

ARTS & LIFESTYLE

Museum presenting historically-based puppet shows

'African-American Portrait Gallery' performance is running through Feb. 21

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Old Salem Museums & Gardens is presenting a series of puppet shows at the Heirloom Puppet Theater at the Frank L. Horton Museum Center this winter and spring.

Heirloom Puppet Theater shows feature historically-based puppet performances intended for all ages.

Puppet shows are included in All-in-One tickets or cost \$2 per person without an All-in-One Ticket. Performances are held in the Frank L. Horton Museum, at 924 S. Main St.

Dates and Times for the Winter/Spring 2015 shows are:

***A Night in the African-American Portrait Gallery:** This show highlights African-American individuals who have paved the way for others with their contributions to our history. Dates: Feb. 20, 25, 27. Times: 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 1 p.m. Other dates and times: Feb. 21 at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 2 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

***Three Trees on a Hill:** Once there were three trees growing happily side by side on a sunny hill in the woods. On a balmy summer night, these trees discuss their hopes and dreams for the future and see how they were unexpectedly and amazingly realized. Dates: March 4, 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27 and April 1, 3, 8, 10. Times: 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 1 p.m.

***Aesop's Fabulous Fables:** Travel to ancient Greece, where you will meet Aesop and hear his timeless fables.



The photo shows examples of heirloom puppets.

Dates: April 17, 22, 24, 29 and May 1, 6, 8, 20, 22, 27, 29.

Times: 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 1 p.m.

Old Salem Museums & Gardens is one of America's most comprehensive history attractions. Its museums—the Historic Town of Salem, the Museum of Early

Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA), and the Gardens at Old Salem—engage visitors in an educational and memorable historical experience about those who lived and worked in the early South. Old Salem Museums & Gardens is located at 600 South Main Street in Winston-Salem. For more information call 336-721-7300 or visit oldsalem.org.

Novel by Charlotte author shows racial issues during desegregation

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

CHARLOTTE — A teacher who struggles with the loss of her husband and daughter faces a greater challenge as she goes "Through the Fire" (published by iUniverse) during Mississippi's desegregation.

Author Jeri Johnson in her novel provides her readers with a moving drama centered on a grieving woman with racist tendencies who must learn to overcome her prejudices and accept her new African-American students.

Deep South Christian values are contrasted with ingrained cultural biases in this portrayal of bigotry, loss, mental breakdown

and potential redemption.

The protagonist, Elizabeth Nolan, has never really recovered from the loss of her family in an automobile accident. She is also unwilling to teach her new pupils and her anguish is compounded when a black girl who resembles her own daughter enters her classroom.

When Nolan develops an emotional attachment to this girl, and comes to actually believe that the girl is her daughter, she must not only deal with her mental issues, but she must also deal with her feelings of racism in light of her Christian testimony.

"I wish readers to take away that race relations will not improve on their own.

Just like any relation-



ship (marriage, siblings, co-workers, etc.), each member of the relationship must be willing to acknowledge any negative behavior that hinders the positive growth of the relationship," says Johnson.

"That behavior must be dealt with and the individuals involved must be willing to change the behav-

ior."

"Through the Fire" is at once an insightful and emotional portrait of a woman's inner struggles and a reflection of a society undergoing profound changes in regards to race relations, a transformation that is ongoing even to this day.

Jeri Johnson was born in Anson County, N.C. She graduated from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She is an Air Force veteran.

She retired from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department. She has one son and two grandchildren.

"Through the Fire," by Jeri Johnson, is available at Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.

Key events of Civil Rights Movement depicted in presentation at DCCC

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

MOCKSVILLE — Key figures and scenes from the American civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s were brought to life in a powerful program presented Thursday, Feb. 12, on the Davie Campus of Davidson County Community College.

"Let It Shine: The American Civil Rights Movement Play" depicted pivotal events that advanced the cause for equal rights, creating a better understanding of the era for students, faculty, staff and community members attending.

The production opened with actors and narrators Adrian Blount and Alex Keane of the Bright Star Touring Theatre leading the audience in a spirited rendition of "This Little Light of Mine," a theme song adopted to help "light the path" of the Civil Rights Movement.

Events depicted began with Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus to a white passenger in 1955 and the subsequent boycott of the bus system that led to the emergence of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as the nation's foremost civil rights leader.

Other events discussed and dramatically portrayed by Blount and Keane included the integration of a Little Rock, Arkansas, high school in 1957, the lunch counter sit-in at the Greensboro Woolworth's in 1960, Freedom Riders who rode interstate buses into the segregated South in 1961 to challenge non-enforcement of federal civil rights laws, the deaths of four young girls in a Birmingham church bombing in 1963, the Salem-to-Montgomery marches of 1965 and King's final speech in Memphis before his assassination in 1968.

IDR sets commemoration, fundraiser

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Institute for Dismantling Racism, soon to be known as the Freedom Tree IDR, will be conducting a Black History Commemoration and fundraising event on Saturday, Feb. 21 from 4 to 6 p.m. at Parkway United Church of Christ, 2151 Silas Creek Parkway.

There will be a silent auction and a Black History Exhibit presented by Effley Howell of The Thankful Heritage Museum, which is a traveling exhibit of African-American memorabilia. Music will be provided by Big Ron Hunter and Kenny Barner.

A \$3 contribution is suggested.

The Freedom Tree IDR is Forsyth County's primary advocate and training provider for more inclusive and productive communities. For over 10 years, under the direction of the Rev. Willard Bass, the IDR

has addressed issues of race in authentic and new ways, and has become our region's primary advocate and training provider for

more inclusive and productive communities. For more information, contact Bass at 336-722-8379, extension 105.

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