

Resident has storied history of activism

By Chelsey Dulaney
Senior Writer

Barbara Trent has never been afraid to take a stand.

The Chapel Hill resident first became involved in activism during her high school years in Illinois and hasn't stopped since.

"I've always had a real healthy sense of outrage," Trent said.

Fighting corruption has made her a target of FBI investigations, taken her across the globe and, finally, to the Academy Awards.

While helping families on welfare in the 1970s, Trent began the Rural Creative Workshop to integrate rural white communities with black neighborhoods through community activities.

"I was there to help them with what they said they wanted," she said. "Often what the people in the community need is invisible to those who provide it."

Trent later went on to train community organizers under the Jimmy Carter administration.

When she moved to California in 1982, she became involved in even larger issues after learning of the CIA's wars in Central America.

Trent and her partner David Kasper made many documentaries exposing similar government deceptions before taking on one of their largest projects — a film on the 1989 Panama invasion.

"We knew there had to be more to the story," she said. "We wanted to keep the pressure on the U.S.

government to continue to withdraw its troops off those bases and return the land back to Panama."

It took two years for Trent and Kasper to finish the film, entitled "The Panama Deception."

But once it premiered, she said it became popular immediately, opening in 80 cities in the U.S., 52 countries and in 23 languages.

In 1993, the film won her an Academy Award for best feature length documentary.

"It was a second of joy, 20 seconds of pride on the walk to the stage, and from there on it was 'How do we express what people need to hear?'"

Trent and Kasper have made several other documentaries together including "Coverup:

Behind the Iran Contra Affair" through their organization, the Empowerment Project.

Kasper said his background in filmmaking and Trent's time in activism made them good partners.

"She always follows through and sees things to fruition," he said. "That's probably the biggest quality I admire in her."

Today, Trent has taken a break from activism to operate The Old Oak Homestead in Chapel Hill — a self-sustaining, organic farm.

"I think it's important for people to know how to survive as your infrastructure continues to collapse," she said.

Kat Norcutt, a former UNC student, has been working on Trent's homestead through the World

GET INVOLVED

Support Barbara Trent's film work by donating to the Empowerment Project.

Info: empowermentproject.org

Contact: 919-928-0382

Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms program this summer.

"Participating to this extent in the things that sustain you — in your food production, maintaining your house — puts you in a place that's humbling," she said. "You're constantly giving instead of taking all the time."



DTH/ERIN HULL

Academy Award winner Barbara Trent feeds one of her goats at The Old Oak Homestead.

Contact the City Editor at city@dailytarheel.com.

Playmakers awarded grants for Shakespeare plays

By Tariq Luthun
Arts Editor

Shakespeare's work has proven timeless — PlayMakers Repertory Company is looking to take advantage of that.

On July 13, PlayMakers announced it had received two grants totaling \$125,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts for their upcoming season's productions of Shakespeare's "Henry IV" and "Henry V."

The initial grant makes PlayMakers one of three theater companies awarded the largest sum — \$100,000 — for the upcoming season.

"It is a huge statement of how

they view us and the excellence in the work we are able to put out," said Joseph Haj, PlayMakers artistic director.

Hannah Grannemann, PlayMakers managing director, said the grant will be dedicated to the upcoming productions.

The additional \$25,000 was awarded as part of the "Shakespeare for a New Generation" program held by the NEA in conjunction with Arts Midwest.

"If we had not received these grants, we would not be doing as much outreach, and we would not be making as spectacular production elements as we will be," Grannemann said.

Both plays are set in the early 1400s. "Henry IV" focuses on war and succession of the crown in England, while "Henry V" focuses on England's conquest of France, Haj said.

"These plays are 400 years old and they still speak in such a relevant and immediate way to our current moment," Haj said.

The plays will run in repertory for six weeks, starting in January when the outreach begins, said Jeffrey Meanza, director of education and outreach.

"There is a strong connection between the Henry plays and America's current engagements," Meanza said.

PlayMakers will conduct a

program titled Breaking History: Power, Politics and the Legacy of War, which consists of a number of events that will foster a dialogue between military veterans, military families and regional peace and justice organizations, said Meanza.

The program features a roundtable discussion, a weekend seminar and plans to send artists to perform in areas like Fayetteville.

"(The plays) really are about the costs of war," Haj said. "We wanted to use that as inspiration to make programming that would be meaningful to the community."

Contact the Arts Editor at arts@dailytarheel.com.

THE BREAKDOWN OF 'BREAKING HISTORY'

PlayMakers' outreach features several main components:

● **Performance:** Will send artists to Fayetteville to perform scenes from the plays.

● **Roundtable:** Will open a dialogue between the Fayetteville military population and regional

peace advocacy groups.

● **Weekend Seminar:** Will team up with UNC's Program in the Humanities and Human Values to host a forum on war.

● **Forum:** Community forum with Pulitzer Prize-winning foreign correspondent Chris Hedges.

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26 TU CHRIS WEBER w/ Skye and Ed Ruper** (\$14/\$16)

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5 FR BROTHER ESAU** (\$6/\$8)

6 SA CHATHAM COUNTY LINE w/ Justin Robinson & the Mary Annettes** (\$14/\$17)

9 TU KURT VILE w/ True Widow and Old Bricks** (\$12/\$16)

10 WE TOAD THE WET SPROCKET w/ Mark Kono** (\$22/\$25)

19 FR & 20 SA ARCHERS OF LOAF (sold out)

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SEPTEMBER

3 SA K.O.X.D

6 TU An Acoustic Evening with THE WEEPERS** (\$18/\$20)

9 FR GHOSLAND OBSERVATORY** (\$20/\$23)

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