

Say Their Names. Tell Their Stories A Black Historical Presentation

Four Anson County women will tell the stories of four enslaved women from the 1800s in a production called *Say Their Names. Tell Their Stories* on Saturday evening, March 9 at 5:00 p.m. at the Lemuel Center, located at 206 West Main Street in Morven. Winnie Bennett will personify Ma Bess, Tracy Harrington will portray Sarah, Eukyta Little will represent Mary, and Telesha Heilig will share Celie's story. Other activities to share historical information about life during slavery will also be featured: poetic reflections, songs created during slavery, and the "plantation ring shout." This event is sponsored by the Morven Chapter of Las Amigas.

This production is based on research conducted by Winnie M. Bennett of Morven. Bennett has compiled information about her family; in particular, about her ancestors who may be buried at the Enslaved Persons Cemetery located at Providence Presbyterian Church in Matthews, NC. While the narratives shared in this production are not the actual lived stories of the enslaved women themselves, the stories are based on African-American history and information gathered from the Federal Writer's Project (Slave Narratives) of 1935.

After learning of her family's connection to Providence Presbyterian Church in Matthews, and conducting research using *Ancestry.com* and the actual records of the church, Bennett contacted staff at Providence Presbyterian Church and from there she was referred to Dr. Julia Moore at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Dr. Moore has uncovered cemeteries of enslaved persons at Presbyterian Churches in the Charlotte area and she gave Bennett more information on the cemetery.

"I visited the Enslaved Person's Cemetery at Providence," said Bennett, "and I was moved as I walked among the crosses. The cemetery seemed peaceful, but there were no names on the crosses. I felt compelled to honor those buried there in some way." She also says she learned from speaking with Dr. Moore that there exists many enslaved persons cemeteries throughout this area and, in fact, throughout the South. But, they are hidden away and in many instances, there are no markers at all.

The presentation on Saturday, March 9 is to say the names of some of Bennett's ancestors and to encourage other African-Americans to learn the names of their enslaved ancestors and to uncover their stories if they can.

"In the lives of most enslaved persons, through the time of the Civil War, Black people were considered chattel, little above animals, and their names weren't even recorded on the Census as human beings," says Bennett.

But, enslaved persons made important contributions to the communities in which they lived. It's why she feels it's so imperative to learn their names, and then say their names, and, if possible, find out their stories and then tell their stories. Their stories make up and contribute in important ways to the history of this country.



**Winnie M. Bennett
as Ma Bess**



**Tracy Harrington
as Sarah**



**Eukyta Little
as Mary**



**Telesha Heilig
as Celie**

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VISION SOURCE

Apply For NC Pre-Kindergarten Today

Anson County Partnership for Children is accepting applications for NC Pre-K, a Kindergarten readiness initiative that is proven to help four-year-olds gain basic skills needed for success in elementary school. Children who are four years of age before August 31, 2023, are eligible to apply for this high-quality program, which is free to qualifying families.

"Pre-K is a place where children learn skills that are vital to child development. NC Pre-K children learn how to socialize, make their own decisions, and interact with others. These are all important skills for child development. To make the transition to kindergarten easier, children learn eye contact, gain self-confidence, develop work efficiency, create a stronger attention span, and work on temper control," said Karen Gerald, Child Care Services Coordinator, Anson County Partnership for Children.

Not only are children who attended Pre-K more successful in school, they usually have higher grade point averages and are more likely to graduate high school and college.

NC Pre-K classes operate on a regular school calendar and are designed to address emotional and social development, physical health, language development, and cognitive functioning. Through the incorporation of indoor and outdoor learning environments, students participate in active learning experiences to foster a lifetime love of learning.

A high priority is placed on serving children who meet the following criteria: child's family is at or below 75% of the state median income level, a disability has been identified, limited English proficiency, developmental differences, chronic health conditions, or a parent who is active military service personnel.

There are currently four centers operating NC Pre-K classes in Anson County. These classrooms are located at Anson Children's Center, Central Center for Children and Families, C's & T's Childcare, Morven Elementary School, and Open Doors Center for Children.

Parents or guardians interested in learning more about the NC Pre-K program should contact Karen Gerald at 704-694-4036 (Ext. 105) or karen.gerald@anson-children.org. Applications are available in the Partnership's Early Childhood Resource Center located at 115 East Morgan Street or online at: www.ansonchildren.org.

Know the Warning Signs and Symptoms of Stroke

Make sure you can spot the symptoms in yourself and a loved one

Strokes are one of the top three causes of death in the United States and the leading cause of long-term disability. What's more, North Carolina is located in what researchers call the stroke belt, meaning the death rates for stroke are highest in this area compared to the rest of the United States.

While most stroke cases are unpredictable, identifying warning signs as soon as possible can make a big difference in how someone is treated for and recovers from a stroke.

"Symptoms can include weakness on one side of the body, numbness, confusion, fatigue, dizziness, blurred vision, a severe headache and potentially paralysis," says Joe Bernard, MD, an interventional radiologist at Carolinas HealthCare System. "However, each stroke case has its own unique combination of signs and symptoms, so not everyone will experience all of them simultaneously nor at the same level of intensity."

F.A.S.T is an easy way to remember the signs of stroke. If you spot these signs in yourself or a loved one, you should call 911 immediately.

- **Face Drooping:** Does one side of the face droop, or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person's smile uneven?
- **Arm Weakness:** Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- **Speech Difficulty:** Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like "The sky is blue." Is the sentence repeated correctly?
- **Time to call 911:** If someone shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get the person to the hospital immediately. Check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared.

Some lifestyle choices and medical conditions can put you at a higher risk of stroke. Some examples include:

- Poor nutrition
- Lack of physical activity
- Smoking
- High stress
- High blood pressure

By making an effort every day to move more, eat more fruits and vegetables, get more sleep, quit smoking and regularly checking your blood pressure, you can cut down on your risk of having a stroke.

To learn more about stroke care visit stroke.org.

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