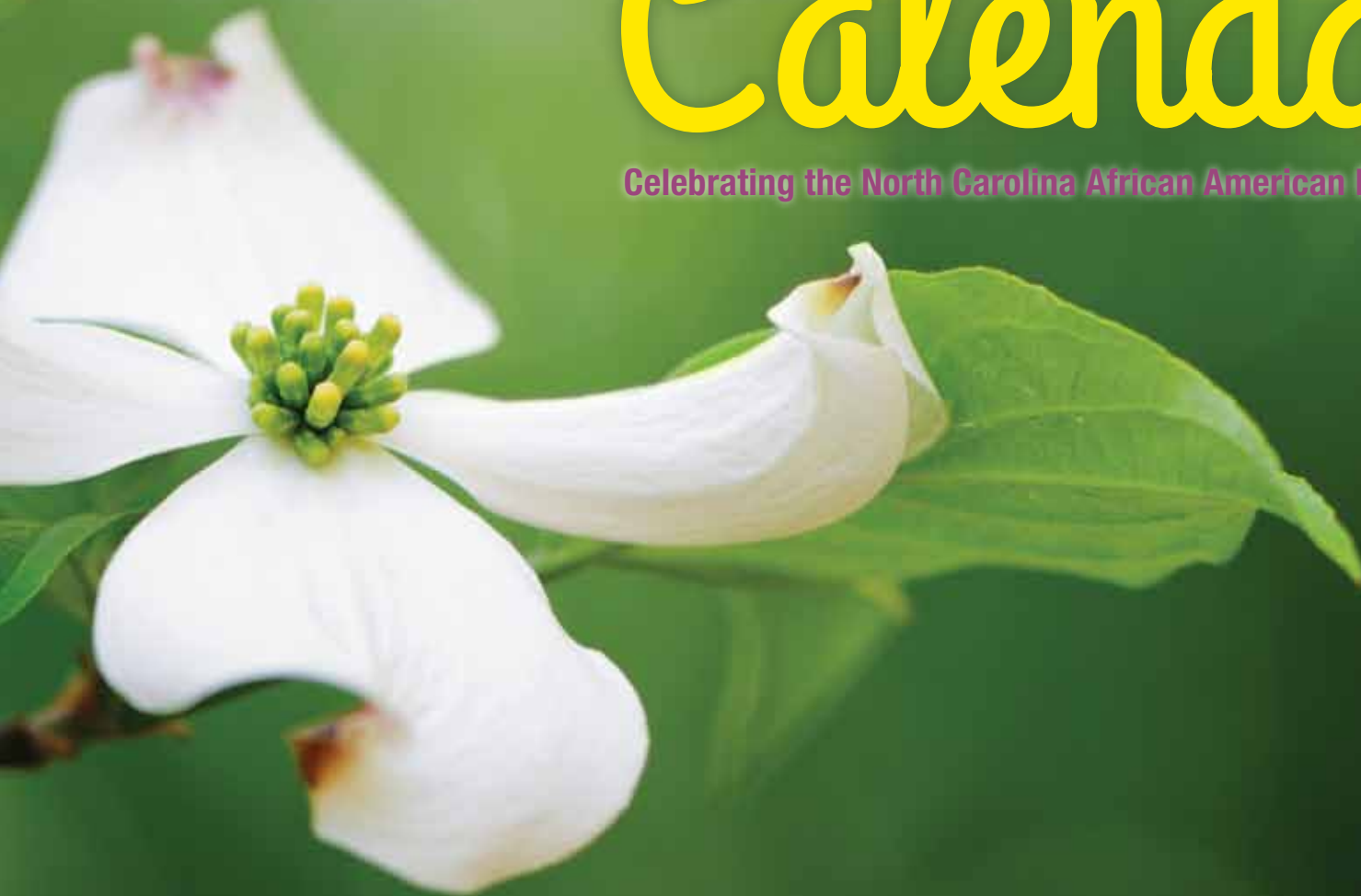


The Heritage Calendar 2015

Celebrating the North Carolina African American Experience



Presented by



Dear Students, Educators, and Friends,

Far more than dates or places, history is actually the story of people whose actions and achievements infuse dates and places with new significance while informing and inspiring generations.

“The Heritage Calendar: Celebrating the NC African American Experience” project is designed to honor North Carolina history makers, men and women of all races who have contributed significantly to the lives and experiences of African Americans in our state. The extraordinary individuals featured in the 2015 Edition represent achievements in many fields, including education, medicine, civil rights, community service, business, music and the media. Some will likely be familiar to you, while others are unsung heroes. Yet all have played an invaluable role in weaving the rich tapestry of who we are as North Carolinians and our state is richer because of them.

We appreciate the continuing involvement and support of our community partners: The News & Observer, Capitol Broadcasting Company/WRAL-TV, The School of Journalism and Mass Communications at UNC-Chapel Hill, the Sheraton Raleigh Hotel, and PNC Bank. The N.C. Department of Public Instruction has again developed unique educational resources which will allow teachers to utilize the printed or online versions of the 2015 Heritage Calendar in their classrooms.

Just as the Calendar reflects efforts to bring people together, AT&T is working hard to connect individuals and communities to opportunities through communications. We continue to invest aggressively in the newest technologies, such as mobile broadband and Internet Protocol (IP) systems, to deliver the products and services customers need today and in the future.

The individuals featured in the 2015 Edition of The Heritage Calendar are role models through their integrity, vision, and dedication to excellence. We are privileged to present their stories and hope you will find them as inspiring as we have.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Venessa Harrison".

Venessa Harrison
President, AT&T North Carolina



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL





Appreciation

The *Heritage Calendar: Celebrating the North Carolina African American Experience* project is made possible by the commitment and talents of many people. AT&T would like to thank the leadership of the NC Department of Education for their vision for how the project could be used in classrooms, the team of educators who wrote the lesson plans and supporting curriculum material available on the website, and the team from the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Journalism and Mass Communication who wrote the profiles of the 2015 honorees. For more information about the honorees and additional educational materials, or to nominate a future honoree, please go to www.ncheritagecalendar.com. Scan code to learn more about the NC Heritage Calendar.

Educational Partners

State Board of Education NC Department of Public Instruction

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University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Susan King, Dean
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Student Writers:

Olivia C. Cox, Carter B. Gregory,
Mary Tyler March and Amanda K. Lee

For more information about the honorees and additional educational materials, or to nominate a future honoree, please go to www.ncheritagecalendar.com.

Hashtag: [#ncheritage](https://twitter.com/ncheritage)

Scan code to learn more about the NC Heritage Calendar.



Robert J. Brown

Calling Robert J. Brown a businessman and philanthropist may be technically accurate, but it is woefully insufficient, for the lives of millions worldwide have been touched by his commitment to service.

A native of High Point, Brown began his career in 1956 as a police officer, later becoming a Special Agent with the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

In 1960 he founded B&C International Inc., a public relations, marketing and consulting firm where he is still Chairman and Chief Executive Officer.

As he was capitalizing on opportunities to grow his business, he realized he also had a responsibility to fight for equal opportunities for all African Americans. Becoming involved in the civil rights movement, he worked closely with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., helping raise substantial funds for the movement and participating in protests.

In 1968, Brown took a leave of absence from his company to serve as a Special Assistant to President Richard Nixon during Nixon's first term, returning to B&C Associates in 1973.

During his career, Brown enjoyed traveling frequently to South Africa, though he was increasingly troubled by the shortage of books and the impact that had on children. A strong believer in the value of education, he created the South Africa BookSmart Foundation in 1993, dedicated to helping children who had never owned a book or visited a library.

"My grandmother was the greatest inspiration in my life," he says. "And she always told me that at the end of the day, all that matters is how much good can you do, not how much money you have."

Now renamed the International BookSmart Foundation, Brown's creation has shipped more than five million books to more than 300 schools and libraries, opening new worlds and new opportunities for children.



Photo courtesy of Robert J. Brown

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January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 NEW YEAR'S DAY Emancipation Proclamation issued in 1863	2 William Lloyd Garrison began publishing The Liberator, an abolitionist newspaper, in 1831	3 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. was elected chairperson of the House Committee on Education and Labor in 1961
4 Grace Bumbry, opera singer, was born in 1937	5 Freedom Rides began in 1961 George Washington Carver was an American scientist, botanist, educator, and inventor who died in 1943	6 The World Slavery Convention opened in London, 1831 John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie, famed musician, died in 1993	7 Marian Anderson made her debut in the Metropolitan Opera House in 1955	8 Fannie M. Jackson, first African American woman college graduate in the US, was born in 1836. Butterfly McQueen, actress, was born in 1911	9 Fisk University established in Nashville, TN in 1866	10 Southern Christian Leadership Conference founded in 1957
11 Charles W. Anderson becomes first African American member of the Kentucky Legislature in 1936	12 Lorraine Hansberry, author of the play A Raisin in the Sun, died in New York City in 1965	13 Don Barksdale became the first African American person to play in an NBA All-Star Game in 1954	14 John Oliver Killens, novelist, was born in 1916	15 Martin Luther King, Jr. was an American clergyman, Activist, and prominent leader in the African American Civil Rights Movement, was born in 1929	16 Jefferson Franklin Long took an oath of office as first African American Congressman from Georgia in 1871	17 Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali), is an American former prof. boxer, was born in 1942 Michelle Obama, the first African American First Lady of the U.S., was born in 1964
18 Robert C. Weaver became first African American president cabinet member in 1966 Reggie Jackson, baseball player, was born in 1946	19 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY UCLA renames its social science buildings to honor alumnus Ralph Bunche in 1969	20 Barack Obama sworn in as the first African American President in 2009	21 William Bron Chapell, pioneer, was born in 1906	22 James Robert Gladden becomes first African American certified in orthopedic surgery in 1949	23 Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, pioneer in surgery, founded Provident Hospital in Chicago in 1889	24 Coach Clarence "Big House" Gaines won record 800th college basketball game in 1990
25 Sojourner Truth addressed the first Black Women's Rights Convention in 1851	26 Bessie Coleman, first African American aviator, was born in 1892 Angela Davis, activist, was born in 1944	27 Leontyne Price, world-renowned opera singer, made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1961 Barber Scotia College was founded in 1867	28 Astronaut Ronald McNair died in Challenger explosion in 1986	29 Oprah Winfrey, American media proprietor, talk show host, actress, producer, and philanthropist, was born in 1954	30 Dan T. Blue Jr. was elected as the first African American Speaker of the House in North Carolina in 1991	31 Jackie Robinson, first African American baseball player in the major leagues, was born in 1919

William Henry Curry

Leaders find inspiration in many places. Some are stirred by competition or social injustice or economic opportunity. For William Henry Curry, music is his motivation.

“Through music, we gain the power to inspire others,” he says.

Curry is the first African American to serve as resident conductor of the North Carolina Symphony. Now in his 19th season with the Symphony, he also serves as the artistic director for the Summerfest series and for all summer programs.

He was appointed the Music Director and Conductor of the Durham Symphony in 2009.

Each time he picks up his conductor’s baton his goal is to help his audience experience the emotions unlocked by music.

“I am extremely lucky to enable others to enter this world with me and experience a shared love for music,” says Curry. “It’s one thing to love something, but it’s far more beautiful if I can share it with someone.”

A viola player since childhood, Curry conducted his first performance at age 14 at the suggestion of his music teacher. Today, he is known world-wide, having conducted more than 40 orchestras across the U.S. and in Asia.

He is also a composer, placing him in the footsteps of one of his childhood heroes, the legendary conductor, composer and teacher Leonard Bernstein.

“Like Bernstein, I am intrigued by every aspect of music, not just conducting,” says Curry. “I see myself following in the same ideals.”

While the gap between classical and other musical genres has widened over the years, Curry believes in the ability of classical to overcome racial differences.

“After a period of embracing pride in our African American culture, how can we not come together and embrace the entire world,” he says. “Through music we create this harmony and embrace all cultures.

“Mozart is for everyone.”



Photo courtesy of William Henry Curry

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February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Four black college students, Joseph McNeil, Franklin McCain, David Richmond and Ezell Blair, refused to leave after being denied service at a "whites-only" lunch counter in Greensboro, N.C., in 1960	2 GROUNDHOG DAY Ernest E. Just, biologist, received the Spingarn Medal for pioneering research on fertilization and cell division, in 1915	3 Geraldine McCullough won the Widener Gold Medal for Sculpture in 1965 15th Amendment, upholding a citizen's right to vote, was enacted in 1870	4 Rosa Parks, civil rights activist, was born in 1913	5 Henry "Hank" Aaron, the home run king of Major League Baseball, was born in 1934	6 Robert Tanner Jackson becomes first African American to receive a degree in dentistry in 1867	7 Eubie Blake, pianist, was born in 1883
8 Oprah Winfrey became the first African American woman to host a nationally syndicated talk show in 1986	9 Bernard Harris became the first African American astronaut to take a spacewalk in 1995	10 Roberta Flack, singer, was born in 1937	11 Clifford Alexander, Jr., became the first African American Secretary of the Army in 1977	12 LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States, was born in 1809 NAACP was founded in 1909	13 Joseph L. Searles became the first African American member of the New York Stock Exchange in 1970	14 VALENTINE'S DAY New registration law in Tennessee abolished racial distinctions in voting in 1867
15 Henry Lewis was named director of the New Jersey Symphony in 1968	16 PRESIDENT'S DAY WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY Joe Frazier became World Heavyweight Boxing Champion by a knockout in 1970	17 MARDI GRAS Michael Jordan, basketball player, was born in 1963	18 ASH WEDNESDAY Author Toni Morrison (born Chloe Anthony Wofford) was born in 1931	19 William "Smokey" Robinson, singer and songwriter, was born in 1940	20 Frederick Douglass, an American social reformer, orator, writer and statesman. After escaping from slavery, he became a leader of the abolitionist movement. He died in 1895	21 Malcolm X was an African American Muslim minister and human rights activist; he was assassinated in 1965 Barbara Jordan, congresswoman, was born in 1936
22 Frank E. Peterson Jr. was named first African American general in the Marine Corps in 1979 Julius Winfield "Dr. J" Erving II, basketball player, was born in 1950	23 W.E.B. DuBois, American sociologist, historian, civil rights activist, Pan-Africanist, author and editor, was born in 1868	24 Rebecca Lee became the first African American woman to receive an M.D. degree in 1864	25 Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) won World Heavyweight crown in 1964 M&F Bank was chartered in 1907	26 Antoine Dominique, "Fats" Domino, singer, was born in 1928	27 Marian Anderson, opera singer, was born in 1897 Members of the NC African American Heritage Commission were sworn in at the Dept. of Cultural Resources, Raleigh, NC in 2009	28 Hattie McDaniel became the first African American to win an Oscar for her role as Mammy in <i>Gone With The Wind</i> in 1940

Thereasea Elder

Pioneering nurse Thereasea “T.D.” Elder may be happiest when she is making a difference in someone’s life.

“I find joy every day in encouraging other people,” Elder says. “If it’s going to benefit somebody, I want to do it.”

It is a philosophy she has embraced for more than eight decades, both as a nurse and a community activist in Charlotte.

Even as a child, growing up in Charlotte’s Greenville area in the late 1920s, Elder dreamed of being a nurse and helping save lives.

Enrolling at Johnson C. Smith University, Elder enlisted in the U.S. Cadet Nursing program, an initiative of the U.S. Public Health Service to alleviate the World War II shortage of trained nurses. The largest and youngest group of uniformed women to serve their country, cadet nurses worked in civilian and military hospitals on the Home Front, and in public health clinics.

Following the war, she returned to Charlotte, where she became the first African American public health nurse in Mecklenburg County, serving both African American and white patients in their homes.

In addition to investing herself in people, Elder invested in her northwest Mecklenburg County community, Rockwell Park, where she and her husband, Willie, built their home from the ground up. She successfully lobbied for water, sewer and paved roads for the community.

Elder officially retired in 1989, after nearly 50 years in nursing. But retirement simply meant not wearing nurses’ attire as she worked to make life better for others. She participated in voter registration drives, worked with hospice, with teen pregnancy and the American Red Cross.

Several scholarships honor her lifetime of service, including one for Rockwell Park residents, one for nursing students and one from the National Association of Negro Business & Professional Women.

Elder is a life member of Calvary Baptist Church.



Photo courtesy of Thereasea Elder

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March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Ralph Ellison, American novelist, literary critic, and scholar best known for his novel <i>Invisible Man</i> , which won the National Book Award in 1953, was born in 1914	2 Carole Gist was crowned first Black Miss USA in 1990	3 Freedmen's Bureau established by federal government to aid newly freed slaves in 1865 Elizabeth City State University was founded in NC in 1891	4 Poll tax ruled unconstitutional in 1966 Garrett A. Morgan, scientist and inventor, was born in 1877	5 William H. Hastie confirmed as Federal District Judge of the Virgin Islands in 1937 Blanche Kelso Bruce of Mississippi elected to full term in U.S. Senate in 1875	6 U.S. Supreme Court issues Dred Scott decision in 1857	7 Slavery abolished in New York in 1799 Selma March began in Selma, Alabama in 1965
8 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS BEGINS The United Nations formally proclaimed March 8 Int'l Women's Day in 1975 Phyllis Mae Dailey was the first African American inducted into the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps in 1945	9 North Carolina A&T State University was founded in 1891 Clifton Wharton is sworn in as ambassador to Norway in 1961	10 Harriett Tubman, an African American abolitionist & humanitarian died in 1913 Jackie Robinson made his professional baseball debut with the Montreal Royals in 1946	11 Lorraine Hansberry's play, <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> , opened on Broadway in 1959	12 Former Chancellor John Harrelson dies in 1955; a graduate of NC State, Harrelson served in various positions at the college for 46 years, including 19 years as Chancellor.	13 <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> by Harriet Beecher Stowe was published in 1852	14 Livingstone College founded in Salisbury, NC in 1879 Fannie Lou Hamer, activist, died in 1977
15 Marcus Garvey, Black nationalist, arrived in America from Jamaica in 1916 <i>Los Angeles Sentinel</i> founded by Leon H. Washington in 1933	16 <i>Freedom's Journal</i> founded in 1827	17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY Nat King Cole, singer, was born in 1919	18 Charley Pride, country singer, was born in 1938	19 James B. Parsons became the first Black chief judge of a federal court in 1975	20 SPRING BEGINS	21 Quincy Jones, composer and musician, was born in 1933
22	23 Dr. Jerome H. Holland elected to the board of directors of the New York Stock Exchange in 1972	24	25	26	27 Sarah Lois Vaughan, jazz singer known as "The Divine One", was born in 1924 Mariah Carey, Grammy-winning singer, songwriter, and actress, was born in 1970	28 First cadets graduate from flying school at Tuskegee Institute in 1942
29 PALM SUNDAY Pearl Mae Bailey, an American actress and singer who won a Tony Award for the title role in the all-black production of <i>Hello, Dolly!</i> , was born in 1918	30	31 Jack Johnson, first African American heavyweight champion, was born in 1878				

James E. Ford

James E. Ford is a man on a mission, driven by the challenges and opportunities he sees as a world history teacher at Garinger High School in Charlotte.

“I have learned that my life standpoint is to help students maximize their potential and reach their full development,” he says. “Assisting a child to realize who they are and then watching them blossom is great motivation.”

In recognition of his ability to help students think beyond the easy answer, Ford was named North Carolina’s Teacher of the Year for 2014.

“Understanding the history of African Americans in this state and being able to contribute just another bullet point to that narrative, is an unspeakable honor,” says Ford.

It would likely gratify the man Ford credits as the greatest influence on his career: Bill Cosby.

“He was not a teacher in the traditional sense of a classroom,” says Ford. “But he found so many ways to dedicate his craft to the underlying principle of educating young people.”

Ford began his teaching career in Rockford, Illinois, moving to North Carolina in 2010. He recalls his hometown as “racially polarizing.”

“Rockford taught me that through any racial adversity, I may bend, but I am not going to break—I refuse to break,” states Ford.

He sought to impart this determination to young people he worked with in his earlier careers as a truancy intervention specialist and director of a teen center. He continues to emphasize it to his students today, wanting them to remember that each has a responsibility to leave the world better than they found it.

“None of us controls the hands we’re dealt,” he says. “But in this interdependent society, we have a human obligation to stand up for what is right and initiate the changes we want to see.”



Photo courtesy of James Ford

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April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 APRIL FOOL'S DAY Hampton Institute was chartered in 1870 as one of the first colleges for blacks in Hampton, Virginia	2 John Thompson became the first African American coach to win the NCAA basketball tournament in 1984	3 GOOD FRIDAY PASSOVER BEGINS Carter G. Woodson, the father of African American history, died in 1950	4 Maya Angelou, author and poet, was born in 1928
5 EASTER SUNDAY Colin Powell, statesman and retired four-star general in the U.S. Army who was the 65th U.S. Sec. of State, serving under Pres. George W. Bush (2001-05), was born 1937	6 Robert E. Perry and Matthew Henson reached the North Pole in 1909	7 Billie Holliday, blues singer, was born in 1917 Johnson C. Smith University was founded in Charlotte, NC in 1867	8 Hank Aaron hit his 715th home run in 1974	9 Civil Rights Bill granting citizenship passed in 1866	10 Richard Allen was made Bishop of the AME Church in 1916	11 PASSOVER ENDS Spelman College was founded in Atlanta, GA in 1881
12 Free African Society organized in 1787	13 Tiger Woods became the youngest person and the first person of color to win the Masters Golf Championship in 1997	14 The first abolition society in the U.S. was founded in Pennsylvania in 1775	15 TAX DAY Jackie Robinson made his Major League debut with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947	16 Founding of Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee in 1960	17 Ralph David Abernathy Sr., a leader of the American Civil Rights Movement and minister, died in 1990	18 Alex Haley won the Pulitzer Prize for <i>Roots</i> in 1977
19 Cheyney State College is the oldest of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities in America; founded in Philadelphia, PA in 1837	20 Harriet Tubman started working on the Underground Railroad in 1853	21 Pvt. Milton L. Olive III, was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1966	22 EARTH DAY Charles Mingus, bassist, composer, pianist and bandleader, was born in 1922	23 Granville T. Woods, inventor of more than 40 products, was born in 1856	24 The United Negro College Fund was established in 1944	25 Ella Fitzgerald, singer, was born in 1917
26 William "Count" Basie, jazz pianist and musician, died in 1984	27 Coretta Scott King, activist and wife of Martin Luther King, Jr., was born in 1927	28 Samuel L. Gravely became first African American admiral in the U.S. Navy in 1962	29 "Duke" Ellington, musician and composer, was born in 1899	30 Wallace Saunders wrote the song "Casey Jones" in 1900		

Judge George Greene

If you didn't know what George Greene did for a living, it would have been difficult to guess he was a judge.

"He was truly one of a kind," his wife, Ruby Greene, recalls. "So many folks are so holier-than-thou on and off the bench. But he was definitely every man's judge. He was a character and he wore that robe lightly."

The first African American jurist elected in Wake County, Greene served more than 20 years as a Superior Court and District Court judge, gaining a reputation for tempering justice with mercy and a common-sense approach to punishment.

First offenders who appeared in his court often received a stern lecture and a sentence that included some alternative to incarceration, along with community service.

"He assured them if they came before him again, things would be different and he would 'throw the book' at them," Mrs. Greene recalls. "They really didn't want to hear that lecture again."

Greene's commitment to fairness and equal opportunity in his courtroom reflected his earlier career as a civil rights attorney in Raleigh. In addition to representing Shaw University and St. Augustine's College students arrested during the lunch-counter sit-ins in the 1960s, Greene was often involved in initiatives impacting jobs, housing and even recreational opportunities for African Americans.

His representation of a plumber in a suit against the City of Raleigh led to minority contractors being able to bid on and receive contracts from the city. And his fight to address the unsafe conditions of the Chavis Park public pool led to its closing, and the closing of the segregated Pullen Park pool for a summer. Pullen was later opened as an integrated facility.

Greene was inducted into Raleigh Hall of Fame in 2011 and died in 2013 at age 82.



Photo courtesy of "The News & Observer"

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May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Howard University in Washington, D.C. opened in 1867	2 Elijah McCoy, inventor and holder of more than fifty patents, was born in 1844
3 James Brown, Godfather of Soul, was born in 1933 Sugar Ray Robinson, boxing champion, was born in 1920	4 Freedom Riders were civil rights activists who rode interstate buses into the segregated south; the first Freedom Ride left Washington, D.C., in 1961	5 CINCO DE MAYO Gwendolyn Brooks became the first African American Pulitzer Prize winner for <i>Annie Allen</i> in 1950	6 Civil Rights Act signed by President Eisenhower in 1960	7 J.R. Winters patented the fire escape in 1878	8 Henry McNeal Turner, a minister, politician and the first southern bishop of the A.M.E. Church, died in 1915	9 Slave emancipation declaration for Georgia, Florida and South Carolina in 1862
10 MOTHER'S DAY P.B.S. Pinchback, first African American state governor, was born in 1837	11 Martha Graham, dancer, was born in 1894 Bob Marley, reggae legend, died in 1981	12 Robert Smalls seized Confederate warship in 1862	13 Joe Louis, boxer, was born in 1914	14 In 1804, a slave known only as "York" accompanied Lewis and Clark on their expedition	15 North Carolina Mutual Building named a National Historic Landmark in 1975	16 ARMED FORCES DAY Sammy Davis Jr. an American entertainer, died in 1990
17 U.S. Supreme Court declares segregation in public schools unconstitutional in Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954	18 Reggie Jackson, baseball player, was born in 1946	19 Malcolm X, an African American Muslim minister and human rights activist, was born in 1925	20 Robert N.C. Nix was elected to U.S. Congress in 1958	21 Lowell W. Perry was confirmed as chairman of the Equal Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in 1975	22 Claude McKay, poet, died in 1948	23
24 Hal McRae was named manager of the Kansas City Royals in 1991	25 MEMORIAL DAY Madame. C.J. Walker, entrepreneur, died in 1919	26 Althea Gibson won the French Open, becoming the first African American tennis player to win a major tennis title in 1956	27 Louis Gossett Jr., actor, was born in 1936	28 Eliza Ann Gardner, Underground Railroad conductor, was born in 1831	29 Thomas Bradley was elected mayor of Los Angeles in 1973	30 Countee Cullen, poet, was born in 1903
31 NAACP held first conference (as the National Negro Committee) in 1909						

Andrea Harris

Andrea Harris' life has been dedicated to overcoming barriers to economic growth and opportunity.

Growing up in the rural community of Henderson, NC, during the heart of the Civil Rights movement, she had seen more than her share of inequality. So, after graduating from Bennett College, she chose to become a community organizer, rather than attend graduate school.

"I decided to be a part of saving the world," she recalls. "I thought I was invincible."

Two years later, at age 23, Harris became Executive Director of a Community Action Agency in Henderson. She was the youngest community agency director in the nation, supervising 120 full time employees and helping fight poverty across three rural communities. Harris stepped out of that role after 6 years to begin representing lower-income, older adults throughout the southeast and in Washington through the regional Office of Community Services. Her work helped the participation levels of minority and elderly in conferences on national aging policy more than ten-fold.

When she tired of the constant travel, Harris took a job with North Carolina state government. Although the slow pace of progress frustrated her, she found the experience provided a new direction for her work.

In 1986, she and two colleagues co-founded the N.C. Institute of Minority Economic Development, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting minority and women businesses. There were then fewer than 30,000 minority businesses in North Carolina; today, there are more than 132,000.

Harris says the Institute's work is founded on the belief that home- and business-ownership are the two most effective means for building economic assets and expanded access to opportunities.

"Investing in populations with limited net worth is far less costly than the negative social consequences of economic isolation," she said. "We must work towards widely shared prosperity as an economic imperative."



Photo courtesy of Andrea Harris

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June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Sojourner Truth began anti-slavery activist career in 1843	2 T. Thomas Fortune, journalist, died in 1928	3 Wesley A. Brown became the first African American graduate of Annapolis Naval Academy in 1949	4 Arna Bontemps, writer and educator, died in 1973	5 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was awarded his doctorate from Boston University in 1955	6 Congress of Racial Equality founded in 1942 Larry Leon Hamlin, founder of the National Black Theatre Festival, died in 2007
7 Gwendolyn Brooks, Pulitzer Prize winning poet, was born in 1917	8 U.S. Supreme Court banned segregation in Washington, D.C. restaurants in 1953	9 Meta-Vaux Warrick Fuller, sculptor, was born in 1877	10 Hattie McDaniel, first African American person to win an Oscar (for Best Supporting Actress in <i>Gone With The Wind</i> , 1940), was born in 1898	11 Hazel Dorothy Scott, classical pianist and singer, was born in 1920	12 Medger Evers, civil rights activist, was assassinated in 1963	13 Thurgood Marshall appointed to U.S. Supreme Court in 1967
14 FLAG DAY Harold D. West was named president of Meharry Medical College in 1952	15 Errol Garner, singer and musician, was born in 1923	16 Kenneth A. Gibson was elected mayor of Newark, N.J.; first African American mayor of a major eastern U.S. city in 1970	17 Thomas Ezekiel Miller, congressman, was born in 1849	18 Nannie Burroughs founded National Training School for Women in 1909	19 African American Independence Day, lauds the end of slavery in the United States	20 Dr. Lloyd A. Hall, pioneer in food chemistry, was born in 1894
21 FATHER'S DAY SUMMER BEGINS Arthur Ashe, tennis champion, led UCLA to NCAA tennis championship in 1965	22 Joe Louis became youngest world heavyweight boxing champion in 1937	23 Wilma Rudolph, track star, was born in 1940	24 John R. Lynch became first African American to preside over deliberations of a national party in 1884	25 Joe Louis defeated Primo Carnera at Yankee Stadium in 1935	26 James W. Johnson, an American author, politician, diplomat, critic, journalist, poet, anthologist, educator, lawyer, songwriter, and early civil rights activist, died in 1938	27 Paul Laurence Dunbar, poet and novelist, was born in 1872
28 Organization for Afro-American Unity founded in 1964	29 James Van Der Zee, photographer, was born in Lenox, MA in 1886	30 Lena Horne, actress, vocalist and activist, was born in 1917 NC Central University's charter was signed in 1909				

J.D. Lewis, Jr.

Broadcasting pioneer John Davis (J.D) Lewis Jr. was a man of many firsts.

A graduate of Morehouse College, Lewis enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1942, one of the first African Americans to join. He completed basic training at Montfort Point Camp before deploying overseas in the Marshall Islands as a radar technician.

After the war, Lewis opened an electronics repair business in Raleigh. He created a mobile public address system for his community's use with announcements, updates and events.

In 1948, he came to the attention of Fred Fletcher, general manager of Capitol Broadcasting Company, who had heard of Lewis' reputation as a play-by-play announcer for area Negro League Baseball minor-league teams. Fletcher hired him as the first African American radio announcer in the state, launching a 20-year career during which Lewis' show delivered local news, interviews with public figures, and music.

When Capitol Broadcasting applied for a television license from the FCC, his technical expertise was crucial. Later, he hosted "Teenage Frolics," which was the first show of its genre to be hosted by an African American and paved the way for programs like "Soul Train" a decade later.

Lewis also wrote editorials for WRAL. Lewis' daughter, Yvonne Lewis Holley, says her father made his "biggest impact" on the civil rights movement through those editorials. "It was a gift," she says. "He put the words to the movement, to help you come to the right conclusion."

Lewis served with the NAACP, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and the First Baptist Church. He served many years as chairman of the Garner Road YMCA board.

At his retirement from WRAL in 1997, the station and Capital Broadcasting gave sizeable contributions to the Garner Road YMCA, helping fund the J.D. Lewis Multipurpose Center.

Lewis died in 2007 at 87.



Photo courtesy of Capital Broadcasting, Inc.

The Heritage Calendar

July

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Carl Lewis, athlete, was born in 1961 NC African American Heritage Commission (AAHC) established in 2008	2 Civil Rights Act of 1964 signed. Thurgood Marshall, the U.S. American justice, was born in 1908	3 Jackie Robinson, the first African American baseball player in the major leagues, was named to Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY Tuskegee Institute established in 1881
5 Arthur Ashe won the men's Wimbledon singles championship in 1975	6 Althea Gibson won Wimbledon in 1957	7 Margaret Walker, writer, was born in 1915	8 Venus Williams won Wimbledon in 2000	9 Dr. Daniel Hale Williams performed the first successful open-heart operation in 1893	10 Mary McLeod Bethune, educator, was born in 1875	11 W.E.B. Dubois, civil rights activist, founded the Niagara Movement in 1905
12 Bill Cosby, entertainer, was born in 1937	13 Continental Congress excluded slavery from Northwest Territory in 1787	14 George Washington Carver National Monument dedicated in Joplin, MO in 1951	15 Pompey Lamb, noted spy, aids the American Revolutionary War effort in 1779	16 V. A. Johnson, first African American female to argue before the U.S. Supreme Court, was born in 1882	17 Billie Holliday, singer, died in 1959	18 Lemuel Hayes, first African American Congregationalist minister, was born in 1753
19 Saint Augustine's University was founded in Raleigh, NC in 1891	20 First U.S. victory in Korea was won by African American troops in the 24th Infantry Regiment in 1950	21 National Association of Colored Women founded by Mary Church Terrell in Washington in 1896	22 Abraham Lincoln read the first draft of the Emancipation Proclamation to his cabinet in 1861	23 Louis Tompkins Wright, physician, was born in 1924 Bennett College was founded in Greensboro, NC in 1873	24 Mary Church Terrell, educator, died in 1954 NBA star Karl "The Mailman" Malone, was born in 1963	25 Garrett A. Morgan, inventor of the gas mask, rescued six people from a gas-filled tunnel in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1916
26 President Truman banned discrimination in the armed services in 1948	27 A.P. Abourne, inventor, was awarded patent for refining coconut oil in 1880	28 The 14th Amendment was adopted in 1868	29 The first National Convention of Black Women was held in Boston in 1895	30 Adam Clayton Powell Jr., activist and politician, was elected congressman from Harlem in 1945	31 Whitney Young, an executive director of the National Urban League, was born in 1921	

Mattie Marshall

When Mattie Marshall moved to Charlotte's Washington Heights neighborhood in 1976, she was stunned to see something she had never experienced even growing up as a sharecropper in the segregated cotton fields of Georgia.

"I often recall the tears in my eyes when I would see some of the young people walking by with their heads down," she says. "That did not look right to me. Growing up in Georgia we had a lot of dignity, respect and pride about life—a lot of love. You never walked around with your head down, hopeless or dragging your feet."

Rather than flee from the drugs and violence plaguing the historic neighborhood, she decided to work to revitalize it. With the help of some neighbors, Marshall founded the Youth Services Academy (YSA) in 1992, and embarked on a mission to help each individual develop mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually to his or her highest potential in a safe, clean, and wholesome neighborhood.

To help children reach their potential, Marshall would teach children and adults every Saturday how to use technology at Johnson C. Smith University. She drew on her passion for the fine arts, developed when she lived in New York, to fill the rest of the week with mentoring, tutoring, educational enrichment and arts activities, such as concerts and dancing.

"Education is the passport to any destination," she says.

Marshall defines a philanthropist as one who shares their gifts and talents to uplift humanity with dignity and respect.

She has continued to support education by establishing a scholarship fund at Johnson C. Smith University and hopes to hold a reunion for those who participated in the YSA.

"The neighborhood has been like my children," she said. "I like people to value our history, achievements and accomplishments."



Photo courtesy of Mattie Marshall

Celebrating the North Carolina
African American Experience

The Heritage Calendar

August

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Benjamin E. Mays, minister, scholar, social activist and the president of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia from 1940 to 1967; was born in 1894
2 James Baldwin, writer, was born in 1924 Gabby Douglas, becomes the first black gymnast to win the individual all-around Olympic gold medal in 2012	3 The Congress of African Peoples convention was held in Atlanta in 1970	4 President Barack Obama, the 44th President of the United States and the first African American to hold the office, was born in 1961	5 Edwin Moses and Evelyn Ashford won gold medals in Olympic track & field in 1984	6 Voting Rights Act signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965	7 Ralph J. Bunche, diplomat and first African American winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, was born in 1904	8 Matthew A. Henson, explorer and first to reach the North Pole, was born in 1865
9 Jesse Owens won four Olympic gold medals in 1936	10 Clarence C. White, composer and violinist, died in 1880 Cullen Jones becomes the 2nd African American to win Olympic Gold medal in swimming in 2012	11 Thaddeus Stevens, abolitionist, died in 1868	12 Frederick Douglass' home in Washington D.C. was declared a national shrine in 1922	13 Baltimore Afro-American Newspaper was founded in 1892	14 Ernest Everett Just, scientist, was born in Charleston, SC in 1883	15 Clarence E. Lightner, the first popularly elected mayor of Raleigh, N.C. and the first African American elected mayor of a metropolitan Southern city, was born in 1921
16 Louis Lomax, author, was born in 1922	17 Marcus M. Garvey Jr., a Jamaican political leader, publisher, journalist, entrepreneur, and orator, was born in 1887	18 James Meredith, the first African American admitted to the University of Mississippi, graduated in 1963	19 Benjamin Banneker published his first Almanac in 1791	20 Richard Allen chaired the first National Negro Convention in Philadelphia in 1830	21 William "Count" Basie, jazz pianist and musician, was born in 1904	22 John Lee Hooker, blues singer and guitarist, was born in 1917
23 National Negro Business League founded in 1900	24 Edith Sampson was appointed first African American delegate to the United Nations by Harry S. Truman in 1950	25 Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters organized in 1925	26 William Dawson elected Black Democratic Party vice-presidential candidate in 1943	27 W.E.B. DuBois, an American sociologist, historian, civil rights activist, Pan-Africanist, author and editor, died in 1963	28 The March on Washington attracted an estimated 250,000 people for a peaceful demonstration to promote Civil Rights and economic equality for African Americans in 1963	29 Charlie "Bird" Parker, jazz musician, was born in 1920
30 Lt. Col. Guion S. Bluford, Jr. became the first African American astronaut in space in 1983	31 Eldridge Cleaver, writer and political activist who became an early leader of the Black Panther Party, was born in 1935					

Eligio Peña

When Eligio Peña emigrated to the U.S. from the Dominican Republic in 1970, he brought his love for people and for community.

But it was in a small convenience store in New York where those twin passions began to take root. Working at the store with his uncle, Peña quickly discovered he had a knack for customer service and an entrepreneurial spirit. After several years, Peña and his uncle bought the business.

“When I came to the country at 19 years old, I had no idea I would end up owning my own business,” says Peña.

Peña had a vision for a store that would deliver high-quality products and service at a low cost, while also providing jobs for people in the community. That dream led, in 1989, to the creation of the Compare Foods supermarket chain.

From its beginning in Freeport, N.Y., the chain now operates in six states, coming to North Carolina in 2002. Its stores are primarily located in diverse, multicultural neighborhoods. Managers make a concerted effort to hire bilingual and minority employees.

“It’s an American supermarket, with strong international ties,” says Peña. “We try to bring the best foods from all over the world to our customers.”

Peña wants his staff to reflect the community for a more enjoyable shopping experience. Most of the employees who work directly with customers are bilingual.

Under Peña’s leadership, Compare Foods works hard to better the communities in which it serves, sponsoring many community groups such as churches, youth organizations and non-profits. For nearly five decades Peña has used his business provide more than just groceries—he has made it a priority to give people in every community the opportunity for success.

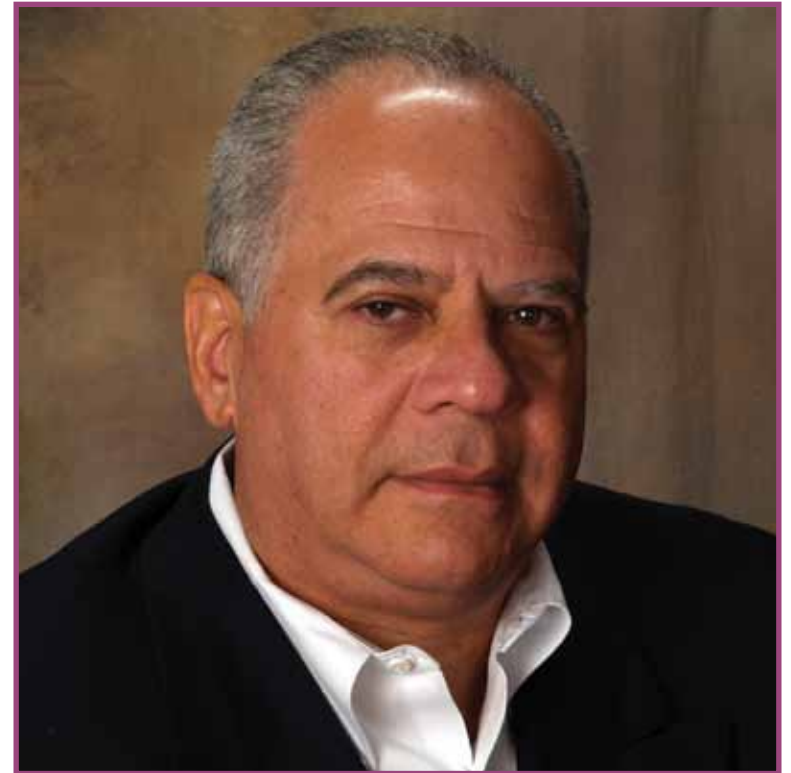


Photo courtesy of Eligio Peña

Celebrating the North Carolina
African American Experience

The Heritage Calendar September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Justice Henry Frye became the first African American to serve on the NC Supreme Court in 1983 and to be appointed Chief Justice in 1999	2 Frank Robinson, professional baseball player, named MVP of the American League in 1966 Romare Bearden, an artist and writer, was born in 1911	3 Charles Houston, NAACP leader, was born in 1895	4 In 1957, Dorothy Counts became one of the first African American students to attend Harding High School in Charlotte NC, an action that challenged school segregation	5 Benjamin S. "Ben" Carson Sr., an American neurosurgeon, was the first surgeon to successfully separate twins conjoined at the back of the head in 1987
6 The National Black Convention met in Cleveland in 1848	7 LABOR DAY Integration in public schools began in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore in 1954	8 Althea Gibson became the first African American athlete to win a U.S. national tennis championship in 1957	9 Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915	10 Mordecai Johnson, first African American president of Howard University, died in 1976	11 PATRIOT DAY "Duke" Ellington won Spingarn Medal for his musical achievements in 1959	12 Jackie Robinson, first African American baseball player in the major leagues, was named National League Rookie of the Year in 1947
13 GRANDPARENT'S DAY ROSH HASHANAH BEGINS Alain L. Locke, philosopher and first African American Rhodes Scholar, was born in 1886	14 Constance Baker Motley, U.S. Cabinet member, was born in 1921	15 ROSH HASHANAH ENDS Dr. Mae Jemison became first African American female astronaut in space in 1992	16 Claude A. Barnett, founder of the Associated Negro Press, was born in 1889	17 CONSTITUTION DAY United States Constitution signed in 1787	18 Booker T. Washington delivered "Atlanta Compromise" address in 1895	19 Atlanta University was founded in Georgia in 1865
20 First episode of <i>The Cosby Show</i> aired in 1984	21 F.W. Leslie, inventor, patented the envelope seal in 1891	22 Ralph Bunche awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 1950	23 FIRST DAY OF AUTUMN John Coltrane, innovative and famed jazz musician, was born in 1926	24 Nine African American Arkansas students integrated Little Rock High School in 1957	25 Barbara W. Hancock became the first African American woman named a White House fellow in 1974	26 Bessie Smith, blues singer, died in 1937
27 <i>The Memphis Blues</i> by W.C. Handy was published in 1912	28 Appeal to the <i>Colored Citizens of the World</i> published in 1829 Winston-Salem State University was founded in NC in 1892	29 Hugh Mulzac, first African American captain of a U.S. merchant ship, launched with the ' <i>Booker T. Washington</i> ' in 1942	30 Johnny Mathis, singer, was born in 1935			

Benjamin Ruffin

When Benjamin Sylvester Ruffin was growing up in Durham's West End neighborhood, higher education wasn't an option for most of his peers. But years later, as the first African American chairman of the University of North Carolina Board of Governors, he helped assure it was an option for many who followed him.

Ruffin, who died in 2006 at age 64, was a business executive whose leadership impacted the education and civil rights communities.

He joined the civil rights movement in the early 1960s while a student at North Carolina Central University, working to improve neighborhoods in Durham.

In 1977, Ruffin became a special assistant to Gov. Jim Hunt, helping to increase opportunities and employment for African Americans in state government.

His wife, Avon Ruffin, recalls Ruffin's listening skills. "He was a person who had the ability to listen, and in that, able to build consensus," she says.

Ruffin was elected to the Board of Governors in 1991, beginning 16 years of service to the 17-campus system. In 1998, he was elected to the first of two terms as Chair, quickly becoming known as an inclusive leader who represented all the institutions.

"You are a creature of your environment," he said in a 2002 interview. "My environment [growing up] was one where I was excluded. So when I got the chance, I erred on the side of inclusion. I know what a university can do, and I know what it did for me personally."

Ruffin earned a bachelor's degree from North Carolina Central University and a master's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

In the business community, he served as a top executive with North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company and later with R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. He was president of The Ruffin Group consulting firm at his death.



Photo courtesy of Mrs. Benjamin Ruffin

Celebrating the North Carolina
African American Experience

The Heritage Calendar

October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Colin Powell was appointed first African American chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1989	2 Thurgood Marshall was sworn in, becoming the first African American U.S. Supreme Court Justice in 1967 Nat Turner, leader of the Virginia slave revolt, was born in 1800	3 Nat King Cole was the first African American performer to host his own television show in 1956
4 National Black Convention met in Syracuse, N.Y. in 1864	5 Yvonne Burke, congresswoman, was born in 1932	6 Fisk Jubilee Singers began national tour in 1871	7 Toni Morrison became first African American to win Nobel Prize in literature in 1993	8 Jesse Jackson, an African American civil rights activist and Baptist minister, was born in 1941	9 O.B. Clare patented the rail trestle in 1888	10 Singer Ben Vereen was born in 1946
11 Alexander Miles patented the elevator in 1887	12 COLUMBUS DAY Barbara Smith Conrad, an American operatic mezzo-soprano of international acclaim was inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame in 2012	13 Arna W. Bontemps, noted poet, was born in 1902	14 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 1964	15 Clarence Thomas confirmed to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1992	16 John Brown led attack on Harper's Ferry in 1859	17 Capital Savings Bank opened in Washington, D.C. in 1888
18 Terry McMillan, novelist, was born in 1951	19 The U.S. Navy was opened to African American women in 1944	20 John Merrick organized North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company in 1898	21 "Dizzy" Gillespie, musician, was born in 1917	22 Clarence S. Green became the first African American certified in neurological surgery in 1953	23 The NAACP petitioned the United Nations about racial injustice in 1947	24 Jackie Robinson, the first African American Major League Baseball player of the modern era, died in 1972
25 Benjamin O. Davis became the first African American general in the U.S. Army in 1940	26 Tom J. Marshall, inventor, patented the fire extinguisher in 1872	27 D. B. Downing, inventor, patented his street letter box in 1891	28 Levi Coffin, founder of the Underground Railroad, was born in 1798	29 The Supreme Court ordered end to segregation in schools "at once" in 1969	30 Richard Arrington was elected the first African American mayor of Birmingham, Ala., in 1979	31 HALLOWEEN Ethel Waters, actress and singer, was born in 1896

Mary Alice Thatch

Journalism is more than a career for Mary Alice Jervay Thatch. It is a calling and a legacy.

The third-generation editor and publisher of The Wilmington Journal, Thatch is committed to providing a voice for the area's African American community.

Thatch took the helm of the paper in 1996, following in the footsteps of her father, Thomas C. Jervay, Sr., and grandfather, R.S. Jervay, who founded the paper in 1927. A printer by trade, the elder Jervay moved to Wilmington from Columbus County in search of better educational opportunities for his family.

The area had lacked an African American newspaper for 30 years, since the 1898 white-led race riot. Encouraged by his family, Jervay founded the Cape Fear Journal.

During the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 70s, as Wilmington simmered in racial tension, Thatch saw first-hand the impact a committed journalist can have on a community. In what became known as the Wilmington Ten case, 10 community activists were convicted in 1972 of arson and other crimes. In the community unrest which followed, Jervay was outspoken in editorials and stories supporting the activists.

Over the past two decades, even as technology has changed the nature of the industry, Thatch has continued her forefathers' tradition of community engagement.

Under her editorship, the Journal sponsors events at the Upperman Cultural Center and is a strong supporter of the Southeastern North Carolina African American Heritage Festival, which Thatch co-founded.

Thatch gained national attention when, in 2011, she began organizing the Wilmington Ten Pardons of Innocence Project. The national campaign ultimately led to Gov. Beverly Perdue issuing pardons of innocence for each of the activists.

"A family-owned newspaper is really part of the community," Thatch says. "This is not just my paper; it is the community's paper. The community is family."



Photo courtesy of Mary Alice Thatch

Celebrating the North Carolina
African American Experience

The Heritage Calendar

November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 ALL SAINTS' DAY DAYLIGHT SAVINGS ENDS First issue of <i>Ebony</i> published in 1945 First issue of <i>Crisis</i> published in 1910	2 President Ronald Reagan signed law designating the third Monday in January Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 1983	3 Eva Clayton became the first African American woman to represent North Carolina in Congress in 1992	4 President Barack Obama, then Senator, was the 1st African American elected as President of the U.S. in 2008. He also received the most votes for a presidential candidate in American history	5 Walter E. Washington elected Mayor of Washington, D.C. in 1974	6 Absalom Jones, minister, was born in 1746	7 David Dinkins elected first African American Mayor of New York City in 1989
8 Edward W. Brooke was elected first African American U.S. Senator (R- Mass.) in 85 years in 1966	9 Benjamin Banneker, surveyor, was born in 1731	10 Andrew Hatcher was named associate press secretary to President John F. Kennedy, becoming the first African American press secretary in 1960	11 VETERAN'S DAY Nat Turner, leader of a Virginia slave revolt, was hanged in 1831	12 In 1775, General George Washington issued an order, later rescinded, which forbade recruiting officers to enlist Blacks	13 Dwight Gooden won baseball's Cy Young Award in 1985	14 Booker T. Washington, an African American educator, author, orator, and advisor to Republican presidents, died in 1915
15 Arthur Lewis, Princeton University professor, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1979	16 W.C. Handy, "Father of the Blues", was born in Florence, Ala. in 1873	17 Omega Psi Phi was founded on the campus of Howard University in 1911	18 Sojourner Truth, abolitionist and orator, was born in 1787	19 Roy Campanella was named the National League MVP for the second time in 1953	20 Garrett A. Morgan patented the traffic signal in 1923	21 Protests against apartheid and the Reagan administration began nationwide in 1984
22 Alrutheus A. Taylor, teacher and historian, was born in 1893	23 J.L. Love put patents on the pencil sharpener in 1897	24 Scott Joplin, composer, was born in 1868	25 Luther "Bill" Robinson, dancer, died in 1949	26 THANKSGIVING DAY Sojourner Truth, evangelist, died in 1883	27 Richard Wright, author, died in 1960	28 Ernie Davis became the first African American to win the Heisman Trophy in 1961
29 Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. was born in 1908 Fayetteville State University was founded in NC as "Howard School" in 1867	30 Shirley Chisholm, U.S. Congresswoman, was born in 1924					

John I. Wilson

John Ira Wilson grew up in a segregated North Carolina. It wasn't until he attended Raleigh's Broughton High School that he saw an African American in his class.

Wilson says he was never exposed to racism at home in Burlington. His mother, who worked in steakhouses and barbeque restaurants during his childhood, taught him to be respectful of everyone.

"In a restaurant, there's such a mix of folks," he recalls. "You had the opportunity to work all day with people and understand there was really no difference."

The turning point in Wilson's life came on Sunday, July 31, 1966, when he attended a speech by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at North Carolina State University. Wilson was shocked by the hatred he saw at a protest organized by the Ku Klux Klan, but he was also heartened by people from different walks of life who attended Dr. King's speech in support of a common goal.

"I picked the side that's for folks getting along and working together," recalls Wilson, who went on to become one of the state's leaders in education and advocacy. "Teaching is the epitome of social justice."

A teacher of special-needs children for 23 years, Wilson retired from teaching in 1993 to become the chief lobbyist for the North Carolina Association of Educators. He later served as the NCAE's executive director and as the National Education Association's executive director.

Wilson currently serves on the Board of Directors for the North Carolina Foundation for Public School Children, which provides financial assistance to help meet basic needs for under-privileged children.

He also left a mark on North Carolina politics by helping manage the campaign for Dan Blue, the first African American Speaker of the NC House of Representatives.



Photo courtesy of John I. Wilson

Celebrating the North Carolina
African American Experience

The Heritage Calendar

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a public bus in 1955 Shaw University was founded in Raleigh, NC in 1865	2 Charles Wesley, historian, was born in 1891	3 First issue of North Star newspaper published in 1847	4 American Anti-Slavery Society organized in 1833	5 Mary McLeod Bethune, educator, founded National Council of Negro Women in 1935
6 HANUKKAH BEGINS Lewis Franklin Powell was confirmed as U.S. Supreme Court justice in 1971	7 PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY Lester Granger was named executive director of the National Urban League in 1941	8 The NAACP wins the Gibbs v. Board of Education case, against the state of Maryland, ensuring that white and black teachers are paid equally in 1936	9 Redd Foxx, entertainer, was born in 1925	10 Ralph J. Bunche became the first African American person awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1950	11 P.B.S. Pinchback became the first African American governor of an American state, Louisiana, in 1872	12 Joseph H. Rainey (S.C.) first African American elected to Congress in 1870
13 Kofi Annan was elected as Secretary-General of the United Nations becoming the first person from an African nation to be elected to the position in 1996	14 John Langston, U.S. Congressman, was born in 1829	15 Maggie Lena Walker, banker, died in 1934	16 Andrew Young of Georgia named ambassador and chief delegate to the United Nations in 1976	17 Noble Sissle, lyricist and bandleader, died in 1975	18 The 13th amendment, outlawing slavery was ratified in 1865	19 Carter G. Woodson, historian, was born in 1875
20 Montgomery Bus Boycott, a political and social protest against the policy of racial segregation on the public transit system of Montgomery, Alabama ended in 1956	21 Berry Gordy, Jr. established Motown Records in 1959	22 FIRST DAY OF WINTER Harriet Ida Picens and Frances Wills, were sworn in as the first female African American WAVES officers in 1944	23 Alice H. Parker patented the gas heating furnace in 1919	24 Irvin C. Mollison, first African American Judge of the Customs Court, was born in 1898	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Rev. Jesse Jackson organized Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity) in 1971	26 KWANZAA BEGINS DeFord Bailey, Sr. became the first African American to perform on the Grand Ole Opry in 1924
27 Dr. Charles Richard Drew, pioneer of blood plasma research, established a blood bank in New York City in 1941	28 Earl "Fatha" Hines, famed jazz musician and father of modern jazz piano, was born in 1905	29 Thomas Bradley, first African American Mayor of Los Angeles, was born in 1917	30 Bo Diddley, blues composer and singer, was born in 1928	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE Odetta Felious Gordon, folk singer and activist, was born in 1930		



Equality

Progress begins with men and women of courage and conviction, whose actions inspire others and spark opportunities that echo through generations. At AT&T, we are dedicated to delivering the innovations and technologies which can help dreams become reality, for we believe each person has the potential to impact tomorrow's history, beginning today.

AT&T is pleased to present the 2015 edition of The Heritage Calendar: Celebrating the North Carolina African American Experience, and to honor the men and women whose lives and accomplishments are highlighted in its pages.

