

ARTS & LIFESTYLE

Of Interest ...

Kenyan honor for Tito Jackson

Tito Jackson of Jackson 5 fame was awarded the title of U.S. Ambassador to Kenya for the Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Foundation (J.O.O.F.) and Honorary Citizen of Kenya by Kenya's Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Raila Amolo Odinga at the Intercontinental Hotel in Century City, Calif. on April 16.



Tito Jackson accepts the national honor in Century City, Calif.

The ambassadorial ceremony marked the Kenyan Prime Minister's inaugural trip to Los Angeles and the launch of the J.O.O.F. in the United States. In his duties as Ambassador, Tito Jackson will serve as a national spokesman for J.O.O.F. and work in collaboration with Kenyan Ambassador Dr. Wenwa Akinyi Oranga along with the J.O.O.F. Board of Directors to create and develop projects and events to bring global awareness to the organization and its initiative in Kenya.

"I am incredibly honored and humbled to be named J.O.O.F. Ambassador and Honorary Citizen of Kenya by Prime Minister Odinga," said Jackson. "I look forward to tackling the important issues of health and education in this east African country."

Jackson is poised to kick off his solo career this summer with the upcoming release of the disc, "So Far So Good."

For more information on Jackson, visit: <http://www.TitoJackson.com>.

50 Cent explores his roots

Hip hop star 50 Cent will travel to the tiny town of Edgefield, S.C. in search of his family's past in the original VH1 Rock Doc "50 Cent: The Origin of Me," premiering Monday, May 23 at 9 p.m. on VH1. During an empowering and emotional voyage, 50 Cent crosses state lines to tell a story of pain, bloodshed, and survival.

"50 Cent: The Origin of Me" is the newest film in the Emmy Award-winning VH1 Rock Doc franchise. VH1 Rock Docs are feature-length documentaries that tell unique stories of artists and music from a wide range of genres, styles and musical perspectives.



50 Cent

The birthplace of noted segregationist Strom Thurmond, "Bloody Edgefield," as the town was known, bears the scars of a violent and racist past. This is the town where 50 Cent — born Curtis Jackson III — sets out to track his roots. With help from local genealogists and census data, 50 manages to find his great-great-grandmother Jane Jenkins, who lived and worked as a slave in the mid-1800's.

Along the way, 50 also learns that in the years following the Civil War, his ancestors faced the infamous "Redshirts," the precursors to the KKK, giving him a new perspective on the violence he encountered as a young man in Queens.

"50 Cent: The Origin of Me," will be available online following the on-air premiere on May 23. For more information on VH1 Rock Docs, go to RockDocs.VH1.com.

Rebels using rap as uprising's soundtrack in Libya

AJDABIYA, Libya (AP) — Libyan rebel fighter Jaad Jumaa Hashmi cranks up the volume on his pickup truck's stereo when he heads into battle against Moammar Gadhafi's forces.

He looks for inspiration from a growing cadre of amateur rappers whose powerful songs have helped define the revolution.

The music captures the anger and frustration young Libyans feel at decades of repressive rule under Gadhafi, driving the 27-year-old Hashmi forward even though the heavy machine gun bolted on the back of his truck — and other weapons in the rebel arsenal — are no match for Gadhafi's heavy artillery.

"It captures the youths' quest for freedom and a decent life and gives us motivation," Hashmi said as he sat in his truck on the outskirts of the front line city of Ajdabiya. He was listening to "Youth of the Revolution," which the rap group Music Masters wrote just days after the uprising began in mid-February.

"Moammar, get out, get out, game over! I'm a big, big soldier!" sang 20-year-old Milad Faraway, who started Music Masters with his friend and neighbor, 22-year-old Mohammed Madani, at the end of 2010.

Rather than grabbing AK-47s and heading to the front line with other rebels to fight Gadhafi's forces, Faraway and Madani stayed in Benghazi, the de facto capital of rebel-held eastern Libya, and picked up a microphone.

"Everyone has his own way of fighting, and my weapon is art," said Faraway, a geology student, during a recent recording session in a small room on the fourth floor of an aging apartment building in downtown Benghazi. The room was equipped with little more than a microphone, stereo and computer.



Madani, left, and Faraway, record.

State adds Civil War markers

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

As the nation celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, North Carolina is one of the Southern states kicking-up efforts to educate the public about one of the ugliest chapters in the country's history.

Burning bacon or a bridge, firing on a church or scribbling in a courthouse, moving toward or away from troop supplies, all are tales told on North Carolina's most recently erected Civil War Trails markers (www.civilwartrails.org).

The 12 newest markers are among nearly 200 in the state, and part of a network including Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Tennessee. The signs, adorned with a red bugle under blue Civil War Trails lettering, can lead history buffs on a motor tour across the state and region. The latest additions are in Alamance, Cabarrus, Cumberland, Duplin and Gates counties, and contribute to the observance of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War (www.nccivilwar150.com).



Before going off to war, members of the Gates County militia signed their names on a second-floor wall of the courthouse in Gatesville. The signatures are still visible today.

In March 1863, Union forces burned the Confederate armory at Kenansville, emptied a safe of Confederate money and, more importantly, destroyed two miles of track of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad, cutting supply lines to Confederate forces in Virginia. The Federal troops destroyed other supplies and burned a barn containing hundreds of pounds of bacon, leaving an aroma for days.

The congregation of Freedom's Hill Wesleyan Methodist Church was among the most outspoken of southern abolitionist groups. Active with the Underground Railroad, the church stated that no Christian could hold slaves. Proslavery mobs attacked the congregation, and small arms were fired at the Alamance County church. Vigilantes

See Markers on A9



Mike Epps and Ice Cube in "Friday After Next."

Epps, Underwood coming to G'boro

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Mike Epps, the star of films like "Next Friday" and "Friday After Next," is bringing his comedy tour, "Mike Epps & Friends," to Greensboro. He will be joined by funny woman Sheryl Underwood.

The show will come to the Greensboro Coliseum at 8 p.m. on Saturday, May 7. The tour is hitting 30 cities throughout the country, including Epps' hometown, Indianapolis.

Epps began crisscrossing the country, just as his new comedy special — "Mike Epps presents: LIVE from Club Nokia" — hit the airwaves on Showtime in February.

Most recently, Epps has appeared in the film "Lottery Ticket" and joined forces with Snoop Dogg to release "Imagine That!" a first of its kind hip-hop comedy show featuring live musical performances. Up next is the Mother's Day Weekend release of

"Jumping The Broom," where Epps stars with actresses Paula Patton and Angela Bassett.

Underwood has appeared in films like "I Got the Hook Up" and "Beauty Shop." Most recently, she served as the host of Martin Lawrence presents "1st Amendment Stand-Up" TV series on the STARZ network. Currently, Underwood is a weekly contributor and guest host on "The Steve Harvey Morning Show" and also hosts "The Sheryl Underwood Show" on Jamie Foxx's "The Foxxhole" heard on SIRIUS 106/XM 149. Underwood also currently serves as the 23rd

International Grand Basileus (President) of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

Tickets prices begin at \$39.50, plus applicable taxes and fees, and are available at all Ticketmaster outlets, the Coliseum Complex ticket office, online at Ticketmaster.com or at 1-800-745-3000.



Underwood

Good Fortune



Marsha McCain, a cook from Reidsville, and her daughters, Leslie and Lisa, are all smiles after McCain won \$100,000 in the N.C. Education Lottery's Mega Bucks scratch-off game. McCain won \$68,001 after taxes and plans to pay some bills and make the money last as long as possible. "I'm going to get back on my feet, buy some land and continue to work," she said.

Local film set to premiere

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

"Brother's Keeper," a movie recently filmed in Burlington in association with Elon University, will have its world premiere on Saturday, April 30.

The free premiere will start at 7 p.m. at The Lamb's Chapel, 250 Roxboro St., in Haw River.

Written, produced and directed by Cornelius Muller, the film stars many members of Winston-Salem-based Carolina Actors Group, where actor Burgess Jenkins teaches acting courses. Jenkins, whose acting credits include "One Tree Hill" and "Remember the Titans," served as a film consultant and was on set during filming to offer his support.

"Brother's Keeper," based on real life events, tells the story of a religious man whose brother commits a vicious crime. The man deals with his brother's actions while also trying to bring healing and forgiveness to the family of his brother's victim. Muller is an Elon alumnus



Muller

and Triad businessman. He says he made the film to give audiences a story that would both make them think and inspire them.

Elon University Associate Provost Connie Book got behind the project early. She made it possible for the production crew from Elon to see the project through. Book's husband, Dewayne, a well known local doctor who is currently continuing his studies in music at Elon, has created an original soundtrack for the film.



Tracee Ellis Ross and Malcolm-Jamal Warner at the 2011 BET Upfront presentation.

BET to add another original series this fall

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Coming off of the success of its best year ever in 2010, BET Networks announced a brand new slate of programming for its BET and CENTRIC networks last week at its 2011 Upfront presentation at the Best Buy Theater in New York.

BET will continue its focus on original-scripted content with a new sitcom, "Reed Between the Lines," starring Tracee Ellis Ross and Malcolm-Jamal Warner. Ross plays psychologist Carla, while Warner plays her husband, Alex, an English professor. The couple's hands are beyond full parenting teenage twins and an outspoken 7-year-old daughter. "Reed Between The Lines" is scheduled to premiere in October.

The Network also announced the new scripted web origi-

See BET on A9