers and communities who help children reach their dreams through PTA."

"Above Horizons" is the PTA's first official song released from the organization's recording label, National PTA Recordings. The organization will raise money by releasing exclusive music, like "Above Horizons," on its label and Web site. PTA chapters around the nation will also be able to raise money through downloads by using Downloadfundraiser.com.

Peniston began recording "Above Horizons" when she became a National PTA Ambassador late last year. Since then, she's visited with hundreds of children across the country to reinforce the importance of an arts education and pursuing your dreams. She's also performed at the U.S. Department of Education during the PTA's

See PTA on A10

Cyrus to bring legacy of Martha Graham to UNCG

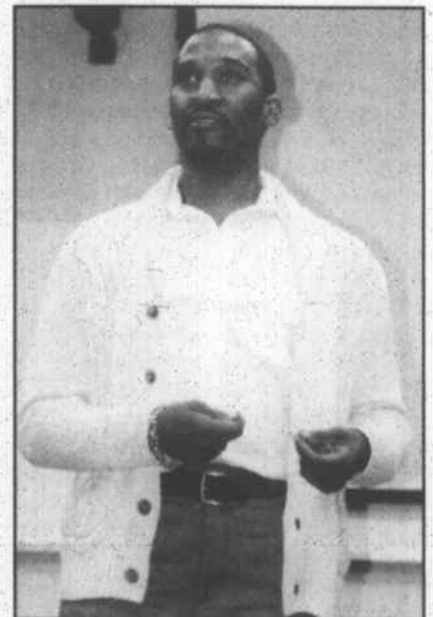
SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

GREENSBORO - When he was a member of the Martha Graham Dance Company, Duane Cyrus would find a seat in the wings or in the audience to watch spellbound as his fellow dancers performed "Steps in the Street."

Now, more than 15 years later, Cyrus, an assistant professor of dance at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, will spend the next year studying and sharing that 1936 composition with a new generation of dancers.

Supported by a \$15,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and university matching funds, the project will culminate with performances at the end of the spring semester. Venues will include local high schools, where UNCG student dancers will perform and discuss the work.

"Graham was, in many ways, the mother of all contemporary dance," said Jan Van Dyke, head of the UNCG Department of Dance. "Since her death, we all feel a responsibility to keep her work alive and relevant to our students and the general public. This grant will enable us to do just that."



File Photo

Duane Cyrus

See Cyrus on A9