

Fairfax County Government and Cox
proudly present



Unite, Uplift and Celebrate!
The Value of Telling Our Stories



A Black History Month Event

Friday, February 23, 2024 | 5:30 p.m.
Fairfax County Government Center
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, Virginia





Reception

5:30 – 6:20 p.m.

Featured ArtistTony Craddick Jr.
Saxophonist

Program

6:20 – 7:00 p.m.

WelcomeNelfred “Tilly” Blanding, Mistress of Ceremony
Retiree, Fairfax County Government

“Lift Every Voice and Sing”Musical Selection Led by Naketa Proctor
Fairfax County Department of Family Services

Invocation..... Sean Miller
Reverend and Associate Minister at People’s Union Baptist Church

Proclamation/Remarks.....Jeffrey C. McKay, Chairman
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

Performance.....Westgate School Age Child Care (SACC) Program

RemarksRodney L. Lusk
Franconia District Supervisor

Remarks.....Bryan J. Hill, County Executive
Fairfax County Government

Musical Selection.....Simone Paulwell
Soprano

PerformanceHollin Meadows Majorettes
Hollin Meadows Elementary School

PerformanceHerndon High School Step Team



“Lift Every Voice & Sing”

James Weldon Johnson

*Lift ev'ry voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.*

*Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.*

*Stony the road we trod, Bitter the chast'ning rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat, Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?*

*We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past, Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.*

*God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thy might, Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.*

*Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee; Shadowed beneath Thy hand, May we
forever stand,
True to our God, True to our native land.*



MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES



Nelfred "Tilly" Blanding
Retiree

COUNTY OFFICIALS



Jeffrey McKay
*Chairman At-Large,
Fairfax County Board of
Supervisors*



Rodney L. Lusk
*Franconia District Supervisor
Fairfax County Board of
Supervisors*



Bryan C. Hill
*County Executive
Fairfax County Government*

**BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH**

Fairfax County and Cox present:

Unite, Uplift and Celebrate!

ENTERTAINMENT



**Tony
Craddock Jr.**
Saxophonist



**Westgate
SACC**



**Naketa
Proctor**
Singer



**Hollin
Meadows
Elementary
School
Majorettes**



**Simone
Paulwell**
Soprano



**Herndon
High School
Step Team**



Main Event

7 – 8:00 p.m.

Board Auditorium

Musical SelectionSimone Paulwell, Soprano

Introduction of Panelists.....Nelfred “Tilly” Blanding, Mistress of Ceremony

Panel Discussion: “The Value of Telling Our Stories”Panelists

The Conversation

The Value of Telling Our Stories

Facilitator:

Brian Heintz, Teacher at Fairfax County Public Schools

Panelists:

Marion Dobbins, Historian and Ethnographer

Brenda Faison, Director of Christian Education and Missions for Bethlehem Baptist Church

Mary Lipsey, Retired Teacher

Sean Miller, Teacher and the History and Social Studies Department Chair at Fairfax County Public Schools

Etta Willson, Co-author of the book Black Communities of Fairfax: a History

Audience Q&A

Closing RemarksNelfred “Tilly” Blanding



ABOUT THE PANEL

MARION DOBBINS, Marion is an Ethnographer, Oral Historian, Public speaker, Educator, and Living History interpreter. She brings life to those persons whose legacies are lost to the next generation. Marion does this through Research, Public Speaking, Oral Histories, and Interpreting, creating the important intersection of past and present. Marion presents information in a creative platform such as 18th-century cooking demonstrations at Monticello, sharing information on plantation life, Juneteenth celebrations, educating on farm life at Ben Lomond, and the Battle of Bull Run’s Sesquicentennial, to name a few. Marion has lectured at UVA, her alma mater, George Mason University, and the Fairfax County History Commission.



BRIAN HEINTZ, Brian Heintz earned his B.A. in History from Kalamazoo College and M.A. in Humanities from Central Michigan University. This Fall will mark his 30th year as a classroom teacher. A Fairfax resident since 2003, he has taught at West Springfield High School since 2007, where he runs the unique Applied History program which is a non-curricular 1st semester “thought laboratory,” and places students in 2nd semester internships at sites including George Washington’s Mount Vernon, The National Mall and Memorial Parks, and the National Museum of the Marine Corps. He is also a frequent contributor to colloquiums and workshops for the National Council for History Education. He was the 2012 Gilder-Lehrman Virginia History Teacher of the Year but is most proud of Applied History research that revealed a story of enslaved persons on the school property that is now incorporated in West Springfield’s history instruction and will be the focus of a historical marker soon.



BRENDA FAISON, Brenda Faison serves as the Director of Christian Education and Missions at Bethlehem Baptist Church. Brenda began her professional career as Director of Media Services for Guilford College, Greensboro, North Carolina. Her love for working with youth and young adults led her to pursue and earn a degree in counseling. She has worked as Director of Guidance (Hallsboro High School, Whiteville, NC 1978-1979) and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Howard University, Washington, DC (1980-1991). In 2008 she led the Christian Education Ministry in the implementation of a summer youth enrichment program for children ages 8-15. In 2013 under her leadership the Summer Youth Empowerment Program was recognized as a “Best Practice” program by First Lady Michelle Obama. In 2023, Brenda advocated for and helped Bethlehem Baptist Church and the New Gum Springs Civic Association secure a historical marker in honor of Annie E. Harper, a member of Bethlehem Baptist Church who was instrumental in the elimination of the poll tax. Harper v. Virginia State Board of Elections, 383 U.S. 663 (1966), was a case in which the U.S. Supreme Court found that Virginia’s poll tax was unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment. The Twenty-fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution (1964) prohibited poll taxes in federal elections. Five states (Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Texas and Virginia) continued to require poll taxes for voters in state elections. The Supreme Court’s ruling in Harper’s case banned poll taxes in state elections. Annie E. Harper’s efforts made it possible for all African American citizens in Virginia to freely vote and for ending this method of disenfranchisement at the polls.





ABOUT THE PANEL

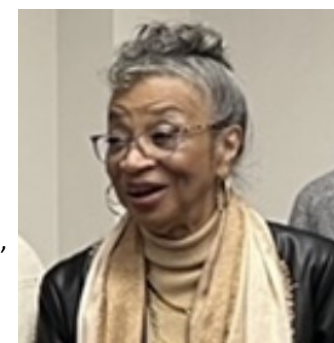
MARY LIPSEY, Mary retired in June 2023 after teaching seventh grade American History for almost thirty years in Fairfax County. Her love of history led her to research and write about local history. Recently she has been delving into Fairfax County’s African American history to help create the African American History Inventory. The goal of the inventory is to capture, communicate, and preserve the African American experience throughout Fairfax County’s history.



SEAN MILLER, Sean serves as a History and Social Studies Department Chair and Teacher for Fairfax County Public Schools. As an Equity Lead, he worked with his school district to conduct social studies curriculum audits in cultural responsiveness and antiracism. Sean received the Virginia Council for the Social Studies Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Excellence in Teaching Award in 2023 and George Washington’s Mount Vernon History Teacher of the Year Award in 2021. Sean is also an ordained Reverend and Associate Minister at People’s Union Baptist Church (King George, VA).



ETTA WILLSON, Etta grew up in the Fairfax City area and was privy to some of its history firsthand. She partnered with local authors Rita Colbert, Linneall Naylor, Rondia Prescott, and Jenee Lindner to chronicle the history of the Black communities in the area by co-writing the book “Black Communities of Fairfax: a History”. This Black History Month, the City of Fairfax is recognizing their work. The excerpt from the book reads “The story of Black Fairfax has long been untold. The free Black population of Fairfax Court House dates to at least the 1820s. After the Civil War, newly freed Black citizens expanded the hamlet of Jermantown dramatically. Additional segregated neighborhoods, including School Street, which overlapped today’s George Mason University, and Ilda, off Guinea Road, grew and thrived. In the second half of the nineteenth century residents built schools, churches, and a cemetery. These families persevered under Jim Crow in the early twentieth century. After incorporation, the City of Fairfax annexed these historically Black localities, and their separate character began to disappear. This group of authors with deep roots in Fairfax tells the stories of their communities.”





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We proudly support Fairfax County's Black History Month Celebration

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Special thanks to the following persons and organizations for their support of this event:

- Jeffrey C. McKay, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
- Rodney L. Lusk, Franconia District Supervisor
- Bryan J. Hill, Fairfax County Executive
- Cox
- Co-Authors of Black Communities In Fairfax: a History
- Fairfax County Fire and Rescue
- Fairfax County Channel 16
- Fairfax County Department of Cable and Consumer Affairs
- Fairfax County Department of Family Services, Foster Care and Adoption
- Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services
- Fairfax County Health Department
- Fairfax/Falls Church Community Services Board
- Fairfax County History Commission
- Fairfax County Library Early Literacy Program
- Fairfax County Meeting Space Management and Event Support
- Fairfax County NAACP
- Fairfax County Park Authority
- Fairfax County Police Department
- Growth and Healing Hub
- Karen Goff
- Kelly Naylor
- Nancy McDonough
- One Fairfax
- What The Chef Catering

Black History Month Committee Members

- | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Tilly Blanding | Terry Henderson | Marlon Murphy | Jernita Smith |
| Ramona Carroll | DeShane Jones | Naketa Proctor | Dale Wallace |
| Chelsi Conaway | Emma Marshall | Andrea Richardson | Paul Woods |

The Black History Month Committee thanks you for attending. We hope to see you next year!



Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations made upon request.

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