Black History Month Events in Newport News

Newport News, VA, Jan. 24, 2020 – From a theater production to a planetarium show and special “pop-up” activities, Newport News has a number of ways to celebrate the African-American experience to commemorate Black History Month in February. Check out our list below:

**Warriors Don’t Cry at the Ferguson Center for the Arts**
When a contemporary teen activist is on the brink of giving up a fight for social justice, she finds inspiration in the story of the Little Rock Nine, the battle to integrate Little Rock Central High School in 1957. Inspired by Dr. Melba Pattillo Beals’ memoir *Warriors Don’t Cry*, this production is a catalyst for deeper discussion about gun violence, social responsibility, civil discourse, social media, and community engagement. Admission is $8. All seats are in the Grand Tier section of Diamonstein Concert Hall at the Ferguson Center for the Arts. Suited for students in grades 6 through 12, the production will be shown at 11:30 a.m. on Feb. 11. Click [here](#) for details.

**Black History Month at the Virginia Living Museum**
The Virginia Living Museum will celebrate Black History Month with information and “pop-up” activities relating to the work of four African-American environmentalists. Check with the front desk for specific dates and times for the following topics of discussion, which will take place on the upper level of the museum:

- **Dr. Erica Holloman**, the first African-American woman to graduate with a doctorate in marine science from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Holloman currently owns and works at an environmental consulting firm which focuses on engaging urban areas in community-based environmental solutions.
- **Bryant Terry**, a James Beard award-winning vegan chef at the Museum of the African Diaspora. Terry is an educator and activist who promotes using locally grown, sourced or raised food products to support communities and keep food as fresh as possible.
- **Majora Carter**, an urban revitalization strategist focused on green spaces in cities, sustainable economic growth, and environmental and public health.
- **Audrey and Frank Peterman**, advocates for people of color to become more engaged in spending time outdoors, enjoying nature, and utilizing public lands.

Also, the Virginia Living Museum will offer a FREE planetarium show, featuring an African-American family’s desperate flight to freedom and how they used the night sky to guide their way. *Follow the Drinking Gourd: A Quest for Freedom* will take you back to the days when freedom was nothing more than a dream for those held in slavery. Some looked to a certain constellation for hope, with its bright shining star. The planetarium production incorporates historical images, original artwork, and music into a timeless experience, based on the children’s book written and illustrated by Jeanette Winter. Enjoy the show at 4:30 p.m. each Saturday in February at the Virginia Living Museum (museum admission is not required to see the show).

**Black History Series at The Mariners’ Museum**
Through programs, living history, and hands-on activities for children and adults, The Mariners’ Museum will commemorate Black History Month every Saturday during the month of February with the following:

- 10 a.m., Feb. 8: *Africans and African Americans in the Maritime World* – Discover the influences of Africans and African Americans across the centuries and throughout the maritime world.
- 1 p.m. Feb. 15: *Nathan Richardson portrays Frederick Douglass* – Poet, author, and spoken-word performer Nathan
M. Richardson captures completely the physical and spiritual essence of the great writer, orator, and abolitionist Frederick Douglass. Experience living history through his performance, with special emphasis on the part of Douglass’s life working in the shipyards in Fells Point, Baltimore, MD.

- 10 a.m. Feb. 22: African Maritime Collage – In this hands-on program, visitors will experiment with collage as a powerful form of artistic expression. Using African fabrics, found objects, embellishments and photographs from our collection, participants will learn how to create collages with personal meaning in celebration of Black History Month.
- 10 a.m. Feb. 29: Anansi the Trickster – Throughout the ages, Africans have used storytelling to teach life lessons, entertain, and explain the workings of the world. In this entertaining and educational program, the audience will listen to some of these stories and learn how African storytellers incorporated music to tell their tales. The audience will then become part of the storytelling by using their own handmade musical instruments as they discover how stories crossed the Atlantic to the Americas.

The Mariners’ Museum will also commemorate Black History Month with its Maritime Mondays, designed for children 18 months to 8 years old. Typically, Maritime Mondays combines a maritime story-time with a craft to teach children how we are all connected to the world’s waters; however, February’s book selections were chosen in honor of Black History Month:

- Feb. 3: The Water Princess, written by Susan Verde and illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds.
- Feb. 10: Earth Mother, written by Ellen Jackson and illustrated by Leo & Diane Dillon.
- Feb. 17: The Coming of Night: A Yoruba Tale from West Africa, written by James Rioirdan and illustrated by Jenny Stow.
- Feb. 24: The Spider Weaver: A Legend of Kente Cloth, written by Margaret Musgrove and illustrated by Julia Cairns.

Maritime Mondays is held at 10:30 a.m. every Monday and is included with the museum’s $1 admission.

Black History Month at the Newsome House Museum & Cultural Center
The Newsome House Museum & Cultural Center honors the legacy of Joseph Thomas Newsome by engaging the public in an ongoing study and remembrance of African-American history and culture. Join them in February for these special Black History Month events:

- 1 to 3 p.m. Feb. 1: A Look Into Our History – This program will feature Nathan Richardson as Frederick Douglass and includes a performance from the United States Colored Troops Ensemble. The event, which begins at 1 p.m., is free and open to the public. Call 757-247-2360 for details.
- Feb. 8-29: 100 Years Strong – An exhibition of Huntington High School (with its opening reception at 2 p.m. Feb. 8). Join The Newsome House Foundation Board as they commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the first black high school in Newport News. Take a walk down memory lane and peruse Huntington High School yearbooks in celebration of this milestone anniversary.
- 12 noon to 5 p.m. Feb. 23: Calling all former Huntington High students – Tell your story and be a part of a documentary honoring the great legacy of Huntington High School. Filming will take place at the Newsome House. If you cannot make it and would still like to tell your story, call 757-247-2360 to sign up for a different date/time. This project is created and sponsored by SEEDAHOPE Productions and the Newsome House Foundation Board.
- 12 noon Feb. 29: Pass It On! – A Black History Month presentation, featuring The Weyanoke Association. Soak in the culture, make a craft, and share good food! The Newsome House invites you to this special program and potluck. Bring a dish to share. Free and open to the public.

For more information about these and other February events, call the Newport News Visitor Center at 757-886-7777. Also, be sure to visit our website for events coming in the weeks and months ahead.

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