

OP/ED



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When Will it Open?



Mercedes Miller
 Guest Columnist

As I finished up three days of working with business owners and leaders in Ohio, I called my family to touch base. The first thing my dad said was, "The folks in the barbershop want to know when is the market opening?" I am not surprised. I received a call just last week from a mentor's wife saying, "Mercedes, the ladies at the beauty parlor were saying that place been sitting there for a long time. When you going to open it?"

Vendors and customers, young and old, in the community and on the other side of town have the same question: When Will the Liberty Street Vendors Market Open?

It's a great question. It is also a question posed by the Triad Farm to Table Cooperative. They are a group of local farmers who work together to promote and support fresh, locally grown produce. They have signed up to sell at the Liberty Street Vendors Market and are looking forward to serving even more residents in our community.

When I pulled up at Hidden Creek Farm a few months ago, Pat Watson yelled to me from across the lawn, "Girl, I been



Switzer

looking for you." "Well, here I am," I said, as I made a beeline to the fresh almonds and hoop cheese.

Pat and her husband Herb sell fresh produce and other locally-made edibles from the spring through the late summer. Signs right on the edge of Davidson and Forsyth counties let you know when and where their place is open. Pat was reaching out to secure a space because their location isn't operational after September.

"We're looking forward to being at the market on Liberty, along with a few of the farmers who bring their fresh fruits and vegetables to our location to sell. It gives us the chance to continue to provide good food even through the fall and winter," Pat said.

Mr. Vern Switzer, one of the most well-known black farmers in this state, has been instrumental in shaping the conversation about the Liberty Street Vendors Market. His space is secured, and he, along with many others, is ready to get started. Triad Farm to Table Co-op, Pat and

Herb from Hidden Creek Farm, Mr. Vern and many other farmers, including those who run local community farms, are poised to provide their products.

So what will they be selling? It might be easier to identify what they won't be selling. But just to whet your appetite a bit - there will be peaches, plums, tomatoes, cabbage, watermelon, greens, corn, cucumbers, squash, potatoes, okra, beans, cantaloupe and peppers.

Now for the question at hand: when will the Liberty Street Vendors Market open?

The City of Winston-Salem is working to ensure that the market is both aesthetically appealing and user-friendly for the vendors and customers. They are erecting a fence that is slated to be completed mid-September. As soon as it is done, the market will open.

See you there. Spaces are available for fresh produce, art, crafts, baked goods, jewelry, apparel and other items. For guidelines, applications and additional information, please contact Terrance McNeil at 336-793-3441 or tsvm@earthlink.net. Internships and volunteer opportunities are also available.

Mercedes L. Miller is owner of Mercedes-Empowers, Inc., which has won the City of Winston-Salem contract to operate the Liberty Street Vendor's Market.

Remembering Alex Haley



Lenwood Davis
 Guest Columnist

If asked the birthdays of such great men such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, most people would give you the correct answer.

But if asked whose birthday is on Aug. 11, they probably wouldn't know. If you ask most people who was Alex Haley, they would say that he was the author of "Roots" and "The Autobiography of Malcolm X."

Haley, the brilliant author, researcher, writer, storyteller, novelist, folklorist, and genealogist, was born Aug. 11. He did more than anyone during modern times to bring attention to the need to trace one's family history. Because of Haley, thousands of Americans, both African Americans and whites, began to research their genealogy. His birthday should be remembered because of the contributions that he made to American society.

I met Alex Haley some 40 years ago in Chicago at the O'Hare International Airport. I was on my way to Portland, Ore., where I was teaching at Portland State, and Mr. Haley was on his way to Los Angeles.

I walked up to him and introduced myself and we talked for a short while. I found him easy to talk to. He was very friendly, and I was impressed by his frankness. I met Mr. Haley again in 1977 when he spoke at Wake Forest University. After the program, Dr. Maya Angelou hosted a reception for him at her home. When Mr.



Alex Haley

Haley arrived, most of the people in the room gravitated toward him and surrounded him. When he spoke, there seemed to be a certain calmness that came over the room.

I went over and introduced myself. I called him Mr. Haley and he told me to just call him Alex.

I told him that I was from Beaufort, N.C., the same town that his first wife was from, and that I knew her family. I found him to be very receptive to what I had to say about his speech. I also told him that I was a writer and he told me to keep on writing, because all people need to know about the history of our people.

I met Alex Haley again in the early 1980s when I went with Dr. William Turner to Indianapolis, Ind. to the East Kentucky Social Club Reunion. Turner was a close friend of Haley's and was responsible for arranging for him to speak at the reunion banquet. Although, Alex received between \$15,000 and \$17,000 per speech, Turner got him to speak for free to the group. Alex saw Turner as an adopted son.

I went with Turner, in his jeep, to the Indianapolis airport to pick up Haley. I asked Turner why he didn't get a chauffeur-driven limousine to pick up this international celebrity. Turner told me that Alex did not like celebrity treatment and would have been insulted if

he had gotten a limousine to pick him up.

Alex remembered me from the reception at Dr. Angelo's home. We drove Alex to his hotel. The three of us sat in his suite and talked for several hours about many different topics, including preserving black history. After talking to him for hours, it seemed to me that I had known him all my life. He had the ability to make people feel relaxed and at ease. Although he was famous, he was not pretentious like many celebrities.

We told him that we would drive him to the banquet. He asked how far the away the club was; we told him about four blocks. He said he could walk. When Alex arrived at the banquet hall he received thunderous applause and everybody took pictures and requested autographs. Alex graciously obliged them.

The next morning, we took him to the airport. He was on his way to Hollywood to see Quincy Jones about a project they were working on together. I never saw Alex again.

As I reflect back on my conversations with Alex Haley, I remember a number of things about him. What impressed me most about him was his humility. He did not let fame change him.

In my conversations with Alex, never once did he mention his two best-selling books. I got the impression that he did not want people to know or appreciate him just for those two works. Alex Haley did not want to be known as a black writer. He did not want to be known as an American writer. He wanted to be known as a writer, period.

Dr. Lenwood G. Davis is a retired history professor and the author of several books.

DCCC

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coaching, study skills support, leadership opportunities and character-building experiences deemed critical to college success.

"Men Moving Mountains is a remarkable program that provides academic and professional development to minority males who wish to obtain a college degree," says Kim Sepich, vice president of Student Affairs at DCCC. "Many underrepresented males in our area feel that a college education is simply out of reach. However, through the 3M program, these same students find the personalized attention and group support they need to become successful in the classroom and in life."

Since 2012, DCCC has seen a 36 percent increase in participation in its program - a sign that it is moving in the right direction. Seventy-one DCCC students used 3M services during the 2013-2014 academic year. Three of the program's recent graduates have been accepted into a four-year institution.

In 2012, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), a part of the U.S. Department of Education, conducted an annual Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) survey. The survey, which was reported in Aspirations to Achievement, a special report released by the Center of Community College Engagement, found that community colleges enroll more men of color than any other type of higher education institution. However, the survey also revealed that men of color earn com-



Kim Sepich

community college degrees and certificates at disproportionately lower rates.

This is a trend DCCC addresses head on with its 3M program.

"The coaching model works, but we have to get the word out into the community that programs like ours exist," adds Sepich. "The skills learned in the Men Moving Mountains program cross over into students' personal lives, which ultimately, makes earning their degrees more likely."

For more information about Men Moving Mountains, call 336-249-8186 or visit www.davidsonccc.edu/3M.

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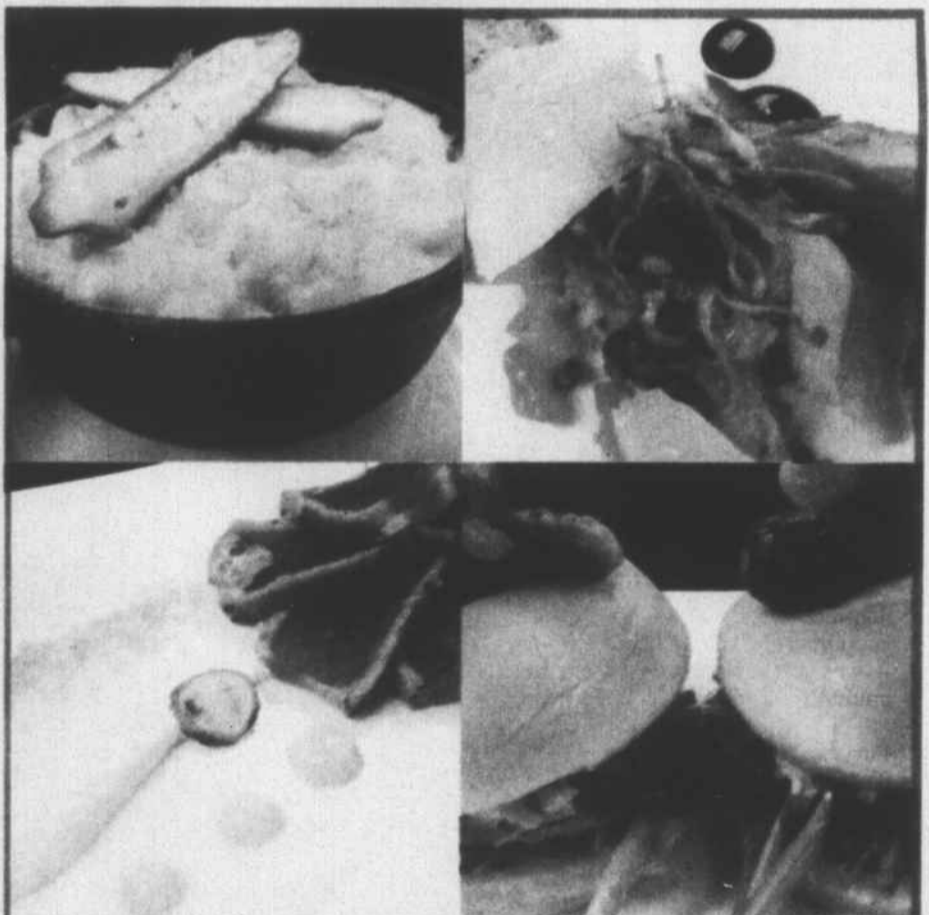
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