



Josephine Jones speaks at the 2012 Emancipation Association ceremony. File Photo

Emancipation

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this year, discovered that she had the option of being sworn-in in her district while attending an orientation for new legislators earlier this month. Traditionally, new members take the oath during a mass ceremony at the General Assembly on the first day of the legislative session, which is Jan. 8. Taking the oath locally will eliminate the headache of travel and finding parking near the General Assembly, Terry said, and give her the chance to enjoy the moment with those who voted for her to serve.

"It's somewhat humbling to be perfectly honest," she said. "The reality of the significance to be able to do it the day Winston-Salem Emancipation Association is giving scholarships to young people who are so deserving of a higher education and thanking God and reading that proclamation that provided a document for liberating us out of slavery, I can't tell you how important that is to me."

She'll be sworn in by Judge Denise Hartsfield, one of Terry's fellow Delta Sigma Theta sorors. Many elected officials bring greetings during the Emancipation Association service. Speakers at next week's service will include Mayor Allen Joiner and State Sen.-elect Earline Parmon. Bethlehem Pastor Dwight Hash will deliver the keynote address. Emancipation Association President Josephine Jones is proud that the annual service has received such a great deal of support over the decades and that she and the other dedicated members of the Association have been able to educate the local community about the importance of the document.

"(The service is for the public) to understand and to learn more about

what the Proclamation is all about," she said.

Because of its 150th birthday, the Emancipation Proclamation is getting more attention than usual and that is how it should be, according to Cheryl Harry, director of African American programming at Old Salem Museums and Gardens.



Hash



Hartsfield

Harry hopes that churches will take time to acknowledge the Proclamation during their Watch Night services on New Year's Eve by reading the document, handing out copies of it and the 13th Amendment (which inserted a ban of slavery into the Constitution) or by simply mentioning its importance and connection to Watch Night services. Harry says few know that Watch Night services became popular in black churches after New Year's Eve 1862 - what became known as Freedom's Eve - as slaves gathered in churches around the country, waiting for their freedom on Jan. 1, 1863.

Old Salem is sponsoring a bus trip in May to the N.C. Museum of History, which will be

displaying a 1862 preliminary copy of the Emancipation Proclamation from May 15 - June 15. The document is currently hanging on the Oval Office of the White House. Emancipation Proclamation commemorations will continue into the new year. Local Juneteenth 2013 activities will focus heavily on the 150th anniversary and in October 2013, the state's Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee will hold a symposium at Wake Forest University focusing on emancipation entitled, "Lay My Burden Down: Freedom and Legacies of the Civil War." Old Salem, Wake Forest, Winston-Salem State University and the N.C. Office of Archives and History will sponsor the event. States who lost residents in the Civil War have set-up sesquicentennial committees to host a series of events that will culminate in 2015 - the 150th anniversary of the end of the war.

"It was a turning point in history," Harry said of the Emancipation Proclamation. "The fight to save the Union, to keep the Union together, became the fight to end slavery. It was a really pivotal point in our history."

For information about the N.C. Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee, go to www.nccivilwar150.com.

Rate of '12 black voters higher than that of whites in N.C.

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

African Americans in North Carolina turned out at the polls last month at a higher rate than white North Carolinians, according to an analysis released last week by the nonpartisan voting rights organization Democracy North Carolina.

Black registered voters turned out at a 70.2 percent rate, exceeding the rates of 68.6 percent for whites and 54.3 percent for Latinos. This was the second-straight presidential election that the rate of black North Carolinians was higher than that of whites. The same was true in 2008, when President Barack Obama became the first Democrat in decades to win the Tarheel State. This year, though, the president won reelection without winning North Carolina, after Republican Mitt Romney received 92,004 more votes.

So how did North Carolina become the only swing state that President Obama lost? The analysis offers answers.

There were 4.5 million ballots cast in North Carolina and registered Republicans showed up at higher rates and in larger numbers than in 2008. State Board of Elections figures show that the number of Democrats who voted actually declined by 53,000 from 2008, even though nearly 200,000 more voters cast ballots in 2012 than in 2008.

When the state's 6.6 million registered voters are divided into groups by race, gender and party affiliation, the segment



with the best performance was African-American female Democrats - the same group that posted the best turnout rate in 2008, when Democrats voted at a slightly higher rate than Republicans.

Overall, 68.3 percent of registered voters cast ballots in 2012 in North Carolina, down from the modern turnout record of 69.6 percent set in the 2008 presidential contest.

President Obama's name on the ballot is what appears to have driven many blacks to the polls. Bob Hall of Democracy North Carolina pointed out that in 2010, a non-presidential election year, when only 44 percent of registered voters cast a ballot, registered whites outperformed blacks by a 46 percent to 41 percent margin and turnout among white Democrats also

trailed white Republicans by five percentage points that year. The 2010 election was also one of the rare cases when men outperformed women. In 2012 and 2008, registered women voted at higher rates than men (70 percent versus 67 percent in 2012) and because women also register to vote at higher rates, their numbers heavily influence election outcomes, Hall said. In 2012, the gap between the number of female and male voters exceeded 490,000 out of 4.5 million voters casting ballots.

Hall said the lowest turnout rates were among young voters (age 18 to 25) and those who don't choose a party affiliation, reflecting the overall division between voters with strong convictions and those with less connection to the political process.

The Chronicle (USPS 067-910) was established by Ernest H. Pitt and Ndubisi Egemonye in 1974 and is published every Thursday by Winston-Salem Chronicle Publishing Co. Inc., 617 N. Liberty Street, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27101. Periodicals postage paid at Winston-Salem, N.C. Annual subscription price is \$30.72.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Chronicle, P.O. Box 1636 Winston-Salem, NC 27102-1636

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