

ARTS & LIFESTYLE

Of Interest ...

Bookmarks hires new executive director

Ginger Hendricks has been named executive director of Bookmarks, a local organization that promotes literacy and inspires the love of reading and writing through its annual book fair and other activities.

Hendricks will manage the production of the annual book festival and its author-based and literary events. She is also charged with fundraising, marketing and public relations, and other duties as assigned by the board.

Most recently, Hendricks served as the director of the Center for Women Writers and coordinator of cultural events at Salem College. She was also an assistant to the dean of Cultural and Special Programs at Elon University.

"During the past four years," Hendricks said, "I worked regularly with Bookmarks, participating in their annual Book Festival each September. I am excited to work with an organization whose mission is aligned with my own passion for reading and writing."

Hendricks grew up in Asheboro and graduated with honors from Salem College with a degree in communication and creative writing. She also holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Writing from Vermont College.

She may be contacted directly at Ginger.Hendricks@bookmarksbookfestival.org.

Black Cinema On Demand debuts on cable systems

In celebration of Black History Month, digital cable subscribers across the United States will be able to access a brand new category of Movies on Demand (MOD).

IN DEMAND, the leading distributor of MOD to cable, launched "Black Cinema On Demand," on Feb. 1. The category will include some of the most acclaimed, award-winning and influential films created by or featuring the most celebrated black directors, actors and themes. Viewers will have a chance to revisit these pivotal films or see them for the first time on demand.

Many of the films in the new category have altered our collective consciousness, enabled discourse, broken our hearts, created controversy and made stars. Included are current and classic films—historical dramas, documentaries, comedies, biography and romance.

Systems set to carry the offering include Comcast, Time Warner Cable, Cox Communications, Bright House Networks, Bresnan Communications and RCN. Prices for the films range from \$1.95-4.99.

Queen Latifah, Underwood to perform at Super Bowl

Carrie Underwood will sing the National Anthem and Queen Latifah will sing "America the Beautiful" as part of Super Bowl XLIV pregame festivities at Sun Life Stadium in South Florida on Sunday, Feb. 7. The performances will be televised live on CBS Sports prior to kickoff.



Hendricks

More than 151 million viewers in the U.S. watched last year's Super Bowl, the most-watched television program in history. The pregame show and Super Bowl XLIV will be broadcast worldwide in more than 230 countries and territories.

A four-time Grammy Award winner, a member of the Grand Ole Opry, the 2009 Academy of Country Music Entertainer of the Year, and three-time CMA and ACM Female Vocalist winner, Underwood has amassed more than 11 million in U.S. album sales since her debut CD in 2005, more than any other "American Idol" winner.

A musician, actress, a label president, an author and entrepreneur, Queen Latifah is a Grammy Award and Golden Globe Award-winning artist as well as an Emmy and Academy Award nominee.

The NFL previously announced that The Who will perform in the Bridgestone Super Bowl XLIV Halftime Show.

Playhouse putting on Lorraine Hansberry show

The Stained Glass Playhouse, 4401 Indiana Ave., will stage "To Be Young, Gifted and Black" on Feb. 5, 6, 12, 13, 19 and 20 at 8 p.m. and on Feb. 7, 14 and 21 at 3 p.m.

The show is directed by Andre Minkins and is based on a book by Lorraine Hansberry that was adapted for the stage by Robert Nemiroff.

The show was a success on the 1968/69 Off-Broadway stage. Uniquely and boldly, the play dramatically weaves through Hansberry's life experiences and the times that shaped her. The actors slip ingeniously into and out of a variety of challenging roles, spanning her life and experiences to the ultimate confrontation when cancer strikes her.

Admission is \$12 for adults; and \$10 for students and senior citizens. Call 336-499-1010 for reservations and advance tickets.

Barn Dinner Theatre debuts MLK musical

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

A play written, directed and starring Nathan Alston made its debut on Jan. 22 at the Barn Dinner Theatre in Greensboro, where it will be staged through Feb. 12.

"Dreams of a King: The Legacy of Martin Luther King Jr." is set in a hotel room two doors down from Dr. King's room in the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4, 1968; the day King was assassinated.

The resident of that room is Shirley Jean Glover Mitchell Johnson (played by Sandra Jones), an elderly friend and supporter of Dr. King (who is played by Alston).

Shirley Jean sings, shouts and evokes the spirits of the ancestors as she reaches back in time and tells powerful stories from the Civil Rights Movement as only an insider can. She takes the audience to 1963, when four black girls died in a vicious church bombing in Birmingham, Ala., and to when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. She rejoices in song when the 381-day bus boycott is successful. When she shouts for joy, the audience responds by clapping, tapping their feet or saying "Amen!"

Alston as Dr. King delivers a powerful performance that reminds the audience of the Civil Rights leader's true essence.

The cast also includes three gifted singers, who use their voices to help tell the story. Sonya Bennett-Brown, a trained opera singer and voice instructor at Bennett College for Women, wowed the audience with her spirituals, freedom songs and traditional gospel tunes. Daniel Ferguson and Robin Doby-Easter, who have performed in many productions at the



Alston

See Musical on A11



This brick St. Philips Church was constructed in 1861.

FREE CONCERTS, PUPPET SHOWS AMONG BHM OFFERINGS AT OLD SALEM

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Historic St. Philips Church in Old Salem, which is the oldest standing African-American church building in the state of North Carolina, will hold a series of events this month to celebrate black history and culture.

Every Sunday, beginning Feb. 7, the church will offer free tours every half hour from 1 - 4:30 p.m. of the original brick church, the reconstructed log church and the adjacent cemetery.

On three Sundays this month, Feb. 14, 21 and 28, free concerts will be performed at 3 p.m.: Soprano Jarrae Payton will perform with accompanist Anthony Felton on Feb. 14; the Salem Interservice Gospel Choir will sing on Feb. 21; and the Voices of God's Children will perform on Feb. 28.

The church will present "The Night the Portraits Spoke" puppet show several times throughout the month. Staged by Old Salem's Heirloom Puppet Productions, the show will highlight African-American greats like Satchel Paige, Arthur Ashe, Henry O. Tanner, Dr. Rebecca Crumpler, Marian

Anderson, Garrett A. Morgan, George Washington Carver, Alice Coachman and Hattie McDaniel.

The puppet shows will be at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Feb. 10, Feb. 12, Feb. 17 and Feb. 19. The shows are free but reservations are required by calling 1-800-441-5305. For the most up-to-date information, visit www.oldsalem.org/stphilips.

St. Philips has a storied history. Africans and African Americans were integral in the construction and operation of the community of Salem from its earliest days. Slaves belonged to the church, not to individuals, and were permitted to worship with and be buried alongside the European American residents if they chose to accept the Moravian faith.

In later years, Salem was influenced by pervasive Southern attitudes about slavery and race, which led to the creation of a separate log church for blacks in 1823. Later, in 1861, a brick church was built on an adjacent site. The St. Philips brick church has now been fully restored, and the 1823 log church was reconstructed on its original site.

North Carolina has a new Poet Laureate

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

After a months-long selection process, Cathy Smith Bowers of Tryon has been named North Carolina's Poet Laureate. Gov. Bev Perdue made the selection last week.

Established in 1935 by the General Assembly, the Poet Laureate is the state's official poet and serves as an unofficial representative of all North Carolina's poets, writers and literature fans.

Smith Bowers will be installed at a ceremony scheduled Wednesday, Feb. 10, at



Smith Bowers

4:30 p.m. at the State Capitol. The ceremony is open to the public.

"Cathy's powerful poems open new avenues of thought, and are a reflection of the love of words and learning. She believes poetry inspires and instructs North Carolinians of all ages," Gov. Perdue said.

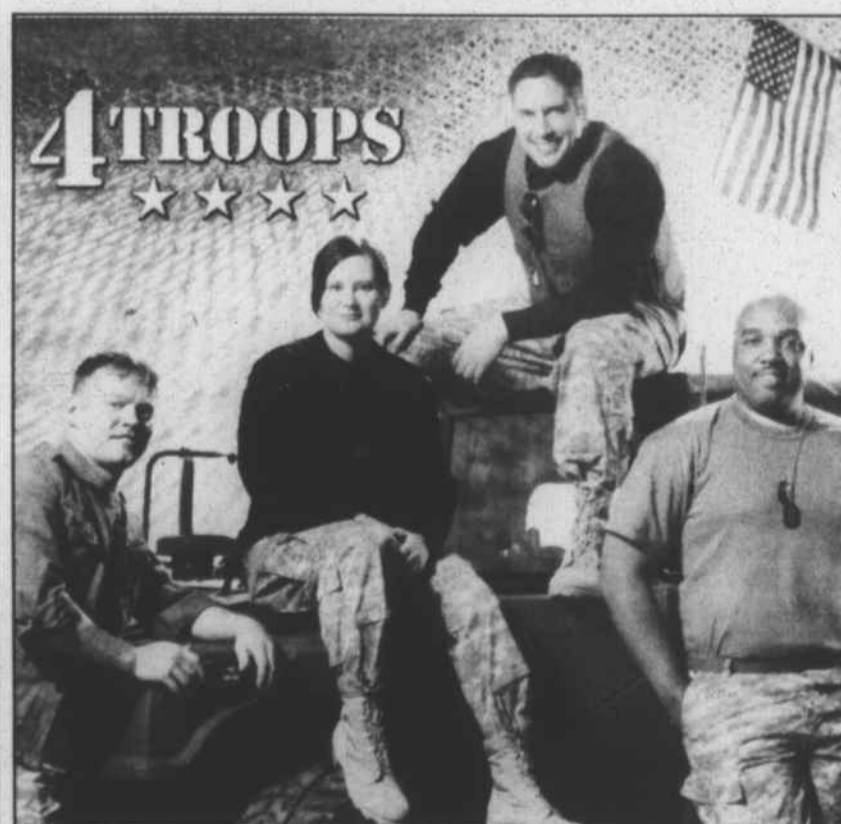
Smith Bowers teaches in the UNC Asheville's Great Smokies Writing Program and in the M.F.A. program at Queens University of Charlotte, where she received the 2002 J.B. Fuqua Distinguished Educator

Award. She also received the Gilbert Chappell Distinguished Poet Award—given by the North Carolina Poetry Society in 2006 and 2007. Smith Bowers received a bachelor's and master's degree in English from Winthrop University in Rock Hill, S.C.

She is the author of four poetry collections: "The Love That Ended Yesterday in Texas," "Traveling in Time of Danger," "A Book of Minutes" and "The Candle I Hold Up To See You."

Smith Bowers will serve at least a two-year term.

SINGING SOLDIERS



Sony Masterworks has signed 4Troops, a quartet of former Army soldiers, to a record deal. The group's first CD will hit stores on May 25. Members (from left) Daniels Jens, a former "America's Got Talent" finalist, Meredith Mejcher, David Clemo and Ron Henry made their national debut last week on "Good Morning America."

Book about real-life injustice selected for UNC freshmen

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

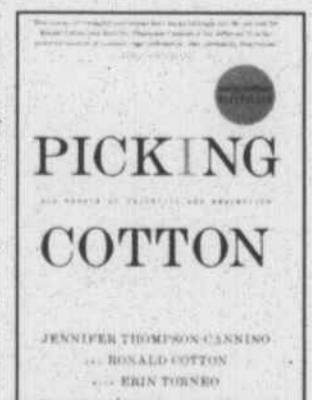
"Picking Cotton," the true story of an unlikely friendship between a woman and the innocent man she sent to prison, will be the 2010 summer reading book at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

As part of its Summer Reading Program, UNC asks all first-year and incoming transfer students to read a book the summer before they enroll and participate in small group discussions about it the day before classes begin. Faculty and staff lead the discussions for the voluntary, non-credit assignment.

The program aims to stimulate critical thinking outside the classroom and give new students an intellectual common ground. An academic ice-breaker, it encourages the students to engage with the scholarly community and come to their own conclusions.

A nine-member selection committee of students, faculty and staff began meeting last fall to consider books for the program, now in its 12th year. They chose "Picking Cotton" (St. Martin's Press, 2009) Monday (Jan. 25) in a unanimous vote.

The book was written by the reconciled pair, Jennifer Thompson-Cannino and Ronald Cotton—both of North Carolina—with help from ghost writer



See Book on A11