

# MUSIC OF THE SOUTH

## LYRICS, LITERATURE, AND LAGNIAPPE

June 2-5, 1999

*This conference features lectures by:*

- **Elvis Presley biographer Peter Guralnick** (*Careless Love and Last Train to Memphis*)
- **New Orleans jazz experts Tom Piazza** (*Guide to Classic Recorded Jazz*) and **Bruce Boyd Raeburn** (Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University)
- **Blues authors David Evans** (*Big Road Blues*) and **Robert Gordon** (*It Came from Memphis*)
- **Country music historian Allen Dennis** (*James Blackwood: Memories*)
- **Pulitzer Prize nominee Clifton Taulbert** (*When We Were Colored and Eight Habits of the Heart*)
- **Music enthusiasts Jim O'Neal** (*Living Blues*); **Elaine Dundy** (*Ferriday, Louisiana*); **Michael Allen** (*Western Rivermen 1763-1861*); **David G. Sansing** (*Mississippi History through Four Centuries*); **Lynn Abbott** (*Religious Recordings from Black New Orleans*); **Dan Tyler** (No. 1-hit songwriter)

*Related events include:*

- **Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards** to **Sterling Plumpp** and **Barry Hannah**
- **Live concerts** by **Don Vappie** and the **Creole Jazz Serenaders of New Orleans**, the **Mississippi Mass Choir**, **St. Joseph Orchestra Ensemble**, **Hezekiah and the Houserockers Band**, and other groups
- **Tours of historic mansions, jazz brunch, blues 'n' barbeque, high tea, exhibits, films, booksignings**
- **Salute to Jerry Lee Lewis, Pee Wee Whitaker, Jimmy Swaggart, and Mickey Gilley**, all of Ferriday, La.
- **Extra special: A hands-on song-writing workshop!**

**Events are free or low-cost.**

For information and tickets, 601-446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724  
or visit the web site, [www.colin.cc.ms.us/nlc](http://www.colin.cc.ms.us/nlc)

*This event is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and the Natchez National Historical Park and is partially funded by the Mississippi Humanities Council.*

For statewide travel information,  
call 1-800-WARMEST

The South's Warmest Welcome  
**MISSISSIPPI**

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THE 19TH ANNUAL NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION

ABOUT THE CELEBRATION...

The Natchez Literary Celebration has been called by official evaluators "Mississippi's most significant annual conference devoted to literature, history, and culture."

Sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and the Natchez National Historical Park, the Literary Celebration annually presents a theme-based lecture series enhanced by films, concerts, exhibits, book sales, book signings, workshops, awards ceremonies, tours, field trips, and social events.

This year's conference theme, "Music of the South," will explore why the Southland gave birth to the blues as well as to jazz, rock 'n' roll, country, spirituals, gospel -- in fact, all music that is truly American.

The conference will also pay tribute to a decade of outstanding speakers and programs, enthusiastic audiences, hard-working volunteers, and top honors (including an Olympic Award, the Governor's Award, and the Mississippi Tourism Award).

In addition, the conference will honor Former Mississippi Governor William F. Winter, President, MDAH Board of Trustees, who for all ten years has served as the Celebration's Director of Proceedings.



Unless otherwise noted, events are at The Radisson Natchez Estia Hotel and are free. Transportation is provided for assisted events.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 1999

2 p.m.: "Mississippi Roots of American Popular Music," Jim O'Neal, Kansas City (*Nothing But the Blues; Living Blues*)

3:15 p.m.: "Ferriday Frappe," Elaine Dundy, Los Angeles (*Ferriday, Louisiana*)

5:45 p.m.: Salute to Jerry Lee Lewis, Pee Wee Whitaker, Mickey Gilley, and Jimmy Swaggart of Ferriday, La., at Tacony Plantation and Ferriday Museum, Sapper, Music, Tour (\$25, Ticket A\*)

8:30 p.m.: "Great Balls of Fire," Film about Jerry Lee Lewis

MUSIC OF THE SOUTH  
LYRICS, LITERATURE, AND LAGNISAPPE  
JUNE 2-5, 1999  
NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION  
NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI



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Other outdoor event areas are at The Natchez-Bluffs State Park and are free. Reservations are provided for attended events.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 1999

2 p.m.: "Musical Roots of American Popular Music." Jim O'Neal, Kansas City (Working Blue and Blues Living Blues)

3:15 p.m.: "Ferdinand Fuzer." Elaine Dundy, Los Angeles (Country, Louisiana)

5:45 p.m.: Salute to Jerry Lee Lewis. Pin Hoe Whiskey, Mickey Gilley, and Jimmy Swaggart of Ferdyday, La., at Tourist Plantation and Ferdyday Museum, Supper, Music, Tour (S15, Ticket A\*)

8:30 p.m.: "Great Balls of Fire," Film about Jerry Lee Lewis

THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 1999

9 a.m.: "Ethnic Diversity and New Orleans Jazz," Bruce Boyd Raeburn, Tulane Jazz Archive, New Orleans (40 Music Guide to Jazz)

10:30 a.m.: "The City and the River: Jazz and the Blues," Tom Piazza, New Orleans (Guide to Classic Revived Jazz)

12 noon: Jazz Brunch, Carriage House at Stanton Hall (S20, Ticket B); After Lunch, "Music City Confidential," Dan Tyler, Nashville No. 1-996 Songwriter and Music Publisher

2 p.m.: "Row, Row, Row: Row: Songs Then and Now on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers," Michael Allen, University of Washington (Western Riverways /76/-106/)

3:15 p.m.: "The Black Swan and the Swedish Nightingale Take a Bow," David Sanding, The University of Mississippi (Mississippi History), with Katherine Holly, Jackson State, and Rebecca Stephens, Natchez

5:30 p.m.: High Tea and Music, Cherokee Mansion (S15, Ticket C)

8 p.m.: "New Orleans Classic Jazz," a Concert and Program by the Acclaimed Ben Vaggie and the Creole Jazz Serenaders, New Orleans, St. Mary Minor Basilica (S15, Ticket D)

FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 1999

9 a.m.: "The History of Country Music: From Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family to Merle Haggard and George Jones," Allen Dennis, Troy (MA), State University (James Barberband, Worcester)

10:30 a.m.: "Talk, Room of Blues Music," David Evans, University of Memphis (Big Road Blues)

1:30 p.m.: "It Came from Memphis: Blues and More," Robert Gordon, Memphis (The King on the Road)

2:15 p.m.: "Elvis in History: A Biographer and His Subject," Peter Guralick, West Newbury, Mass. (Carroll Live)

FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 1999, CONTINUED

3:15 p.m.: "Writing Down the Sound: Documenting Musicians," a Panel

4:30 p.m. throughout the Night: "Blue Time in the Old Town," Live Music at Downtown Spots (S30, Ticket E\*, Valid June 4-6)

6 p.m.: "Barbeque, Brews, and Blues on the River," with Hoodlums and the Housebreakers (S15, Ticket F), Natchez Visitors Reception Center

8:15 p.m.: "The 1968 Comeback of Elvis Presley" Film

SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 1999

9 a.m.: "Crying Holy: Jubilee Singing, Barbershop Harmony, and the Birth of the Modern Black Gospel Quartet (Phenomenal)," Lynn Abbott, New Orleans (Multiple Recordings from Abroad, New Orleans)

10:30 a.m.: Presentation of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards to Sterling Plumpp, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Barry Hannah, The University of Mississippi

11:15 a.m.: A Tenth Anniversary Salute to Former Award Winners, Lecturers, and Lecture Chairmen, with Bookings to Follow

12:30 p.m.: "Songwriting Seminar and Lunch," Led by Dan Tyler (S25, Ticket G), Deposit Guaranty National Bank

1:30-5:30 p.m.: "Music's in the Air at the Mansion Cottage Garden, Lawrence House, and Rosalee," (S15, Ticket H\*)

7:30 p.m.: "Music: The Universal Language" (S15, Ticket I), Natchez Municipal Auditorium

- \* Mini-Concert by the St. Joseph (La.) Orchestra Ensemble
- \* "The Power of Music to Change Our Lives and Build Our World," Chilton Taulbert, Tulsa (When We Were Colored)
- \* Grand Concert by The Mississippi Mass Choir

9:30 p.m.: "A Grand Finale Reception" (S10, Ticket J), Museum of the Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture

# Opinion

Tuesday, June 1, 1999

The Natchez Democrat

## Literary Celebration just 'meant to be'

I am frequently asked, "How did the Natchez Literary Celebration get started?" I always answer, "It was meant to be. Many important factors were simply waiting to converge."

First, in the spring of 1989, while I was serving as Coordinator of the English Department and Director of Public Relations at Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez, I was at The University of Texas at Austin at a major educators' conference. With me was Dr. Howell C. Garner, then dean of Copiah-Lincoln Community College and now the college's president.

In attendance were 1,500 top educators from all over the country. Splendid lectures and related activities were on the agenda. At one of the programs, I said, "Dr. Garner, this conference is so successful, full of interesting writers and scholars, I bet Co-Lin could host a similar conference in Natchez, but just on a smaller scale."

A patient man with vision, Dr. Garner said, "What do you have in mind?"

"Well," I said, "I'm always looking for strong ways to tie the college into the community. An educational conference would continue the college's academic mission and at the same time attract out-of-towners who would help Natchez's tourism industry. We probably could attract at least 100 people."

"That sounds good," Dr. Garner said. "Put something on paper."

All the way back to Natchez I thought about our upcoming conference. Since at the time I was serving on the Natchez Trace Parkway Association's board, I knew the Natchez Trace was a subject of widespread interest. It hit me: the Natchez Trace could be our theme, since it shows up in history, fiction, poetry, drama, biography, song and other segments of the arts and the humanities.

We could get writers and scholars to discuss various aspects of the Trace in their books, I thought.

I even dreamed big dreams. I wanted famous writers, such as Eudora Welty and Margaret Walker Alexander. But we needed assistance to get people like that.

First I went to Dr. Billy B. Thames, president of Copiah-Lincoln. He agreed to help. Next I called Elbert Hilliard, director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. He agreed to help. Then I contacted my husband's friend, former Mississippi



Top of the Morning  
Carolyn Vance Smith

help. I then met with Brad Chism, at that time director of the Natchez Convention and Visitor Bureau. He agreed to help. Then I went to see Dr. Cora Norman, director of the Mississippi Humanities Council. She agreed to help. I asked Becky Nevill and Kenneth Taylor, both instructors at Copiah-Lincoln and members of the college's Publicity Committee to help. They agreed to be co-chairmen with me.

Then I set about lining up the program. I knew from teaching American literature that my idol, Miss Welty, had written a short story, "A Worn Path," and set it on the Trace near Natchez. I had had the honor of spending a weekend with her in 1982 at Mississippi University for Women when I was president of the MUW Alumnae Association and she was there to receive the first Medal of Excellence. I was overjoyed to be the one to present the medal to her.

But by 1989 I thought she would have forgotten me. When I called and introduced myself, this gracious lady instantly made me feel we were old friends. After I explained the Literary Celebration, without hesitation she agreed to be on the program.

Dr. Alexander likewise agreed to appear, and so did a dozen other superstars. Months went by as we worked on details. Then the first Natchez Literary Celebration took place June 7-9, 1990.

Those three days flew by. On the evening of June 9, 1990, an overflow crowd gathered after dinner at the Carriage House Restaurant at Stanton Hall to hear Miss Welty read "A Worn Path."

The entire room was dead silent as she mesmerized us with that beautiful story of self-sacrifice and love. When she finished, people were in tears as they leaped to their feet in a thundering ovation. Miss Welty had reached into our hearts with her poignant story.

So did other speakers and events during that first Literary Celebration. At the dedication of

Melrose to the National Park Service, the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra performed on the front lawn as more than 1,000 people took part in a truly historical moment.

In all, the 1990 Celebration reached not just 100 people, as I had first dreamed, but many times that number. Response has been the same each year since, especially because of the generous support of the Natchez community.

That support began when the Natchez National Historical Park joined Copiah-Lincoln as a Celebration co-sponsor. My first National Park co-chairman was Stuart Johnson, later came Gerald Gaumer and Robert Dodson. In 1994 the Mississippi Department of Archives and History officially became a co-sponsor with James F. Barnett, Jr., as co-chairman. And last year, 1998, the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at The University of Mississippi was likewise a co-sponsor with Ann Abadie as co-chairman.

Other support has come from the Mississippi Humanities Council. Every year since the beginning the MHC has given the Celebration the highest compliment it can give: annual funding. Official MHC evaluators say the Celebration helps meet the needs of people who are starved for a world in which their own minds are allowed to flourish.

Since the beginning, the Celebration's top goal has remained the same: to provide a springboard to the world of books and ideas. A related goal is to encourage a more open, accepting attitude among participants old and young, black and white, rich and poor, highly educated and educationally deprived. As a life-long educator and a lover of books, I rejoice over the Literary Celebration's first 10 years.

But as we approach a new millennium, I also look forward to future Celebrations. My hope is that they will continue to follow Miss Welty's "worn path" -- a path lined with books and stories and the deeply meaningful messages they hold for all of us.

*Carolyn Vance Smith is chairman of the Natchez Literary Celebration. The 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration will take place June 2-6, 1999, with the theme, "Southern Music: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe." Free lectures are at the Radisson Natchez, Eola Hotel. Tickets for low-cost, related events are available at the Visitors Reception Center, 601-446-6345.*

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# The Natchez Democrat

Wednesday, June 2, 1999

Natchez, Mississippi

Serving Natchez, Vidalia and the Miss-Lou

5

## Literary festival begins

Related stories, 5A.

By KERRY WHIPPLE  
The Natchez Democrat

Beginning today, Natchez celebrates the South's literary and musical tradition with the Natchez Literary Celebration.

Events over the next four days include lectures, concerts and meals



### Today's events:

■ 2 p.m. — Opening

ceremony with former Gov. William Winter, "Mississippi Roots of Popular Music," by Jim O'Neil, author of "Nothing But the Blues" and "Living Blue"

■ 3 p.m. — Refreshments and book signing by O'Neil

■ 3:30 p.m. — "Ferriday Frappe" with Amanda Taylor, director of Concordia Parish Library System and chairman of Ferriday Museum

■ 5:30 p.m. — "Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On: Music, Food and Fun with Jerry Lee Lewis, Peewee Whitaker, Mickey Gilley and Jimmy Swaggart at Taconey Plantation and Ferriday Museum. Sold out.

■ "Great Balls of Fire," film about Jerry Lee Lewis.

For information call 446-6345.

will host a tour and live music at their house Taconey. "We'll immerse ourselves in that beautiful area," Smith said.

Sold-out events for the week include tonight's tour of Taconey, Thursday's jazz brunch at the Carriage House and Thursday's high tea at Cherokee mansion.

designed to immerse visitors and residents in everything from gospel to jazz.

This year's theme is "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe."

"With the topic of music, it carries on a tradition of highly cultural activities that has been the heritage of Natchez for many years," said Carolyn Vance Smith, chairman of the celebration.

This is the 10th year for the literary celebration, which in the past has hosted Eudora Welty, Margaret Walker and Maya Angelou.

Former Gov. William Winter, who for 10 years has served as director of proceedings, will open the celebration at 2 p.m. today at the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel.

Today's events will also include a lecture by author Jim O'Neal. Later, Hal Garner and Harold Hawkins

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**1999 MARCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION  
TICKET INFORMATION**

Because of partial funding by the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council and other generous agencies, the Literary Celebration is free or low cost.

For ticketed events, complete, clip, and mail this form with check or National Literary Celebration, P.O. Box 1482, Natchez, MS 39121. For our credit card, call 601-466-6145 or 1-800-647-6724.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, state, zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

	No. Tickets	Cost
A. Ferryday Supper Tour, June 2, \$25	_____	_____
B. Jazz Brunch, June 3, \$20	_____	_____
C. High Tea, June 3, \$15	_____	_____
D. Creole Jazz Concert, June 3, \$15	_____	_____
E. Big Time Music, June 4-6, \$10	_____	_____
F. Baroque & Blues, June 4, \$15	_____	_____
G. Songwriting Seminar/Lunch, June 5, \$25	_____	_____
H. Tour of Mansions, June 5, \$15	_____	_____
I. Concert/Theatrical, June 5, \$15	_____	_____
J. Grande Finale Reception, June 5, \$10	_____	_____
Total payment enclosed	_____	_____



About the cover: *Photo of Captain's Haplines by Michael P. Smith, New Orleans*

**MUSIC OF THE SOUTH  
LYRICS, LITERATURE, AND LAGNIAPPE  
JUNE 2-8, 1999  
MARCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION  
MARCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI**



**MUSIC OF THE  
SOUTH  
LYRICS, LITERATURE,  
AND LAGNIAPPE**



*Photo of Captain's Haplines by Michael P. Smith, New Orleans*

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**MARCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION  
MARCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI  
June 2-8, 1999**



For information, call 601-466-6145 or 1-800-647-6724.

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# MUSIC OF THE SOUTH

LYRICS, LITERATURE,  
AND LAGNIAPPE



Photo of Lightnin' Hopkins by Michael P. Smith, New Orleans

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NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI

June 2-5, 1999



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LYRICS, LITERATURE, AND LAGNIAPPE

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For statewide travel information,  
call 1-800-KANEST.

The South's Warmest Welcome  
**MISSISSIPPI**

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Mississippi History  
**NEWSLETTER**

Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
P.O. Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205-0571

JAN. 1999

June

## Music in the South: Natchez Literary Celebration

The theme for the Tenth Annual Natchez Literary Celebration, scheduled for **June 2-5**, is "Music in the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe." Featured speakers for the event include Elvis biographer and music critic Peter Guralnick; Robert Gordon, author of *It Came From Memphis*; blues historian David Evans; jazz critic Tom Piazza; and Elaine Dundy, author of *Ferriday and Gladys and Elvis*. Sponsors with Copiah-Lincoln Community College are MDAH and the Natchez National Historical Park. For more information, contact Carolyn Smith, 601/446-1208.

## NLC celebrating 10th year

*Music of the South is this year's theme*

The Natchez Literary Celebration marks its 10th year this June with what promises to be a series of unforgettable programs.

The NLC was founded by Co-Lin staff member Carolyn Vance Smith in 1990 and since has grown to become one of the South's most important literary and cultural events, winning numerous awards for excellence.

This year's theme is "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe." The NLC will be from Wednesday, June 2 through Saturday, June 5. Most events are free and will be held at the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel.

The NLC begins with a welcome by former Gov. William F. Winter, president of the board of trustees of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, a co-sponsor along with Co-Lin and the Natchez Park Service's Natchez National Historical Park.

During the four days, the NLC will explore the music that gave the South and America its distinctive sound and spirit: blues, jazz, rock 'n' roll, country, spirituals, cajun, gospel, zydeco, rockabilly and more. Some of the music world's most famous scholars, writers and musicians will talk, pick and sing their way into participants' hearts, minds and souls. Included in the four days are lectures, performances, dinners, book-signings, awards presentations and much more.



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Festive Banana Split Cake... Recipe on Page 158

# Southern Living

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JUNE 3 - 5, 1999

HISTORY

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1-800-99-NATCHEZ

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# NLC singing a southern tune

## N-Sights staff

Remember the famous lyrics, "And the Southland gave birth to the blues"?

Well, that's not all the South gave birth to.

There's jazz, rock 'n' roll, country, spirituals, Cajun, gospel, zydeco, rock-a-billy — in fact, the South gave life to all music that is truly American.

Why did this happen? And when, and how?

"These questions about America's music will be explored June 2-5 at the tenth annual Natchez Literary Celebration," said Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez, the event's founder and one of three co-chairmen.

"Some of the music world's most famous scholars, writers and musicians will not only talk this year, but they'll also pick and sing their way into our hearts," she said.

The conference theme, "Music of the South:

Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe," covers a wide spectrum of Southerners and their music. Included are four days of free lectures, book-signings, awards presentations and exhibits plus low-cost musical performances, meals and parties.

"Once again we have taken the best in Southern literature and added a twist of the arts this year to create the perfect humanities cocktail," said Robert Dodson, superintendent of the Natchez National Historical Park and a conference co-chairman.

"Every year we say, 'This year's conference is the best,' and every year we believe it," said James F.

Barnett, Jr., conference co-chairman and director of Mississippi Department of Archives and History properties in Natchez.

"But this year I think we're really going to have the best conference ever," Barnett said. "Everyone loves music, and in June we'll make literature come alive with concerts and performances."

The Celebration, sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, the Historical Park and Archives and History, is celebrating not only its 10th anniversary but also a decade of special awards and other achievements.

These include an Olympic Award, the Governor's Award, the Mississippi Tourism Award, the Mississippi Humanities Council Award and other top recognition in print and on educational television by a wide number of authors, officials and writers.

*'Once again, we have taken the best of Southern literature and added a twist of the arts.'*

*Bob Dodson  
National Park Service*

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## Some dates to remember



**Monday, April 19 through Friday, April 23:** Campaign period for SGA president. Candidates are Meg Harper and Terri Dunn.

**Thursday, April 22:** Open house for high school students and their families, 5-8 p.m., Vocational-Technical Building with tours of the campus and more.

**Monday, April 26 through Friday, April 30:** Elections for SGA president.

**Monday, April 26:** Deadline for education majors to schedule an appointment for counselors from the Alcorn State University School of Education, who will be on campus Tuesday, April 27 from 1 to 4 p.m. in Room 220. See Gwen McCalip, academic counselor, to schedule an appointment.

**Wednesday, April 28:** Phi Theta Kappa sponsoring presentation about credit, 11 to 11:50 a.m., Room 300. All are invited.

**Thursday, April 29:** Industry Appreciation Day for Co-Lin Natchez, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Vocational-Technical Center Multi Purpose Room.

**Monday, May 3:** SGA election winner announced.

**Monday, May 3:** Deadline for next edition of *N-Sights*.

**Friday, May 6:** Next edition of *N-Sights* scheduled to be published.

**Thursday, May 6 through Tuesday, May 11:** Final examination schedule for spring semester. Schedules available in admissions or Vocational-Technical offices.

**Monday, May 10 through Friday, May 14:** Registration for summer semester for currently enrolled Co-Lin Natchez students only.

**Thursday, May 13:** Graduation practice and dinner, multi-purpose room, Vocational-Technical Center Multi-Purpose Room.

**Friday, May 14:** Graduation, 6 p.m., Natchez Convention Center.

**Wednesday, June 2-Saturday, June 5:** Natchez Literary Celebration, Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel (and other sites). For a information or to help see Carolyn Vance Smith.

## Mississippi History NEWSLETTER

Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
P.O. Box 971, Jackson, MS 39205-0671

APRIL 1999

## Music of the South: Natchez Literary Celebration

This year's Natchez Literary Celebration, **June 2-5**, will focus on the South's music, from the broad perspective—Mississippi's vast contribution to the world's popular music—to a closer look at famous locals like **Jerry Lee Lewis**, who grew up just across the river from Natchez, in Ferriday. For jazz lovers, **Tom Piazza**, author of the *Guide to Classic Recorded Jazz*, will present a session on New Orleans jazz; and a jazz brunch, high tea, and concert will all feature live jazz groups. Eminent music scholars will be on hand: **country music** scholar **Charles Wolfe** will tell about the birth of the Grand Ole Opry; **blues** scholar **Dave Scales** will talk about the folk roots of the blues; **gospel** music expert **Lynn Hunt** will lead a discussion on New Orleans gospel; and **Elvis Presley** biographer **Peter Guralnick** will reveal the Real Elvis Presley. Other highlights include barbeque on the river with world-famous locals **Hezekiah and the Houserockers**, presentation of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards to poet **Sterling D. Plumpp** and novelist **Barry Hannah**, a presentation by author **Clifton Taulbert**, a concert by the **Mississippi Mass Choir**, and **tours of historic Natchez mansions**, with music provided at every stop. All presentations and many other events are free; to register for meals and special events or for more information, **contact Carolyn Vance Smith, 601/446-1208**. Sponsors of the Celebration with Copiah-Lincoln Community College are MDAH and the Natchez National Historical Park.

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Stanton Hall is located at 401 High St.

## Stanton Hall

Stanton Hall is one of the most magnificent houses of antebellum America. Stanton Hall, 401 High St., stands on a rise surrounded by huge live oak trees more than a century old. On the east and west are entrances with a drive leading through them to form a crescent before the front door.

The house was built by Frederick Stanton, one of three brothers who came to America from Belfast, Ireland, in 1815. He settled in the Natchez area and married Hilda Helm. Stanton became immensely wealthy by business ventures, especially the cotton brokerage business.

In 1849, he bought the square on which he was to build his dream house; construction was completed in 1857. Built to the designs of the Natchez architect-builder, Captain Thomas Rose, Stanton spared no expense.

Through Stanton did seek some of the furnishings from outside Natchez, his confidence in the skill of local artisans was so high that all the work on the edifice was done by Natchez architects, builders, artists and finishers.

The hall is of impressive dimensions with ceilings 16 and a half feet high, but the excessive length of this hall is broken by an exquisitely carved overhead arch. Circular arabesques ornament the ceilings, which are also bordered by narrow geometric friezes.

Furnishings of the hall include matching

bronce chandeliers, especially made for the hall and for the other rooms in the house, probably by the Cornelius and Baker Co. of Philadelphia, Pa.

On the right of the hall is a large front parlor and smaller back parlor, sometimes called a music room. Together, these rooms are 70 feet long. The length of the front parlor is broken by an elaborately carved and unsupported arch similar to the arch in the hall and one of the fine architectural features of the house.

Mantels in the parlors are of finest white Carrara marble, richly carved with fruits and flowers. Silver hardware is used on door knobs, hinges, key escutcheons, lock plates, and call bells. Mirrors are original to the house, specially-made in France.

The parlor includes a matched set of highly carved Victorian furniture, a pair of pier tables with marble columns and an unusually large antique Aubusson carpet.

The small parlor contains an antique piano, an Aubusson carpet and a portrait of the late Katherine Goulton Miller, founder of the Natchez

Pilgrimage in 1932 and a past president of the Pilgrimage Garden Club.

On the other side of the main hall is a library, containing two large bookcases with hundreds of books, a center English table, comfortable chairs and an lamp. Also on this side of the hall is a formal 35-foot dining room, covered with a Natchez-made dining table. Other furnishings include a set of early Empire chairs, a Sheraton sideboard and a breakfast table containing a large set of Old Paris china.



The parlor and its mirror.

## Natchez in Historic Photographs

Nearly 100 years of Natchez history captured in photos  
People ♦ Parades ♦ Street Scenes ♦ Rural Life ♦ Steamboats



First Presbyterian Church in Natchez, Mississippi proudly presents one of the world's most important and unusual collections of historic photographs. More than 300 photographs hang on the walls of beautiful Stratton Chapel, with captions to take the visitor on a journey back in time and entertainment. Photos on display have been printed from original negatives of photographers Henry D. Gurney, Henry C. Norman and Earl Norman, whose combined work in Natchez began in the 1820s and ended in 1951.

Stratton Chapel • 405 State Street • Between Pearl & Commerce  
Open Daily 10am-5pm • Sunday 1pm - 5pm  
Suggested donation is \$3 per person

## The 10th Annual Natchez Literary Celebration

June 2-5, 1999, Natchez, Mississippi

"Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe"

- Lectures by nationally known authors and scholars
- Live musical performances, some in historic mansions
- Exhibits, book signings, films, parties, AND LOTS OF FUN!

ALL AT LOW COST

For information and tickets, call 601-446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724.

Sponsors: Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and the Natchez National Historical Park

Book It! The 10th NLC: "Religion in the South" June 1-3, 2000



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# Upcoming Natchez Literary Celebration

## Special to The Democrat

Remember the famous lyrics, "And the Southland gave birth to the blues?"

Well, that's not all the South gave birth to. There's jazz, rock 'n' roll, country, spirituals, Cajun, gospel, zydeco, rock-a-billy - in fact, the South gave life to all music that is truly American.

Why did this happen? And when, and how?

"These questions about America's music will be explored June 2-5 at the tenth annual Natchez Literary Celebration," said Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez, the event's founder and one of three co-chairman.

"Some of the music world's most famous scholars, writers and musicians will not only talk this year, but they'll also pick and sing their way into our hearts," she said.

The conference theme, "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe," covers a wide spectrum of Southerners and their music. Included are four days of free lectures, book-signings, awards presentations and exhibits plus low-cost musical performances, meals and parties.

"Once again we have taken the best in Southern literature and added a twist of the arts this year to create the perfect humanities cocktail," said Robert Dodson, superintendent of the Natchez National Historical Park and a conference co-chairman.

The Celebration, sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln, the Historical Park and Archives and History, is celebrating not only its 10th anniversary but also a decade of special awards and other achievements.

These include an Olympic Award, the Governor's Award, the Mississippi Tourism

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Do you ha

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## to feature Southerners and their music

Award, the Mississippi Humanities Council Award and other top recognition in print and on educational television by such literary giants as Eudora Welty, Willie Morris, Shelby Foote, Richard Ford, Will Campbell, Ellen Douglas, Margaret Walker Alexander, Maya Angelou and dozens more.

Headquarters of this year's literary conference will be The Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel. Among the highlights are a dozen lectures on Southern music by such authorities as:

■ Elvis Presley biographer Peter Guralnick of Massachusetts (Careless Love).

■ Jazz experts Tom Piazza (Guide to Classic Recorded Jazz) and Bruce Boyd Raeburn (Curator, Tulane Jazz Archive) of New Orleans

■ Blues authors David Evans (Big Road Blues) and Robert Gordon (It Came from

Memphis) of Memphis

■ Country music enthusiast Allen Dennis (James Blackwood: Memories) of Alabama

■ And Pulitzer Prize nominee Clifton Taulbert (When We Were Colored) of Tulsa, Okla.

Enhancing the lecture series are:

■ A salute to Louisiana musicians Jerry Lee Lewis, Pee Wee Whitaker and Mickey Gilley, with live music and supper at Tacony Plantation near Vidalia, La., and a tour of the Ferriday, La., Museum.

■ A New Orleans style jazz brunch.

■ A special presentation on "The Black Swan" and "The Swedish Nightingale" by Dr. David Sansing of The University of Mississippi, with vocal selections by Dr. Ellistine Holly of Jackson State University and Rebecca Stephens of Natchez.

■ The presentation of the Richard Wright

Literary Excellence Awards to Sterling D. Plampp, professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Barry Hannah, writer-in-residence at The University of Mississippi.

■ A hands-on song-writing workshop led by Dan Tyler of Nashville, Tenn., a No.-1 hit songwriter, author and music publisher.

Expected at the Celebration are hundreds of people, many of whom have attended annually. "These wonderful people give the celebration such high compliments," Smith said. "And the credit all goes to the generous citizens of Natchez who year after year give of themselves to make the conference a success."

For more information, call (601) 446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724, write P.O. Box 1485, Natchez, Miss., 39121, e-mail carlyms@nat.colin.cc.ms.us or visit the website: [www.colin.cc.ms.us/hlc](http://www.colin.cc.ms.us/hlc)

is a story idea for the style section? Call 442-9101.

The Natchez Democrat



Dr. Howell C. Garner, left, reads a plaque thanking Carolyn Vance Smith, founder and co-chair of the Natchez Literary Celebration. Garner also presented a plaque to former Mississippi Gov. William F. Winter.

## NLC completes 10th year

The Natchez Literary Celebration wrapped up its first decade on a high — and sometimes low — note. This year's theme was "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe."

The three-and-a-half-day program included a wide range of presentations and performances by writers, performers and lecturers from around the nation — primarily the South.

The culmination was a three-part program featuring the St. Joseph Ensemble, a stirring speech by Clifton Taulbert and a rousing performance of gospel music by the Mississippi Mass Choir.

Next year's theme will be "The Sacred South: Writings from the Bible Belt." The 11th NLC will be June 1-3, 2000.

2 • THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT, Natchez, Miss.

May 1999

### WHAT'S HAPPENING ...

JUNE is steamboat time in Natchez, too, with the annual Steamboat Jubilee and Floozie Parade taking place when the Mississippi Queen, Delta Queen and American Queen steamboats stop in the Miss-Lou during their annual race from New Orleans to St. Louis. Passenger from both compete to see who's the "biggest floozie."

• June also kicks off another Natchez Literary Celebration. Most events are free and open to the public.

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# Upcoming literary celebration highlights blues – and jazz, rock, country, gospel ...

## Special to The Democrat

Remember the famous lyrics, "And the Southland gave birth to the blues"?

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"Every year we say, 'This year's conference is the best,' and every year we believe it," said James F. Barnett, Jr., conference co-chairman and director of Mississippi Department of Archives and History properties in Natchez.

"But this year I think we're really going to have the best conference ever," Barnett said. "Everyone loves music, and in June we'll make literature come alive with concerts and performances."

The Celebration, sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln, the Historical Park and Archives and History, is celebrating not only its tenth anniversary but also a decade of special awards and other achievements.

These include an Olympic Award, the Governor's Award, the Mississippi Tourism Award, the Mississippi Humanities Council Award and other top recognition in print and on educational television by such literary giants as Eudora Welty, Willie Morris, Shelby Foote, Richard Ford, Will Campbell, Ellen Douglas,

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- Country music enthusiast Allen Dennis ("James Blackwood: Memories") of Alabama

- Pulitzer Prize nominee Clifton Taulbert ("When We Were Colored") of Tulsa, Okla.

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- A New Orleans style jazz brunch with music.

- A special presentation on "The Black Swan" and "The Swedish Nightingale" by Dr. David Sansing of The University of Mississippi, with vocal selections by Dr. Ellistine Holly of Jackson State University and Rebecca Stephens of Natchez.

- The presentation of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards to Sterling D. Plumpp, professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Barry Hannah, writer-in-residence at The University of Mississippi.

- A hands-on song-writing workshop led by Dan Tyler of Nashville, Tenn., a No.-1 hit songwriter, author and music publisher.

- A performance by Hezekiah and the Houserockers Band of Natchez with barbecue and trimmings.

- The showing of two films, "The Singer Special: The 1968 Comeback of Elvis Presley" and "Great Balls of Fire," the life of Jerry Lee Lewis.

For more information, call (601) 446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724, write P.O. Box 1485, Natchez, Miss., 39121, E-mail carolyns@nat.colin.cc.ms.us or visit the web site, www.colin.cc.ms.us/nlc

# Mississippi events

Call South Mississippi Regional Center, (228) 867-1313.

- **Mississippi Coast Coliseum Fair and Expo**, June 2-13, Biloxi. Rides, concerts, special events and exhibits. Admission. Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center, (228) 388-8010 or 1-800-726-2781.
- **Delta Jubilee / Mississippi State Championship Pork Barbecue Cooking Contest**, June 3-5, Clarksdale. Crafts, bicycle ride, carnival, food, 5K run/walk, volleyball tournament and bands. Hwy. 61 South and Anderson Blvd. Call 627-7337 or 800-626-3764.
- **Natchez Literary Celebration**, June 3-5,

Natchez. Conference devoted to literature, history and culture. Free. The Natchez Eola Hotel. Call Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 446-1208 or 800-862-3259.

• **Magnolia State Spring Bluegrass Festival**, June 3-5, Wiggins. Admission. Stone County Music Park. Call WIGG radio, 928-7281.

• **Balloon Fest '99**, June 3-6, Greenwood. More than 75 hot-air balloons to compete in BFA-sanctioned state championship. Rides, crafts, entertainment, Kid's Korner and more. Admission. Whittington Park. Call Greenwood CVB, 453-9197 or 800-748-9064.

*Continued on page 20*

May 1999 Country Roads Page 29

**June 2—5: CULTURAL CONFERENCE:  
Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature,  
and Lagniappe, Natchez, Miss.—The**

Natchez Literary Celebration presents the latest in its series of annual conferences dedicated to the literature, history, and culture of the South. This year's theme will explore the historical and cultural forces behind why the Southland gave birth to most of America's most clearly identifiable musical forms, including blues, jazz, rock 'n' roll, country, spiritual, and gospel. Around twenty lectures, seminars, jazz brunches, and concerts are included in the five-day event, which is based at the Natchez Eola Hotel. See the June issue of *Country Roads* for a complete schedule. Many events are free, but reservations are

required for others. Call (800) 647-6724 to receive a mailed schedule.

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# NLC friends offer special T-shirts

For the first time, the Natchez Literary Celebration has created a T-shirt.

The fund-raising project is sponsored by Friends of the NLC, a group of students, faculty and staff at Co-Lin Natchez.

The customized T-shirts will emphasize the NLC's theme for this year, "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe." The festival, which is

celebrating its 10th anniversary, will be June 2 through 5 in Natchez.

Co-Lin is one of the three sponsors.

"People who buy the shirts are encouraged to wear them throughout May as 'walking billboards' to promote the NLC," said Carolyn Vance Smith, co-chairman and founder. "They are especially encouraged to wear them on

Friday, June 4, when a casual music and food event called "Barbeque, Brews and Blues" will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Natchez Visitors Center. The wonderful event will feature barbeque by Co-Lin's maintenance supervisor Carl Roberts and crew and music by Hezekiah and the Houserockers of Natchez."

The shirts will be light blue with a musical design on front

(see sketch) created by William M. Smith Jr., formerly of Natchez and now of California Designs in San Francisco. William Smith is Carolyn Vance Smith's son.

T-shirts will cost \$10, pre-paid. Orders are being taken at the Learning Center.

Most of the presentations this year will be at the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel, including the opening program.

N-Sights - May 7, 1999

15



N-Sights staff photo

Jacqueline Potter, a Co-Lin Natchez student, models a Natchez Literary Celebration T-shirt, which will be on sale this year for \$10.

## NLC beckons staff, students to join in fun, programs

The Natchez Literary Celebration June 3-6 promises a wide range of programs, activities and fun for all Co-Lin Natchez students and staff.

The school is a co-sponsor of the event, which will feature music and literature of the South.

Among the many highlights of the program this year are:

- A salute to Jerry Lee Lewis, Perwee Whitaker and Mickey Gilley, with live music, supper, a tour of Tacony Plantation in Vidalia and the Jerry Lee Lewis Museum.

- A New Orleans style jazz brunch with music.

- The presentation of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award.

- A song writing lunch seminar with Dan Tyler, songwriter, author and entertainment attorney.

- Performances around Natchez at various clubs and night spots.

- A performance by Hezekiah and the

Houserockers Band with barbeque and trinnings. Co-Lin's staff member Carl Roberts will cook up a tasty barbecue for the event. (Tickets are \$15).

- A showing of the film, "The Singer Special: the Comeback of Elvis Presley."

- There also will be a full slate of lectures - mostly free - Wednesday through Saturday at the Natchez Eola Hotel, conference headquarters.

- One of the NLC's major events includes a performance by the Mississippi Mass Choir, a concert by the St. Joseph Orchestra Ensemble and a lecture by renowned author and speaker Clifton Taulbert (Tickets are \$15).

- Many Co-Lin Natchez students and staff are volunteering to help out at the various events.

- Volunteers still are needed. For information and a complete brochure, see Carolyn Vance Smith, co-chair, whose office is near security. Or call extension 208/213.

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# Copiah-Lincoln Community College Office of Institutional Planning and Research Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1

April 1999

## Visit to Natchez

Recently, **Alita Myers** and I visited the Natchez campus and had a most enjoyable trip. I was able to meet many of the employees who work on the campus. **Susan Blackmon** and I have returned to campus on several occasions to work with **Dr. Nettles** and **Pat Cater** to ensure that your planning documents are in order. During the course of the next few months, I hope to be able to meet all Natchez employees.

On one of my Natchez trips, I was made aware of the literary celebration sponsored by this campus each year. I look forward to participating in these activities and hearing the speakers and musical groups that have been scheduled. For more information regarding the Natchez Literary Celebration, check out the website at [www.colin.cc.ms.us/nlc](http://www.colin.cc.ms.us/nlc).



## Cover Pages

Spring 1999  
Volume VII, No. 4

Dr. David Sansing - Hot off the press is history professor emeritus Dr. David Sansing's comprehensive sesquicentennial history of Ole Miss entitled *The University of Mississippi* (University Press of Mississippi, hc, 37.00). A labor of love, Dr. Sansing will be in Natchez at the Literary Celebration, June 2-5, and will return to sign at *Cover to Cover* at a later date.

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# The Natchez Literary Celebration

presents

## "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe"

10th  
Anniversary



June 2-5, 1999

The Natchez Radisson Eola Hotel  
Natchez, Mississippi

### Features

#### Free or Low-Cost Events, Including:

Lectures by such national writers, scholars, and producers as:  
Jim O'Neal, Elaine Dundy, Bruce Boyd Raeburn, Tom Piazza, Dan Tyler, David  
Sansing, Allen Dennis, David Evans, Robert Gordon, Peter Guranick, and  
Lynn Abbott, Michael Allen, Sterling Plump, Barry Hannah.

"Songwriting Seminar" with Songwriter/Publisher Dan Tyler.

Live Music by talents such as: The Tim McGivaren Trio, Ellistine Holly,  
Rebecca Stephens, Marvin McDonald Trio, Don Vappie and The Creole Jazz  
Serenaders, Hezekiah and the Houserockers, St. Joseph Orchestra Chamber  
Ensemble, The Mississippi Mass Choir, and Swampwater

For tickets & information, call (601) 446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724

Sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College,  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History,  
Natchez National Historical Park.  
Partially funded by Mississippi Humanities Council.

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The South's Warmest Welcome  
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# Opinion

The Natchez Democrat

Sunday, May 16, 1999

## Finding literature in Southern songs

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The southern storytelling tradition expresses itself in several ways; novels, plays, short stories, humor, and, my specialty, songs. Songs are probably as old as language itself, and southern songs can be traced back to the ancient folk songs of Ireland and Scotland and the field songs slaves adapted from their African sources.

The theme for this year's Natchez Literary Celebration is "Music of the South Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe." As a lifelong songwriter (well, since the age of 13) I'm delighted the organizers of this year's festival have seen fit to treat the art of songwriting as a "literary" enterprise, and I'm even more delighted that I will be in Natchez the first week in June to participate in, and hopefully contribute to, the proceedings.

I do believe that sometimes songwriting does achieve the status of literature. "Ode to Billy Joe" by Mississippi singer-songwriter Bobbie Gentry is one example of a song that will probably be remembered and studied and enjoyed as long as any short story by Faulkner or Welty. Songs like that are rare, but so are stories like "Why I Live at the P.O."

My point is, it is possible for a song to transcend time and place and establish itself as an authentic expression of the human



Top of the  
Morning  
Dan Tyler

spirit, eternal and universal. To become in a word, art. In moments of crisis, in times of sorrow or joy, songs provide a powerful connection among human beings and remind us that our most essential feelings, hopes and fears are shared by all people.

Can you imagine a world without "Amazing Grace"? What would Christmas be without the wonderful songs that the season has inspired? And any discussion of songs would be incomplete without acknowledging that which has caused more songs to be written than any other emotion or experience - love. Songs about tailing in love, staying in love, falling out of love, love requited and unrequited, and on and on. What would love be like without love songs?

As in most forms of art, the South has

produced its share and more of great songs. From Stephen Foster on, the South has given the world some of its greatest songwriters and the songs they created. The current capital of songwriting is a southern city, Nashville, northern terminus of the ancient Natchez Trace and destination of songwriters everywhere. I look forward to driving South from Nashville on the Trace to southwest Mississippi, land of my youth and source of my songs, to share my thoughts about and my experiences in the literature of song.

Dan Tyler of Nashville, Tenn., is a native of McCook, author of the novel, "Music City Confidential" and one of a dozen program presenters at the 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration. During his 30-year career as a songwriter, Tyler's songs have been recorded by LeAnn Rimes, Kenny Rogers, Keith Whitley, The Oak Ridge Boys, B.J. Thomas, Marie Osmond, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Eddie Rabbit and many others. He will speak after lunch June 3 at the Carriage House Restaurant on the site of Nashville in Southern culture and will present a songwriting workshop June 5 at Deposit Guaranty National Bank meeting room. Tickets are available by calling the Natchez Visitor Center, 601-446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724.



*The*  
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URL: <http://www.cssc.olemiss.edu/depts/south>

May 17, 1999

**TO:** State Advisory Committee  
**FROM:** Charles Reagan Wilson, Director  
**SUBJECT:** Advisory Committee Meeting in Natchez

The Center's State Advisory Committee will hold its next meeting on Saturday, June 5, during the 1999 Natchez Literary Celebration. SAC member Carolyn Vance Smith is cochair of the June 2-5 event, which will explore the theme "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe."

A flyer with information about the program and registration is enclosed. Most of the lectures are free, and tours and social events are priced individually at low cost. Tickets are available through the Natchez Box Office. For details, see the flyer. For lodging information and reservations, call the Natchez Convention and Visitors Bureau at 800-647-6742. Carolyn and I hope you will plan to attend the entire Literary Celebration as well as the SAC lunch and meeting.

At noon on Saturday, June 5, SAC member John Callon has again this year invited us to gather for lunch at the conference room of Callon Petroleum Company's headquarters, located on the top floor of a beautifully restored building overlooking the Mississippi River. The address is 200 North Canal Street; telephone 442-1601. The cost of the meal, including drinks and wine, is \$17.00 a person. **(Checks should be made to the caterer, Sara Blough.)** Our meeting will begin immediately after lunch and will conclude no later than 4:00 p.m. Please return the enclosed form to make reservations for lunch. Or, if you prefer, you may call Sarah Dixon Pegues at the Center, 232-5993.

I look forward to seeing you in Natchez in June and in Oxford on July 24 for our meeting to be held in conjunction with the 1999 Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference. Details about the conference and the SAC meeting will be forthcoming.

Enclosure

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# WELCOME TO ELDERHOSTEL AND MUSIC OF THE SOUTH!

A unique, multi-cultural experience awaits you in the historic river city of

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NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION!

TUESDAY-SUNDAY, JUNE 1-6, 1999

Hotel housing, private bath; \$445 per person; program # 24150-0601-01.

For easy phone registration, see inside.

Program sponsor: Copiah-Lincoln Community College  
Natchez, Mississippi.



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# WELCOME TO ELDERHOSTEL AND MUSIC OF THE SOUTH!

**REMEMBER** the famous song which said, "The Southland gave birth to the blues"? That song is right, but that's not all the South gave birth to.

**ADD** jazz, rock 'n' roll, spirituals, gospel, country -- in fact, all music that is truly American.

**WHY** did this happen? **WHEN** and **HOW**?

You'll find out as nationally known historians, scholars, and musical experts explore "MUSIC OF THE SOUTH" at the award-winning Natchez Literary Celebration, June 2-5, 1999.

This conference annually welcomes Elderhostelers and dozens of other intellectually curious folks.

**FEATURED** in 1999 are such lecturers as:

- **Elvis Presley expert Peter Guralnick** (*Careless Love*, a *New York Times* best-seller)
- **Pulitzer Prize nominee Clifton Taulbert** (*Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored*, made into a 4-star movie)
- **New Orleans jazz scholars Bruce Boyd Raeburn** (Tulane University Jazz Archive) and **Tom Piazza** (*All Music Guide to Jazz*)
- **Blues authors Robert Gordon** (*It Came from Memphis*) and **David Evans** (*Big Road Blues*)
- **Country music enthusiast Allen Dennis** (*Blackwood Brothers: Memories*)
- **David Sansing, Jim O'Neal, Elaine Dundy, Michael Allen, Lynn Abbott, and many more!**

**ENHANCING THE LECTURE SERIES:**

- **Concerts by:**  
**The Mississippi Mass (gospel) Choir** of Jackson  
**Don Vapple and the Creole Jazz Serenaders** of New Orleans  
**Hezekiah and the Houserockers** of Natchez  
And other live performers
- **Films** about **Elvis Presley** and **Jerry Lee Lewis**
- **Tours** (with live music) of **historic mansions**
- **Presentations** by the noted writers **Barry Hannah** and **Sterling Plumpp**, winners of the 1999 Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards
- **Barbeque and blues, high tea, jazz brunch, and other social events**
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- And, **just for Elderhostelers**, a pre-conference overview of the wealthy port city of Natchez, which in 1850 was the center of America's cotton kingdom.

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SEE YOU IN BEAUTIFUL NATCHEZ!

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# Historic glimpses

## Cottage Garden, Lawrence House join Rosalie in Literary Celebration tour event

By STACY GRANING and EMILY WHITTEN  
The Natchez Democrat

When Jerry Krouse began collecting antique furniture, he never expected it would drive him out of his house.

"When I started collecting furniture about 15 years ago, I just started shoving it in my subdivision house," he said. "I had no idea it would take such hold of me and become a passion."

And, when he and his wife, Betty Jo, purchased antebellum Cottage Garden nearly a year-and-a-half ago, the driving factor was his growing collection.

"The reason d'être is the collection of furniture," he said.

His collection, which focuses heavily on Irish furniture and includes Georgian, American Queen Anne and Chippendale pieces, is showcased in Cottage Garden.

"It's built to be put in a room with a larger scale," Krouse said. The house "has done its job admirably," he said.

"I used to drive across town a couple of times a month to look at (the house)," Krouse said, "because I found it so aesthetically pleasing."

Cottage Garden, built in 1794 by Don Jose Vidal on a land Spanish land grant, is believed to have been the work of John Scott, a Scotsman and one of the town's earliest architects.

The house, so named because of its extensive gardens, served as a pasture for the Union troops' horses during the Civil War.

The house is constructed of cypress and poplar timbers, riveted and pegged together. The simple door and window facings are typical of the period. The house rests upon a basement which is larger than the first floor of the house and is supported by brick arches. The beautiful, flying elliptical staircase is one of three built-in-Natchez. One at Windy Hill Manor was lost when the house was destroyed by fire and the is at The Barn, just a short distance from Cottage Garden. In the basement is a "milk room," where troughs filled with cool water from a cistern kept milk and butter fresh. Open arches underneath provided space for storage of vegetables.

In the mid 1930s, the house underwent a significant restoration, arguably one of the most

most intensive done to a Natchez house. That restoration included the addition of the kitchen and breakfast room, and the reconstruction of the basement. To accomplish this, the entire house was raised on a jack and the basement was restored and a concrete floor added.

The Krouses did little to the interior after purchasing the house, Mr. Krouse said. However, the couple did complete a major exterior addition, including a landscaped and terraced courtyard. The outdoor living area centers on a spectacular fountain overlooked by a raised seating area, and the addition is surrounded by a specially designed brick privacy wall, which blends with the historic house.

Participants in the upcoming Natchez Literary Celebration will be able to view Cottage Garden during the "Music in the Air" tour event. The three-hour tour - which also includes Lawrence House and Rosalie - is part of the three-day celebration which takes place June 2-6 in Natchez.

Of the houses on tour, two are not typically open to the public. Rosalie, which is owned by the Mississippi State Society Daughters of the American Revolution, is open for tour daily.

Lawrence House was recently restored by Mike and Gail Henry.

When the Henrys bought the Lawrence House in 1997, Gail Henry had to admit she was a little skeptical.

"You could not imagine the amount of work that had to be done," Gail said. "I didn't want it, (but) my husband fell in love with it."

But after months of hard work, the Henrys have named this three-story house at 206 S. Martin Luther King Jr. St., into another fine example of an historic Natchez house.

Natchez native Missouri Lawrence purchased the property in 1857 for \$2,000 and built the existing house in 1870.

Mrs. Lawrence was very active in society, did lots of entertaining and was fairly wealthy for that era, Henry said. "I think it's a wonder after the Civil War she had the



The Natchez Democrat, Stacy Graning  
Jerry and Betty Jo Krouse, below, stand in the Cottage Garden, the 18th Century antebellum house that the gracious fountain provides a striking focal courtyard. The house is one of three which is part of a special outing during the upcoming 13th Natchez Literary Celebration.



Kitchen was remodeled during



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# Cooking to cool turn

## Literary celebration pairs food with music

By CHRISTINA HALL  
The Natchez Democrat

It's no wonder Southern people are always whistling, tapping their toes or singing a tune. Consider all the different types of music that has its roots in the South: From gospel to jazz, from country to rock 'n' roll, we lay claim to the birth of most forms of music.

Since we like to eat and share food with others here in the South, the pairing of these two art forms seems only natural.

And this year's Literary Celebration does just that with its theme "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe."

Even as diverse as our music history is, we have a food to fit each and everyone category the festival covers this year.

To kick off the festival June 2, there will be a salute to Jerry Lee Lewis, Poo Wee Whitaker, Mickey Gilley and Jimmy Swaggart, all of Ferriday, La. This celebration will be at Tacey Plantation and will require a ticket. The dinner will be catered by the Sandbar Restaurant of Vidalia.

Sherrie and Ricky Rowlin have owned the Sandbar for 21 years and they have helped with the Literary Celebration on other occasions. They will be serving fried fish, french fries, cole slaw and hash-peppies. One key to successful fish frying is the meal you use on your fish. If you have ever eaten at the Sandbar you know how good theirs is. They package their own meal and it is a secret recipe. While I can't give you one of their recipes here is my favorite hashpeppy recipe.



Natchez Literary Celebration

### Old Miss Peppies

- 1 pkg. Martha White hashpeppy mix
- 1 medium onion
- 1 bell pepper
- 2 tablespoons fresh chopped parsley
- 1 egg
- 1 can diced tomatoes and chilies salt and pepper
- Chop onion and place in a bowl. Chop bell pepper in a blender or food processor, drain juice off by pushing through a strainer. Add to the onion. Drain tomatoes and chilies, reserving liquid and put in bowl with onion and pepper. Add egg, hashpeppy mix, parsley, salt and pepper. Stir, mixture should be thick, you can add liquid from tomatoes if needed. Let mixture sit for about 5 minutes. Fry in hot oil using 1/2 teaspoon of mixture per hashpeppy. Let brown on both sides, turning as they cook. Drain on paper towels.

—Allen Brown

On June 3, the Celebration will change its tune and head to the Carriage House Restaurant for a Jazz Brunch.

With Tim McGovern and his trio playing too-tapping jazz in the background, you can delight in grits and grillades, biscuits, corned beef, oatmeal, coffee and tea.

Dot Clark has been with the Carriage House for 18 years. "We have been active supporters of the Literary Festival every year," Clark said.

Grits and Grillades is an traditional New Orleans as you can get. A big thank-you to Dot Clark for sharing her recipe for this scrumptious dish.

### Grits and Grillades

- 8 pounds beef round steak
- 1 cup oil or bacon grease, divided
- 1 cup flour
- 2 cups chopped onion

Cut meat into strips and brown in a little oil or bacon grease in a heavy skillet or Dutch oven. Set aside. Add rest of oil or grease to pan and stir in flour, continue stirring until a rich brown roux has been made. Add onions, celery and green pepper and stir until tender. Add tomato sauce and thyme, stirring until sauce has lost its bright red color. Add wine and water necessary to make enough gravy to cover meat. Return meat to gravy and bring to a boil. Add all seasonings. Reduce heat and simmer 2 hours, or until done. Adjust seasonings. Serve over grits. May be prepared 1-2 days ahead. Process well. Serves 24.

—The Carriage House

Later that day at Cherokee there will be a high tea with music by the Marvin McDonald Trio. Unlike a regular tea where the fare is usually light, a high tea is usually considered an early evening meal.

The tea is being catered by Phantasm Catering of Natchez. Phantasm owner Anne Vidal Willet has a wonderful menu planned for this event. She will be serving a tea punch, whiskey sour punch, beef roulades with mushroom filling, cucumber caps with salmon mousse, mini sweet-potato biscuits with smoked turkey and fresh sauce, crab patties (these are puff pastry turnovers with crab filling), an assortment of tea sandwiches with savory fillings, mozzarella and bitter lettuce with basil on skewers, and fruit kabobs dipped in white and dark chocolate.

Willet, who is also the co-owner of the Pig-out Inn with her husband Archie, has been in the flower business for 18 years and now is taking on catering. Since moving back to Natchez four and a half years ago, she has been developing her flower and catering business. She is expecting 150 to 200 people at the high tea. Willet shared this recipe for Jerebel sauce with me.

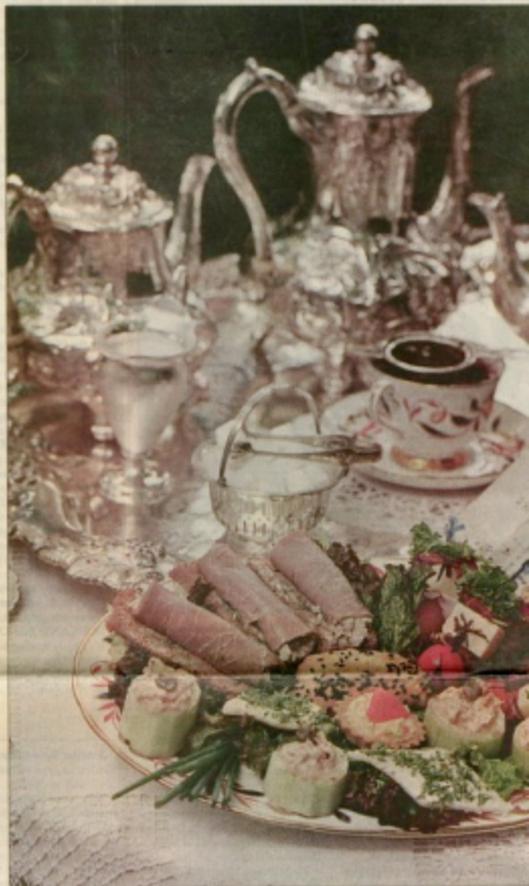
### Jerebel Sauce

- 1 10-ounce jar of apple jelly
- 1 5-ounce jar of horseradish
- 1 12-ounce jar pineapple preserves
- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- Mix all ingredients together and serve with smoked turkey, pork and ham. Also good served on cream cheese as a quick spread on crackers. This sauce holds wonderfully in the refrigerator.
- This menu sounded so good I thought you might want to try some other items from it. While these are not Willet's recipes, they are some that I have used in the past.

### Sweet Potato Biscuits

- 2 cups mashed sweet potatoes
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup buttermilk
- Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Grease two baking sheets.
- Mix together thoroughly the sweet potatoes, flour, butter, sugar, salt and baking soda. Mix in enough buttermilk to form a soft dough (it will be sticky). Coat hands with flour and lightly knead dough back and forth a few times to cover with flour. Do not overwork the dough. Roll out on a well-floured board to a thickness of 1/2-inch. Cut with a floured 1/2-inch round biscuit cutter and bake for about 15 minutes or until tops begin to slightly brown.

—Lee Bailey's Southern Food and Plantation Homes



The Natchez Democrat is pictured at high tea at the Carriage House. The ones here are the Celebration.

recipe and use part of it to make ice rings. That way you won't have ice melting in your

honey. This sauce is sticky, though you can use a little food.

# The Natchez Democrat

Serving Natchez, Vidalia and the Miss-Lou

Natchez, Mississippi Wednesday, May 26, 1999

## Former Gov. William Winter resides over literary

By KERRY WHIPPLE  
The Natchez Democrat

Carolyn Vance Smith knew former Gov. William Winter would be perfect to serve as master of ceremonies for the Natchez Literary Celebration.

"He was the person who could help the Literary Celebration become a top-notch conference," said Smith, founder of the event.

That first year, Smith said, Winter presided

over the dedication of Mallory to the Natchez National Historic Park. With the secretary of the interior on the platform and authors Eudora Welty and Margaret Walker Alexander in the front row, Winter handled his duties with great charm, she said.

"And when it was over, she told him, 'We can't possibly do the second one without you!'"

So for the last 10 years, Winter has returned for every Literary Celebration to serve as director

of proceedings.

It's a job the busy former governor considers a privilege.

"The Literary Celebration has gotten consistently better over the years," he said.

"I don't know that I've ever been to one quite like this in other states. I don't recall ever having participated in a series of events that brought together so many highly regarded literary and artistic figures."

## celebration for 10th year

Over the years, Winter has had the chance to meet Welty and Alexander, Shelby Foote and Clifton Taulbert, Maya Angelou and Myrtle Evers.

"(The Literary Celebration) has brought me in association with some people I have long admired and some that I have known for some time," said Winter, who called the conference "enriching and invigorating."

This year's Literary Celebration will focus on

"Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe."

From blues to barbecue, the conference offers visitors a taste of the music, literature and food that have shaped Southern and American culture.

Events include a salute to Ferriday family members Jerry Lee Lewis, Mickey Gilley and

See Williams page 5A

Continued from page 1A

Jerry Swaggart, lectures on New Orleans jazz, the history of country music, black gospel and Mississippi roots of American popular music; and a 10th anniversary salute to former award winners and lecturers, including Winter.

The diversity of the events at each literary celebration shows how diverse Mississippi's literary tradition is, Winter said.

"The celebration cuts across all races and classes of people," he said. "We have a common heritage."

While the celebration attracts people

from all over the country, it also reminds Mississippians what they might have taken for granted.

"It's important for those of us who live here to understand the tremendous contribution this region has made to literature," Winter said.

"It's also important for a younger generation of people to understand and get to know and hear these authors."

Since the celebration "picks up momentum each year," Winter said, "it's now established as a permanent institution."

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The Natchez Literary Celebration

Natchez, Mississippi, presents

*Music of the South*

Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe

June 2-5, 1999

**FREE LECTURES**, Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel

Elvis Presley authority Peter Guralnick (*Careless Love*)  
Jazz experts Tom Piazza (*Guide to Classic Recorded Jazz*)  
and Bruce Boyd Raeburn, Tulane Jazz Archive  
Blues authors David Evans (*Big Road Blues*) and Robert  
Gordon (*It Came from Memphis*)  
Country music expert Allen Dennis (*James Blackwood*)  
Music enthusiasts Jim O'Neal (*Living Blues*); Amanda  
Taylor (Louisiana Librarian); Michael Allen (*Western  
Rivermen 1763-1861*); David G. Sansing  
(*Sesquicentennial History of the U. of Miss.*); Lynn  
Abbott (*Religious Recordings from Black New Orleans*)  
Richard Wright Literary Awards to Barry Hannah and  
Sterling Plumpp; plus films, exhibits, booksignings

**LOW-COST EVENTS** away from the hotel

Salute to Jerry Lee Lewis, Pee-wee Whitaker, Jimmy  
Swaggart, and Mickey Gilley, with supper and tours of  
Tacony and Ferriday Museum, 5:45 p.m., June 2, \$15  
Jazz brunch, Carriage House, noon, June 3, \$20  
High tea with music, Cherokee, 5:30 p.m., June 3, \$15  
Concert by Don Vappie and the Creole Jazz Serenaders of  
New Orleans, 8 p.m., June 3, St. Mary Church, \$15  
Barbecue/Brews/Memphis Blues Duo, 6 p.m., June 4, Visitor  
Center, \$15  
Tours of the mansions Cottage Garden, Lawrence House,  
and Rosalie, 2:30-5:30 p.m., June 5, \$15  
Nashville song-writing workshop by Dan Tyler, No.1-hit  
songwriter), noon, June 5, \$25  
Talk by Pulitzer Prize nominee Clifton Taulbert (*When We  
Were Colored*), and CONCERTS by the Mississippi  
Mass Choir and St. Joseph Orchestra Ensemble, 7:30  
p.m., June 5, City Auditorium, \$15  
NAPAC reception, 9:30 p.m., June 5, Historic Natchez  
Foundation, \$10

For tickets, call 601-446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724



Sponsors: Copiah-Lincoln Community College,  
the Mississippi Department of Archives and History,  
and the Natchez National Historical Park

Thursday, May 27, 1999

THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT, Natchez, Miss. • 5A

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# The Natchez Literary Celebration



## Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe presents



Don Vappie and Creole Jazz Serenaders

### "New Orleans Classic Jazz"

A concert by **Don Vappie**  
and the

**Creole Jazz Serenaders**

8 p.m. • Thurs., June 3, 1999

St. Mary Minor Basilica

Main at Union



Winter



Taulbert

### "Music: The Universal Language"

- Ceremony honoring **Governor William Winter**
- Remarks by Pulitzer Prize nominee **Clifton Taulbert** (*When We Were Colored*).

- Mini-concert by **St. Joseph Orchestra Ensemble**

- Grand concert by **Mississippi Mass Choir**

- 7:30 p.m., Saturday, June 5, 1999, at the Natchez City Auditorium



Tickets: \$15 per evening

Call 1-601-446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724

Sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and Natchez National Historical Park.

# Natchez Literary Celebration kicks off Wednesday

By TRACY BESCHOFF

The Natchez Democrat

Five days of booky-cookin', hop-downin', Praise-the-Lord music, leavin' begins next week with the onset of the Natchez Literary Celebration.

Headliners this year include the Mississippi Mass Choir, Don Vappie and the Creole Jazz Separators, "When We Were Colored" author Clifton Taulbert, and No. 1 country hit songwriter Don Tyler of Nashville.

This year, which marks the 10th anniversary of the festival, is a salute to music of the South and the words behind it, both in the lyrics of the music and the literary writings about the music.

The festival, dubbed "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe," opens Wednesday with a welcome by former Gov. William Winter, who will also be honored at the conference for his 10 years of contribution as the director of proceedings.

A "Mississippi Blues of American Popular Music" lecture by author Jim O'Neal of Kansas City will follow the opening ceremony.

The festival, a theme-based lecture series enhanced by films, concerts, exhibits, book

sales, book signings, workshops, award ceremonies, tours, field trips and social events, is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the Natchez National Historical Park.

A new comer this year is "Hot Times in the Old Town," where festival-goers can get a feel for Natchez's nightspots while being entertained by live local and regional bands.

"Hot Times" is a fundraiser for the celebration and will be held throughout the evening June 4 and 5 and all day Sunday, June 6.

Local hot spots participating include Biscuits and Blues, Cook of the Walk, The Corner Bar, Dimples, Lady Luck Casino, Pelly Bones, Under the Hill Saloon, and the Whitehouse's House.

With the purchase of a \$10 voucher, patrons can catch a ride on the trolley traveling back and forth between the participating establishments. The voucher is also good for a complimentary drink and cover charge waivers in some places. The vouchers will be available throughout the literary celebration.

Tickets to the literary celebration are on sale now at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center and, beginning at noon Wednesday,

they will be available at the celebration's registration desk in the lobby of the Eolia Hotel.

Many of the events during the festival are free but there are some ticketed events, with prices ranging from \$10 to \$25.

The following events will sell out early or will be closed out in order to allow caterers to prepare.

■ A salute to Jerry Lee Lewis, Peewee Whitaker, Mickey Gilley and Jimmy Swaggart at Tazony Plantation and Florida Museum at 5:30 p.m. June 2. Tickets are \$25 and the event will include supper, music and a tour.

■ A jazz brunch at Carriage House Restaurant at Stanton Hall with lunch and a lecture by songwriter and author Don Tyler at noon June 3. Tickets are \$20.

■ A High Tea and Music at Cherokee Mansion with the Maria McDonald Trio at 5:30 p.m. June 3. The event will include a meal and tickets are \$15.

■ Barbours, Blues and Blues. Overlooking the River with music by the Memphis Blues Duo of Memphis at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center at 6 p.m. June 4. Tickets are \$15.

Tickets for the above events should be purchased immediately. Other tickets will be available throughout the festival.



By Tracy Beschoff, Natchez Democrat

Don Vappie and the Creole Jazz Separators will be one of the headlining bands during the 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration. The band will perform a concert and program at St. Mary Minor Basilica and p.m. Tuesday. Tickets are \$25 and are available through the Natchez Visitors Center box office.

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# CLIFTON L. TAULBERT

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## LECTURER:

Taulbert is lauded as a well known, respected and captivation voice on "Building Community wherever People are." He lectures throughout the United States, Europe, Japan and Central America. Whether speaking before Corporate America, Professional Organizations, distinguished members of the Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Costa Rica, the children of the famed Indianapolis Children's Museum, or an International Economic Symposium in Florida, Taulbert finds "Community" in the stories of our lives and weaves the strategies and objectives of his audience into the fabric of their shared humanity. According to Taulbert, "No contract, no plan or initiative is complete without the human element being involved. People are still at the core of community building."

## AUTHOR:

Taulbert has authored four books including the internationally acclaimed memoir, "Once upon a time when we were Colored" (this book became the basis for the critically acclaimed film by the same title...released in 1996). Taulbert also wrote the Pulitzer nominated "The Last Train North" which also won the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Award. The third book in the series, "Watching our Crops come In" was released by Viking Penguin Publishers in February of 1997 and was hailed as required reading for all Americans by the Los Angeles Times. "Eight Habits of the Heart", Taulbert's fourth book captures the essence and impact of good living. It was USA TODAY'S 1997 year-end choice as the inspirational book to give and enrich our minds.

Note: Taulbert's books have been excerpted world-wide for inclusion in secondary educational textbooks.

## JOURNALIST:

Clifton Taulbert has written for national and international publications...The New York Times, The Atlanta Constitution, Parade Magazine, USA Today, Southern Living, The Oxford American, and Lydia(a German publication).

## REVIEWS and NEWS:

Taulbert's works have been reviewed by every major newspaper in America...the New York Times, The Chicago Tribune, The Atlanta Constitution, The Los Angeles Times, The Boston Globe, The Arizona Star, The Washington Post and Clarion Ledger of Jackson, Mississippi. He has been a guest on CNN, TBN, CSPAN, NPR, Donahue, Voice of America and talk radio throughout the country as well as being a satellite guest on Central American television.

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**Together on Tuesdays**  
**Lending our talents to the worship of God**  
**May 4, 1999**

We welcome you to this service of worship. We hope that your spirits will be lifted by our celebration together.

**Call to Worship: (Responsive)**

**Leader:** Alleluia! This is the day that the Lord has made!

**People:** Let us rejoice and be glad in it! Alleluia! (Psalm 118:34)

**PROGRAM:** Carolyn Vance Smith will preview events of the Natchez Literary Celebration.

**Shared Prayer**

Following worship, you are invited to enjoy a light lunch in Stratton Chapel.

**Next Week:** Highlights from the Natchez Opera Festival presented by Dr. Donald Killebra, Dr. David Blackburn. There will be two opera singers on hand to sing selections from upcoming performances. One of the singers will be Archie Manning. Archie who????????

# Musical Arts League to hold June meeting

## Special to The Democrat

Jefferson Street Methodist Church will be the setting for the season's final presentation by the Musical Arts League. The public is invited to attend.

The concert is set for Tuesday, June 1, at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary of the church. The program will be dedicated to the Literary Festival and will present the music of Natchez during the antebellum era, 1800-1860. Documented by newspaper records from the time and later compiled into book form.

In keeping with the period's music, the program will open with a Johann Sebastian Bach's composition played on the organ by Dr. Patrick Doherty, followed by "Tocatta in G" minor by Minnie Hoffman, played by Anna Rose Davis.

Olley Bull, one of the violin "greats" at that time, played a concert in the 1800's and Matthew Monette, violinist, and Vincent Bach, pianist,

will play music for which Bull was famous.

Frans Liszt, whose music was sold in Natchez in local stores in 1850, will be represented by Doris Bart at the piano. Compositions that Jerry Lind and the Black Swan sang will be presented by Kathleen Mackay King, soprano, and Larry Konecky, violinist.

The music of Stephen Foster and the spirituals of the black man will be presented by a group portraying "The Minstrels." The group consists of John Creeker, Melton King, Van Strubben and Bryant Reed.

The "Tidbits" of the black man that was so popular will be performed by Matthew Monette and his "Tidbits."

The music of the first waltz king, Van Weller, and of the Strauss family, will be presented at the piano by Doris Bart. Vincent Bach's will play at the organ "That clock" by Hayden. "The Klein Natchez Massacre" by Mozart will be performed by Matthew Monette.

violin, Larry Konecky, cello, Dr. Edward Gaudet, oboe and Dr. Patrick Doherty on the harpsichord.

The program will conclude with "The President's March" and the "Benevolent Blue Flag," sung by Helen, Kayne, Ellen Mosby, Kathy King and Kathleen Whitehead. They will be accompanied by Marcia Cochran, flute, Kathleen Mackay King, flute, Rae Kozubicky, violin, Matthew Monette, violin and Dr. Gaudet on the oboe.

Hosts for the occasion will be, Mr. and Mrs. Melton King, chairman, Mrs. Zaida Milbrain, Mrs. Rae Kozubicky, Mrs. Joe Parker, Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Cullbertson, Mrs. Eunice Cullbertson, Mrs. Melvin Williams, Dr. and Mrs. George Moss, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Moorland, Ms. Meredith Moorland, Mr. Vincent Bach, Mrs. Ellen Monette, Mr. and Mrs. Larry Buckley, Mrs. Darlene Christian, Mrs. Joyce Hall, Mrs. Frances McKinley and the Rev. and Mrs. Curtis Moffat.

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# The Natchez Democrat

Serving Natchez, Vidalia and the Miss-Lou

Natchez, Mississippi

Sunday, May 30, 1999

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## Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe

The Natchez Literary Celebration begins the week and focuses on the music of the South. Some events have been changed to a full schedule as follows:

### Wednesday, June 2

**7 p.m.** — Opening ceremony with former Gov. William Winter, "Mississippi Republic of American Pop/Rock Music," by Jim O'Neal, author of "Sounding Butter-Blue" and "Living Blue"

**8 p.m.** — Introduction and book signing by O'Neal  
**9:30 p.m.** — "Friday Froppe" with Amanda Taylor, literary director of Concordia Parish Library System and chairman of Lumbard Museum

**5:30 p.m.** — "Whole Lots Shakin' Goin' On: Music, Food and Fun with Jerry Lee Lewis Penney Whitaker, Mickey Gilley and Jimmy Skeaggar" at Factory Plantation and Pernod Museum with coffee, supper, music by Swampwater Band, and guided tour of Factory. (Tickets: \$25, transportation provided)  
**8:45 p.m.** — "Great Balls of Fire," film about Jerry Lee Lewis

### Thursday, June 3

**9 a.m.** — "I Bred 'Em and Now I'm Raising 'Em" by Frank Boyl (recipient of Tulane Jazz Society, New Orleans, and author of "All Music Guide to Jazz")  
**10:30 a.m.** — "The City and the River: Jazz and Blues" by Tom Piazza of New Orleans, author of "Tulsa in Classic Recorded Jazz"

**11:30 a.m.** — Book signing with Bruce Springsteen and Tom Piazza  
**Noon** — Jazz brunch at Cottage House of Stanton Hall, with lecture by Dan Tyler of Nashville, author of "Music City Confidential" and No. 1 country hit songwriter. (Tickets: \$20)

**2 p.m.** — "Two, Dollars, Five: Songs Then and Now on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers," by Michael Allen, author of "Winters Rivermen 1753-1967"

**3 p.m.** — refreshments  
**5:15 p.m.** — "The Rock Swain and the Swedish Nightingale Take a Bow," by David Searg of the University of

Mississippi, author of "Mississippi History," with Tildie Holly of Jackson State, and Rebecca Stephens of Natchez  
**4:15 p.m.** — book signing with Dan Tyler, Michael Allen and David Searg  
**5:30 p.m.** — "High Tea and Music with Marvin McDonald Trio at Cherokee Mansion at Moss and Union streets. (Tickets: \$15)

**8 p.m.** — "New Orleans Classic Jazz," a concert and program by Don Vappie and the Creole Jazz Seminars of New Orleans at St. Mary Minor Basilica. (Tickets: \$15)

**8:30 p.m.** — informal reception with cash bar at the Delta honoring Jazz Seminars (where CDs will be sold and signed)

### Friday, June 4

**9 a.m.** — "The History of Country Music: From Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family to Merle Haggard and George Jones," by Allen Downs of Troy (Ala.) State University, author of "James Blackwood: Memories"  
**10:30 a.m.** — "Pik Roots of Blues Music," by David Evans of University of Memphis

**11:30 a.m.** — book signing by Allen Downs and Tom Piazza  
**1:30 p.m.** — "I Came from Memphis: Blues and More," by Robert Gordon of Memphis, author of "The King on the Road"

**2:15 p.m.** — "This is History: A Biography of West Newton, Mass., author of "Caneless Louie"

**3 p.m.** — refreshments  
**3:15 p.m.** — "Writing Down the Sound: Documenting Musicians," a panel discussion with Robert Gordon, Peter Guralnick, Jim O'Neal, and chaired by Shirley Ritter

**6 p.m.** — "Harbinger: Blues and Blues Overlooking the Blues," with the Memphis Blues Duo of Memphis at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center. (Tickets: \$10)

**8:30 p.m.** — "This '85 Comeback Soccer," a film about Dink Prepler at the Club ballroom

### Saturday, June 5

**9 a.m.** — "Singing Holy: Jubilee Singers, Barbershop Harmony and the Birth of the Modern Black Gospel Quartet Phenomenon," by Lynn Abbott of New Orleans, author of "Religious Recording from Black New Orleans"

**10:30 a.m.** — Presentation of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards to Sterling Plump, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Barry Hannah, The University of the South, funded by Natchez Newspapers, Inc. and Oxford American Magazine

**11:30 a.m.** — "A 10th Anniversary Salute" to former award winners, lecturers and cashiers, with book signings by more than 20 authors featured at the literary celebrations in the last decade  
**Noon to 3 p.m.** — "Sourgrunter Seminar and Lunch" by Dan Tyler at Deposit Statecraft National Bank. (Tickets: \$25)  
**2:30 to 5:30 p.m.** — "Musics in the Air" at the manor's Cobble Garden, Lumbard Museum. (Tickets: \$15, transportation provided)

**7:30 p.m.** — "Music: The Universal Language" at Natchez Municipal Auditorium, featuring a mini concert by the St. Joseph Orchestra Ensemble, "The Power of Music to Change Our Lives and Inspire Our Future" with book signings by Tulsa, Okla., author of "When We Were Colored," and a grand concert by the Mississippi Mass Choir, with orchestra. (Tickets: \$15)

**9:30 p.m.** — "A Grande Finale Reception," honoring Gov. William Waller, Clifton Sautter, Sterling Plump and Barry Hannah at the Historic Natchez Foundation hosted by the Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture

\*Unless otherwise noted, events are at The Radisson Fols Hotel and are free.  
\*\* "Hot Times in the Old Town" with live music at downtown hot spots will be throughout the night, Friday and Saturday, and all day Sunday, June 6. (Tickets: \$10)



Natchez Literary Celebration

# Natchez Literary Celebration explores ties of South, music

Special to The Oklahoman

The South isn't the South without the music.

And that's the premise the 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration explores Wednesday through Saturday.

"Some of the music world's most famous exponents, writers and musicians will not only talk this year but they'll also play and sing their way into our hearts," said Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lewis Community College, the event's sponsor and one of its co-chairmen.

The conference theme, "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Language," covers a wide spectrum of Southern and

their music. Included are four days of free lectures, book signings, special presentations and exhibits plus low-cost musical performances, meals and parties.

The conference winds down Saturday (7:30 p.m. session) with a salute to former Gov. William Waller, who has been the director of proceedings for 19 years.

"We have taken the best in Southern literature and added a brand of the arts that you know as the perfect immersion cocktail," said Robert Dodson, Natchez National Historical Park superintendent. Dodson, Smith and James F. Barnett Jr. of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History are co-chairmen.

## DETAILS

- **What:** Natchez Literary Festival
- **When:** Wednesday-Saturday (weekend is best)
- **Where:** Unless otherwise noted in the schedule, events are at the Robinson Natchez East Hotel and are free.

- **Details:** 448-6346 or 1-800-647-8744, write P.O. Box 5488, Natchez, MS 39121, or e-mail carolyn@natchez.com, or see the Web.

## FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

### WEDNESDAY

- 2 p.m. — Welcome
- 2:15 p.m. — **Mississippi Roots of American Popular Music.** Jim O'Neal (*Nothing But the Blues: Living Blues*)
- 3:30 p.m. — **Ferriday Frappe.** Amanda Taylor, chairman of the Ferriday, La., museum
- 5:30 p.m. — **Salute to Louisiana musicians Jerry Lee Lewis, Pee Wee Whitaker, Mickey Gilley and Jimmy Swagart** at Teahou Plantation near Vidalia, La., and a tour of the Ferriday museum. Supper, music and tour, \$25
- 8:45 p.m. — **Showing of the movie *Great Balls of Fire*** about Jerry Lee Lewis



Taulbert



Hannah

- 9 a.m. — **Salute to Louisiana musicians Jerry Lee Lewis, Pee Wee Whitaker, Mickey Gilley and Jimmy Swagart** at Teahou Plantation near Vidalia, La., and a tour of the Ferriday museum. Supper, music and tour, \$25
- 10:30 a.m. — **The City and the River: Jazz and the Blues.** Tom Piazza of New Orleans (*Guide to Classic Recorded Jazz*)
- Noon — **Jazz Brunch.** Carriage House at Starbuck Hall (\$20), with after-lunch discussion **Musico City Confidential** by songwriter and music publisher Don Tyler
- 2 p.m. — **Row, Boatmen, Row: Songs Then and Now on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.** Michael Allen (*Western Rivermen 1763-1867*)
- 3:15 p.m. — **A special presentation on *The Black Swan and The Swedish Nightgale Take a Bow*** by David Searing of the University of Mississippi, with vocal selections by Ellaline Holly of Jack-

### THURSDAY

- 9 a.m. — **Ethnic Diversity and New Orleans Jazz.** Bruce Boyd Raeburn, curator of the Tulane Jazz Archive in New Orleans (*AM Music Guide to Jazz*)
- 10:30 a.m. — **The City and the River: Jazz and the Blues.** Tom Piazza of New Orleans (*Guide to Classic Recorded Jazz*)
- Noon — **Jazz Brunch.** Carriage House at Starbuck Hall (\$20), with after-lunch discussion **Musico City Confidential** by songwriter and music publisher Don Tyler
- 2 p.m. — **Row, Boatmen, Row: Songs Then and Now on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.** Michael Allen (*Western Rivermen 1763-1867*)
- 3:15 p.m. — **A special presentation on *The Black Swan and The Swedish Nightgale Take a Bow*** by David Searing of the University of Mississippi, with vocal selections by Ellaline Holly of Jack-

### FRIDAY

- 9 a.m. — **The History of Country Music: From Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family to Merle Haggard and George Jones.** Allen Dennis of Troy (Ala.) State University (*James Blackwood: Memories*)
- 10:30 a.m. — **Folk Roots of Blues Music.** David Evans, University of Memphis (*Big Road Blues*)
- Noon-1:30 — **Hot Time in the Old Town.** Live music at downtown spots (\$10, good Friday-June 6)
- 1:30 p.m. — **It Came from Memphis: Blues and More.** Robert Gordon of Memphis (*Elvis: King on the Road*)
- 2:15 p.m. — **Elvis in History: A Biographer and His Subject.** Peter Guralnick of West Newbury, Mass. (*Careless Love*)
- 3:30 p.m. — **Writing Down the Sound: Documenting Musicians,** a panel discussion
- 6 p.m. — **Barbeque, Brews and Blues at the River.**

with Memphis Blues Duo (\$15) at the Natchez Visitors' Reception Center

■ 8:30 p.m. — **Elvis: '68 Comeback Special,** a film

### SATURDAY

- 9 a.m. — **Crying Holy: Jubilee Singing, Barbershop Harmony and the Birth of the Modern Black Gospel Quartet Phenomenon.** Lysa Abbott of New Orleans (*Religious Recordings from Black New Orleans*)
- 10:30 a.m. — **Presentation of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards** to Sterling Plumpp of the University of Illinois at Chicago and Barry Hannah of the University of Mississippi
- 11:15 a.m. — **A 10th Anniversary Salute to Former Award Winners.** lectures and book signings to follow
- Noon-3 p.m. — **Songwriting Seminar and Lunch,** led by Dan Tyler (\$25) at Deposit Guaranty National Bank
- 2:30-6:30 p.m. — **Music's in the Air at the Minston's Cottage Garden.** Lawrence House and Rosalie (\$15)
- 7:30 p.m. — **Music: The Universal Language,** at the Natchez Municipal Auditorium (\$15) with a mini concert by the St. Joseph (La.) Orchestra Ensemble, discussion of *The Power of Music to Change Our Lives and Build Our World* by Clifton Taulbert of Tulsa (*When We Were Colored*) and grand concert by the Mississippi Mass Choir
- 9:30 p.m. — **Grand Finale Reception,** hosted by Museum of the Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture (\$10) at Historic Natchez Foundation

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# Songwriter Tyler knows about No. 1

By TRACY BISHOP

The Natchez Democrat

Sitting in a law class at the University of Mississippi, Dan Tyler never saw himself wrapped up with country music sensation LeAnn Rimes.

But then, who could envision the eclectic success Tyler has accomplished. He has enjoyed a professional career as an entertainment attorney, a country songwriter, a music publisher, and — with his latest foray into the arts — a novelist.

Tyler will be one of the guests at the 10th Annual Natchez Literary Celebration — where he will conduct a songwriter's workshop, perform, lecture and sign copies of his novel.

This year's conference theme is "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe," and "it will explore why the Southland gave birth to the blues, as well as to jazz, rock 'n' roll, country, spirituals, gospel — in fact, all music that is truly American," said Carolyn Vance Smith, founder of the literary festival.

Tyler's songwriting workshop and lunch will be held from noon to 1 p.m. June 3, and tickets are \$25. Participants must register in advance and can do so by calling 1-800-647-6724.

Tyler said participants are asked to bring one song they've recorded so he and the class can critique it.

Tyler said that during the seminar, the class will

analyze the elements of a good song, discuss what a music publisher is and does and discuss the paperwork and administrative aspects of getting a song published such as copyright procedures.

"And of course I'll throw in a few war stories," he said.

At noon on June 3, Tyler will participate in a jazz brunch at the Carriage House Restaurant at Station

Hall. After lunch, Tyler will present a lecture on his experiences in Nashville as a songwriter. Tickets to the jazz brunch are \$20.

Tyler will also be available to sign copies of his novel, "Music City Confidential," which is set in Nashville and centers around the country music scene full of payoffs, drugs and murder.

On June 4, Tyler will perform at Dimplex on Main Street.

Tyler, a McClumb native, has spent most of his adult career living in the country music capital, Nashville, Tenn., picking up and heading out in 1976 after completing a bachelor's degree in English and a law degree at the University of Mississippi.

Within two years of his move, Tyler had co-written his first No. 1 hit, "Hearts on Fire," performed by Eddie Rabbit.

During his first few years in Nashville, Tyler divided his time between practicing law and writing songs. In 1980, he wrote "Bobbie Sue," which was recorded by the Oak Ridge Boys. The song became one of the biggest country hits of the 1980s and reached No. 12 on the Billboard pop charts. And

Tyler says he hasn't practiced law since.

He devoted his time to writing songs full-time, and now more than 45 of his songs have been recorded. Over the next five years, Dan had three other No. 1 country hits, including "Modern Day Romance" by the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, "Baby's Got a New Baby," by SKD, and one of his favorites, "Twenty Years Ago," by Kenny Rogers, which is almost growing up in McClumb.

He has also written songs recorded by B.J. Thomas, Glen Campbell, Juice Newton, Marie Osmond, Keith Whitley, Agnetha Faltskog of ABBA, Johnnie Taylor, and the Cox Family, to name a few. His latest big hit, "The Light in Your Eyes," was recorded by LeAnn Rimes on her debut album "Blue."

"The Light in Your Eyes," another one of Tyler's favorites, was inspired by his son and is about a father trying to give his son advice.

In 1983, Tyler and his wife, Adrië, began a music publishing and production company, and along with his own songs, Tyler also publishes his son's songs, as well as others.

Tyler feels he's been lucky in the competitive world of country music, and has enjoyed what he calls "moderate success."

"But it's harder than I thought," he said. "It's so competitive. There's always someone new knocking at the door."

Tyler said he knows a good song when he hears it and perhaps that's why he's enjoyed the success that he has. When a songwriter brings him a new song he knows exactly what to look for — "The best songs come from the heart," he said.



The Natchez Democrat's featured guest, Natchez, Tenn.-based songwriter Dan Tyler will perform and lecture at this year's Natchez Literary Celebration, which begins Wednesday.

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• Grand concert by Mississippi Mass Choir

• 7:30 p.m., Saturday, June 5, 1999, at the Natchez City Auditorium

Tickets: \$15 per evening

Call 1-601-446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724



Sponsored by Capital South Community College, Mississippi Department of Culture and Office of Tourism and Historic Preservation, Natchez, Miss.

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6-2-99

## Supporting cast helps Celebration every year

### Special to The Democrat

Each year for the past 10 years, the Natchez Literary Celebration has attracted stars and superstars as speakers for its lecture series, said Robert Dodson, superintendent of the Natchez National Historical Park and co-chairman of the Celebration.

"But the Celebration has also attracted stars and superstars in supporting roles, as well," he said.

"This year's Celebration is no different. In fact, this year we have even more top-level people assisting us because we're saluting the conference's first decade. People say they want to be here, that they love both the Celebration and Natchez."

Returning as director of proceedings for the 10th year in a row is former Gov. William Winter of Jackson.

Author of three books and long-time chairman of the board of trustees of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Winter will be honored at a special ceremony this year.

At 7:30 p.m. June 5 at the City Auditorium, before concerts by the St. Joseph Orchestra Ensemble and the Mississippi Mass Choir and remarks by the author Clifton Taulbert, Winter will be presented with special gifts as a thank-you for his commitment to the Literary Celebration, Dodson said.

Other well-known figures assisting with the 1999 Celebration include:

■ Betsy Bradley, director, Mississippi Arts Commission, Jackson, who will introduce Don Vappie and the Creole Jazz Serenaders of New Orleans, in concert June 3.

■ Larry L. "Butch" Brown, mayor of the City of Natchez, who will welcome conference guests June 2.

■ Barbara Carpenter, executive director of the Mississippi Humanities Council, Jackson, who will introduce speaker Amanda Taylor June 2.

■ Howell Garner, president of Copiah-Lincoln Community College, who will introduce author Tom Piazza June 3.

■ John D.W. Guice, professor and author at the University of Southern Mississippi, who will introduce author Michael Allen June 3.

■ Alferdeen Harrison, director of the Margaret Walker Alexander Research Center, Jackson State University, who will introduce historian David Sansing June 3.

■ Elbert Hilliard, Director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, who will introduce speaker Allen Dennis June 4.

■ Stuart Johnson, National Park Service, Atlanta, and a former co-chairman of the Celebration, who will introduce songwriter Dan Tyler June 3.

■ Robert Khayat, chancellor, The University of Mississippi, who will present the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards June 5.

■ Ronald Nettles, dean, Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez, who will introduce the film, "Great Balls of Fire!" June 2.

■ Olon Ray, executive director, State Board for Mississippi Community and Junior Colleges, Jackson, who will introduce writer Lynn Abbott June 5.

■ Shelley Ritter, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, who will chair a panel discussion June 4.

■ Virginia Salmon, president, Adams County Board of Supervisors, who will introduce jazz archivist Bryce Boyd Raeburn June 3.

■ James Stribling, president, Board of Trustees, Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Brookhaven, who will introduce author David Evans June 4.

■ Kenneth Taylor, instructor at Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez and former co-chairman of the Celebration, who will introduce writer Jim O'Neal June 2.

■ Charles Reagan Wilson, director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at The University of Mississippi, who will introduce writers Robert Gordon and Peter Guralnick June 4.

Natchez Democrat

OUR OPINION

Wednesday, June 2, 1999

## Southern sounds echo as celebration kicks off

Shhh! Listen. Do you hear it? Is it Elvis? Muddy Waters? B.B. King? Or even Jerry Lee Lewis?

The sounds of the South will echo through the streets of Natchez today as the 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration kicks off.

Each year the celebration serves to remind us just how rich in culture Natchez is. On the surface the event draws hundreds of participants from all over the country to our city and serves as a large economic boost.

But the celebration is far more important than just a few tax dollars spent at local business.

The event is rare and special because it celebrates the art of words - written, spoken and, this year, sung.

Most of us can't remember the days before television and radio were the chief form of entertainment for the masses. Back then, entertainment was local - stories passed down atop grandparents' knees or tall tales swapped while passing time at the old general store.

And while technology and the information age may have changed the way we share our words, some things really haven't changed much. The beauty of the words is still important - and worthy of celebration.

Each of us uses words each day to work, to communicate and even to entertain.

The written word continues to convey ideas, inspiration, hope and insights - as well as record history, teach lessons and preserve our traditions for new generations.

This year the celebration focuses its sights on the beauty of the song. While Southerners like Faulkner and Welty are the legends of the Southern literary tradition, folks like Muddy Waters, Elvis and Jerry Lee Lewis own the stage and the title of legends.

So let the music begin, y'all.

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# T-shirts add casual air to celebration

## Special to The Democrat

Just as the blues go with barbeque, T-shirts go with jeans.

"And they'll all go together June 4 when we gather at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center," said Natchez Literary Celebration co-chairman James F. Barnett Jr. of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

The Celebration's 1999 theme, "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe," will be explored June 2-5 in a series of free lectures at the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel and at related activities around town.

One such activity will take place from 6 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. June 4 at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center when the Celebration presents "Barbeque, Brews and Blues" as a sequel to the day's lectures about Southern Blues musicians.

Featured that evening will be blues music by the Memphis Blues Duo of Memphis, Tenn., and barbeque chicken, barbeque ribs and all the trimmings by Carl Roberts and his cooking team of Natchez.

Tickets for the event are \$15 and are available at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center, 446-6345.

"Everybody is encouraged to dress down that night," Barnett said. "As we were planning the Barbeque, Brews and Blues event, the most logical thing was to develop a special Literary Celebration T-shirt and get people to wear it during the evening of June 4."

The T-shirt was designed by William M. Smith Jr. of

Natchez, who holds a bachelor of fine arts degree in painting and sculpture and has recently completed a master's degree in art therapy in San Francisco.

"The shirt is blue, to carry out the theme of blues music," Smith said. A dominant feature on the back of the shirt in black ink is a large photo by Michael E. Smith of New Orleans.

The prize-winning photo is of blues musician Lightnin' Hopkins, performing before a huge crowd at the New Orleans Jazz Festival.

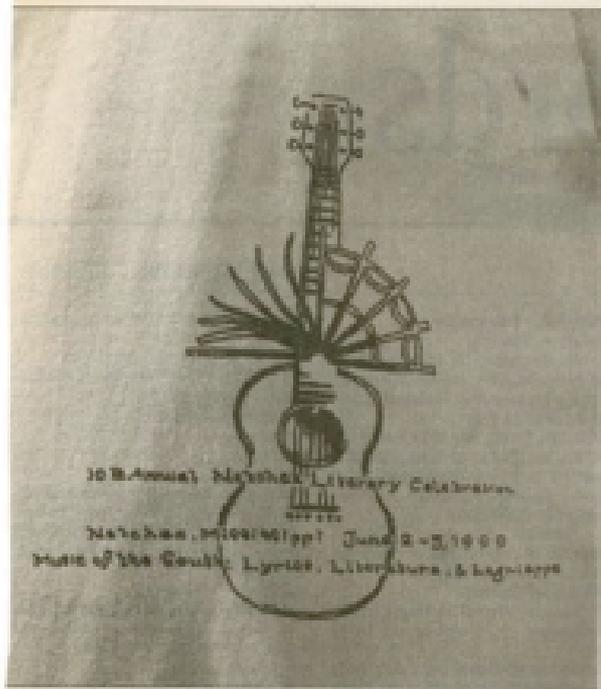
On the left front of the shirt is the Celebration logo, which William Smith designed in 1989.

"This logo, which is an open book/open window design, in the T-shirt design sits at the throat of a guitar," Smith said.

Beneath the design is the name of this year's Celebration theme, as well as this year's conference dates, June 2-5, 1999.

Shirts are for sale prior to the Celebration at the bookshop at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center, 640 South Canal St.; at the bookshop at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, 400 Jefferson Davis Boulevard; at the bookshop at Historic Jefferson College at Washington; and at the bookshop at Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 11 Co-Lin Circle.

"The shirts cost \$11 each and are a fundraiser for this year's Celebration," Barnett said. "Those not sold before June 2 will be for sale at the conference in the lobby of the Eola Hotel."



The Natchez Democrat/The artist

T-shirts for the 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration are \$15 and are available at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center, 446-6345.

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THE 1999 NATCHEZ LITERARY  
CELEBRATION

"MUSIC OF THE SOUTH"

JUNE 2-5, 1999

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WHILE THEY LAST!

# Local restaurants, bars exited about 'Hot Time'

## Special to The Democrat

Ronnie Cox, co-owner of Dimples night club on Main Street, and Patricia Clark, owner of Cock of the Walk restaurant on Broadway Street, got excited when they heard that this year's Natchez Literary Celebration is using the theme, "Music of the South."

They got even more excited when they heard of a special Celebration fund-raiser called "Hot Time in the Old Town."

The event features live music at eight downtown clubs and restaurants throughout the Celebration weekend, June 4-6.

For \$10, a special Celebration ticket is redeemable for a choice of three beverages, cover charges or shows as well as two rides on the downtown trolley.

"It's a neat idea to have live music downtown," Clark said. "This will get people moving about and enjoying themselves."

Participating establishments agreed to donate the cost of beverages, cover charges or live

shows and let the NLC keep ticket proceeds, said co-chairman Carolyn Vance Smith. "We are so grateful to the owners of these places," she said.

Trolleys will run until 11 p.m. both June 4 and June 5, Smith said.

"People can park their cars and go from place to place on the trolleys.

This way they can easily sample all kinds of music."

At Dimples on June 4, Dan Tyler of Nashville, Tenn., will present a solo performance at 9 p.m. and later join the Ronnie Cox Blue Bayou Band.

During the late evening of June 5, Tyler will also join the band.

"Dan is a major songwriter, song publisher and performer," Cox said. "He'll be in town to give a talk at the Celebration on June 3 and to

**"It's a neat idea to have live music downtown. This will get people moving about and enjoying themselves."**

**PATRICIA CLARK  
COCK OF THE WALK OWNER**

conduct a songwriting workshop on June 5."

At Cock of the Walk, Burnley Cook of Natchez will entertain at the piano June 4 and June 5 from 5 p.m. until 9 p.m., Clark said.

"Burnley is a fantastic musician," she said. "He is seldom stopped by a request. He's so good he can play beautifully and read a book on woodworking at the same time — and pass a quiz on the book! After music, woodworking is his love."

Other participating establishments will offer live music at various days and times.

They are:

■ Biscuits & Blues, Main Street, blues music at brunch and in the evening, June 6; no cover charge.

■ Corner Bar, corner of South Canal and State Street, J.P. Caldwell, Southern songs, some original, with acoustic guitar, 4 p.m. until June 4-5; no cover charge.

■ Lady Luck Casino, Silver Street, Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band Cajan music shows at 8 p.m. and 10 p.m., June 4-5; no cover charge. Tickets includes a free spin on \$100,000 machine and a coupon for \$5 match play.

■ Pulley Bone's, South Canal Street, Southern musical favorites, 12-4 p.m., June 4-5; no cover charge.

■ Under-the-Hill Saloon, Silver Street, Kalmecott blues band, 10 p.m.-2 a.m., June 4-5, and 8-12 p.m., June 6; no cover charge.

■ The Wharf Master's Restaurant, Silver Street, Little Jimmy Reed playing electric blues with keyboard, guitar and harmonica, 12-4 p.m., June 6; no cover charge.

"Hot Time in the Old Town" tickets are available by calling the Natchez Visitors Reception Center, 601-446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724.

"This is a chance to bring some outside entertainers into Natchez for not only home folks to see but also for visitors to see," Cox said. "They'll go back and spread the word."



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The Natchez Democrat/Karin Cooper

Ferriday Museum organizer Amanda Taylor hopes to broaden horizons of music lovers participating in the Natchez Literary Celebration as she shares the story of the Ferriday museum and the famous citizens who were raised in Ferriday. Behind Taylor is bluesman Leon "Pee Wee" Whittaker.

## Ferriday musicians kick off Natchez literary festival

By NITA MCCANN

### The Natchez Democrat

FERRIDAY, La. — At first glance, the musical heritage of Ferriday might have little in common with a literary festival.

But Carolyn Vance Smith, founder of the Natchez Literary Celebration, believes there couldn't be a better fit — especially since the 10th annual festival is themed "Music of the South."

Ferriday is unique, Smith said, because four famous musicians were raised in the area: country star Mickey Gilley, rock pioneer Jerry Lee Lewis, gospel singer/evangelist Jimmy Swaggart and bluesman Leon "Pee Wee" Whittaker.

"Here we have a microcosm of Southern music all in one little town," Smith said. "And these men are famous and have had books written about them — which ties into the literary celebration."

In fact, the four-day event will kick off on June 2 with a look at the early lives and music

of the four.

First, Amanda Taylor, Concordia Parish librarian and an organizer of the Ferriday Museum, will speak on the work that went into opening the museum and on books that have been written about the musicians.

"For a town of less than 4,000 to produce four musicians who are recognized worldwide is quite an accomplishment," Taylor said. "I think that's why Elaine Dundy came here."

Dundy, a California author, spent four months in the town to research her book "Ferriday, Louisiana." Taylor will be a substitute speaker at the event in place of Dundy, who couldn't attend for medical reasons.

After Taylor's speech, buses will take participants to a catfish supper at Tacony Plantation, an old plantation house on U.S. 84 West between Vidalia and Ferriday.

There, the Swampwater Band will perform country and rock 'n' roll music from the

1950s to today. "Everything but bluegrass and rap," said Tom Bell of Ferriday, a member of the local band.

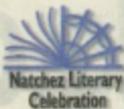
Supper will be followed by a guided bus tour of Ferriday landmarks that had an influence on the musicians.

"They'll see the Assembly of God Church the cousins (Lewis, Swaggart and Gilley) attended," Smith said. "They'll see their childhood homes and the movie theater where they dreamed dreams of becoming stars."

Participants will wrap up the day at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center where they will view a movie on Lewis' life, "Great Balls of Fire."

Taylor's speech and the movie are free, while tickets for the supper/tour are \$25 each. Books on the musicians' lives will be for sale at the event.

The Natchez Literary Celebration is co-sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College's Natchez campus, the National Park Service and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.



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## CELEBRITIES OF THE FERRIDAY MUSEUM



### MICKEY GILLEY

Mickey Leroy Gilley, born March 9, 1936, grew up in Ferriday, Louisiana, and is a well-known country music performer and songwriter. He learned to play the piano alongside his famous cousins, Jerry Lee Lewis and Jimmy Lee Swaggart. In the Ferriday area, "Gilley" is pronounced as "Jilly," but after Mickey moved to Texas at age 17, the pronunciation changed. Mickey recorded 39 Top Ten country hits with 17 of those reaching the number one spot on the country music charts. His recordings, "Room Full of Roses" in 1974, "Don't the Girls All Get Prettier at Closing Time" in 1976, and "Stand By Me" in 1980 are some of his best-known hits.

In 1971, Mickey opened the world's largest "honky-tonk," Gilley's Club in Pasedena, Texas. It served as the setting for the 1980 movie "Urban Cowboy." The club remained a busy attraction for locals and tourists until its closing in the late 1980s. In 1989, when Mickey opened a brand-new club in Branson, Missouri, he became one of the first country superstars to open his own theater there.

The thing Mickey says he loves most is "getting on stage and performing a good show for people."

### JERRY LEE LEWIS

Jerry Lee Lewis, born September 29, 1935, in Ferriday, Louisiana, with a God-given talent, at an early age became a world-famous rock-and-roll star. At age 8 he sang for the first time to an audience at the Assembly of God Church on Texas Avenue in Ferriday. When he was 13 he played his first night club engagement at the Blue Cat Club in Natchez, Mississippi. By age 22 Jerry Lee, with the help of Sam Phillips at Sun Records in Memphis, Tennessee, had recorded two records with one million sales each: "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," and "Great Balls of Fire," which revealed his rare talent and his strong determination. Nicknamed "The Killer," Jerry Lee worked his way back to the top of the charts with country-and-western music after a deep fall that lasted almost 10 years. No one has ever pounded a piano to bring an audience to such a shouting frenzy as Jerry Lee Lewis. His legendary music lives on.

### JIMMY LEE SWAGGART

Jimmy Lee Swaggart, born in Ferriday, Louisiana, on March 15, 1935, describes himself as an old-fashioned, Holy Ghost-filled, shouting, weeping, soul-winning, gospel-preaching preacher. His earliest religious experiences, piano playing and singing, began at the Assembly of God Church in Ferriday. His religious background is similar to that of his cousins, Jerry Lee Lewis and Mickey Gilley. God led Jimmy Lee from street preaching, country churches, and auditoriums to radio and television broadcasts and later to a 7,200-seat Family Worship Center on the 270-acre site of the Jimmy Swaggart Ministries in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Jimmy Lee recorded his first record, "God Took Away My Yesterdays," with the help of his famous cousins. Jimmy Lee is one of the best-selling gospel music artists of all times, with more than 50 recorded albums and sales of more than 13,000,000 copies worldwide. The Jimmy Swaggart Ministries has reached the entire world.

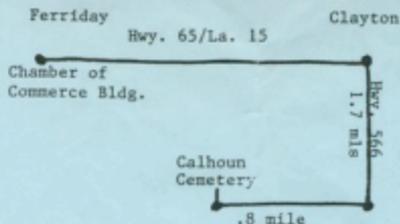
### LEON "PEEWEE" WHITTAKER

1906-1993

Leon "Pee wee" Whittaker was born about 35 miles north of Ferriday, in Newellton, Louisiana. He studied music as a child and received instruction on clarinet, trombone, guitar, string bass, and mandolin. From 1919 until his death in 1993, Whittaker performed with minstrel shows, carnival bands, swing orchestras, and rhythm-and-blues groups. He played alongside some of the top musicians in the country, including Louis Armstrong, Louis Jordan, and Jerry Lee Lewis.

From 1935 until 1950, Pee wee was a member of F. S. Wolcott's Rabbit Foot Minstrels. This popular traveling show was made up of black performers who played an important part in the development of many musical styles, including blues, jazz, and rock-and-roll. During the last 20 years of his life, Pee wee lived in Ferriday and was a key member of the great Natchez blues band, Hezekiah and the Houserockers.

# CALHOUN CEMETERY



Blinking light in Clayton before bridge, turn left

Top of levee, turn right onto Indian Village Road

## Jerry Lee Lewis and Jimmy Lee Swaggart Family Members

- JOSEPH LEE CALHOUN-----Jerry Lee Lewis and Jimmy Lee Swaggart's Uncle.  
1887-1969 Land owner of cemetery.
- STELLA HERRON CALHOUN-----Jerry Lee Lewis and Jimmy Lee Swaggart's Aunt.  
1910-1996 Sister to Mamie, Minnie Bell, Henry, Viola, Fanny, George.
- JOHN WILLIAM HERRON-----Jerry Lee and Jimmy Lee's maternal Grandfather.  
1869-1955
- THERESA LEE HERRON-----Jerry Lee and Jimmy Lee's maternal Grandmother.  
1876-1955
- HENRY CLAY HERRON-----Jerry Lee and Jimmy Lee's Uncle.  
1914-1983
- ELMO LEWIS-----Jerry Lee's Father and Jimmy Lee's Uncle.  
1902-1979
- MAMIE HERRON LEWIS-----Jerry Lee's Mother and Jimmy Lee's Aunt.  
1912-1971
- ELMO LEWIS, JR.-----Jerry Lee's Brother  
1929-1939
- JERRY LEE LEWIS, JR. And STEVE ALLEN LEWIS-----Jerry Lee's Sons  
1954-1973 1959-1962
- SHAWN LEWIS-----Jerry Lee's 5<sup>th</sup> Wife  
-1983
- MINNIE BELL HERRON SWAGGART-----Jimmy Lee's Mother and Jerry Lee's Aunt.  
1917-1960
- WILLIE "SON" SWAGGART-----Jimmy Lee's Father and Jerry Lee's Uncle.  
1914-1998
- CECIL BEATTY-----Jerry Lee and Jimmy Lee's Cousin. Son of Viola.  
1932-1996
- J.T. JACOBS-----Jerry Lee and Jimmy Lee's Cousin-in-Law.  
1920-1998 Husband of Stella and Lee Calhoun's only child, Maudine Calhoun Jacobs.



### Ferriday Mileage Chart

© U. S. Hwy. 84, U. S. Hwy. 87 and La. Hwy. 11 all lead to the small town of Ferriday.

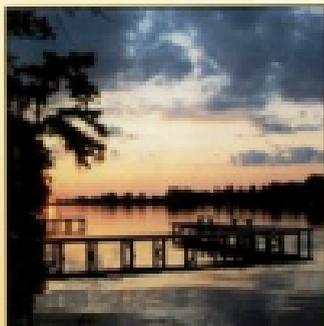
Alexandria	63 miles
Baton Rouge	101 miles
Cadieux	141 miles
Lake Charles	158 miles
Monroe	81 miles
New Orleans	129 miles
Shreveport	174 miles
Thibodaux, Mississippi	211 miles
Hammond, Mississippi	151 miles
Jackson, Mississippi	114 miles
Natchez, Mississippi	107 miles

### For More Information

Ferriday Chamber of Commerce  
P. O. Box 11  
1001 E. E. Walker Boulevard  
Ferriday, Louisiana 71314  
108.792-4297

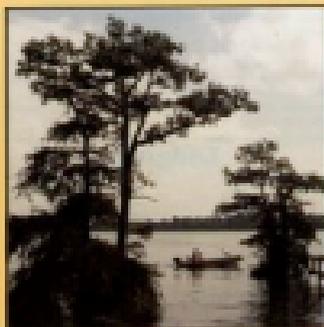
OR

Louisiana Tourist Center  
1421 Carter Street  
Thibodaux, Louisiana 71111  
108.516-2008



Lake Concordia

## Ferriday Louisiana



Lake St. John

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file 100  
possibly  
consider attachment to  
Odeal Montgomery  
Joe Whittaker

May 22, 1999

To: Mr. Sam Hanna, Concordia Parish  
From: Carolyn Vance Smith, Co-chairman, Natchez Literary Celebration  
Re: Invitation

Please plan to attend the Natchez Literary Celebration this year! You may be interested to know that the City of Ferriday and four of its most famous native sons will be featured topics at the Celebration's opening day, Wednesday, June 2, 1999. These people are Jerry Lee Lewis, Mickey Gilley, Jimmy Swaggart, and Fessie Whittaker.

A free lecture at 3:30 p.m. June 2 at the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel Ballroom will be delivered by Concordia Parish Library Director Amanda Taylor. Following that, at 5:30 p.m., will be a bus tour of Ferriday, with stops at the Ferriday Museum and at Tacony Plantation for a catfish supper with live music by the Swampwater Band. (The bus tour and supper are \$25 per person.) That evening, at 8:45 p.m. at the Eola Ballroom, will be a free showing of the film, "Great Balls of Fire" featuring the life of Jerry Lee Lewis.

We know how proud you are of all your citizens. We want you to know that four of them will be the focus of several hundred people as we celebrate three and one-half days with the theme, "Music of the South."

Please call the ticket office at Natchez Visitors Center for tickets for the bus tour and supper, 601-446-8345. I hope to see you at the Eola Ballroom for the lecture and the film.

If I may be of service to you, please call me at 601-446-1268.

## NLC opens with 'most attractive subject of all'

Locals excited about 'Hot Times,' page 3A.

By MARK LAFRANCIS  
Special to The Democrat

The 10th anniversary of the Natchez Literary Celebration began Wednesday with foot-stomping presentations about music the South made famous: blues and rock 'n' roll.



### Today's events:

- 9 a.m. — "Ethnic Diversity and New Orleans Jazz," by Bruce Boyd Raeburn.
  - 10:30 a.m. — "The City and the River: Jazz and the Blues" with Tom Piazza
  - Noon — Jazz Brunch, Carriage House at Stanton Hall, sold out.
  - 2 p.m. — "Row, Boatmen, Row: Songs Then and Now on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers" with Michael Allen
  - 3:15 p.m. — "The Black Swan and the Swedish Nightingale Take a Bow" with David Sansing, Ellistine Holly and Rebecca Stephens.
  - 5:30 p.m. — High tea and music at Cherokee Mansion, sold out.
  - "New Orleans Classic Jazz" with Don Vappie and the Creole Jazz Serenaders at St. Mary Minor Basilica. Tickets: \$15
- For information call 446-6345.

ed by a group of people who rarely put a single work on a piece of paper ... They composed in their heads ... They didn't write the words because in most cases,

See Celebration page 3A

## Celebration

Continued from 1A

they didn't know how (to write)," O'Neal said.

"Mississippi can claim a special relationship with the blues because it took hold here like nowhere else," he said. "What made Mississippi the caldron of the blues was the plantation culture ... with unprecedented concentrations culture," O'Neal said.

The blues' roots spread from the plantation towns after the network of trains brought listeners to hear this new form of music. O'Neal recounted the contributions of such early blues singers as Charley Patton, W. C. Handy, Muddy Waters and Jimmie Rodgers.

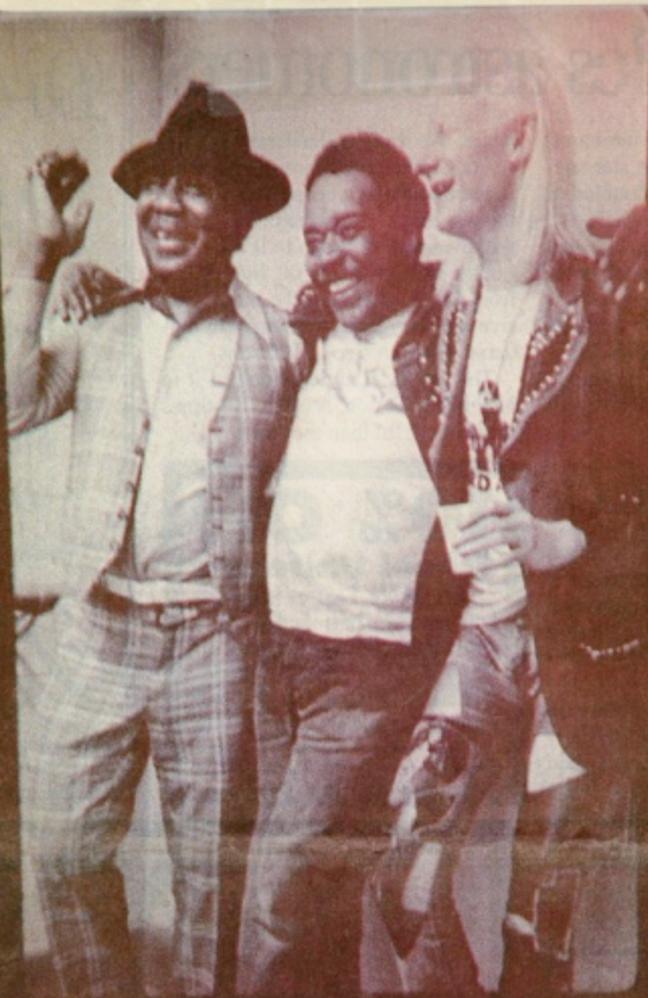
Sadly, though, the blues writers had to leave the Magnolia State to become known, O'Neal said. "Mississippi was a great place for inspiring the music, but to carry it to a different level, people often had to leave," he said. Singers and musicians frequently relocated to Chicago.

The lectures Wednesday concluded with "Ferdinand Frappe," a program by Amanda Taylor, Concordia Parish Library director, on the music scene in Ferriday, La.

The NLC was scheduled to continue Wednesday evening with a visit to the restored Ferriday plantation house, Tacony, for catfish and a salute to the works of local musicians Jerry Lee Lewis, Pee-wee Whitaker, Mickey Gilley and Jimmy Swaggart.

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NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT - JUNE 3, 1999



The Natchez Democrat/Laura Skolding

During the opening ceremony of the Natchez Literary Celebration, music enthusiast Jim O'Neal lectured on "Mississippi Roots of American Popular Music," presenting a slide show and music samples with his talk. This slide features from left, musicians Muddy Waters, Junior Parker and Johnny Winters.

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THE NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION  
NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI  
presents

## NEW ORLEANS CLASSIC JAZZ by the Creole Jazz Serenaders

New Orleans, Louisiana

8 p.m., Thursday, June 3, 1999

St. Mary Minor Basilica

### WELCOME

by The Honorable William F. Winter, Jackson, Mississippi  
Former Governor of Mississippi  
and Director of Proceedings, the Natchez Literary Celebration

### INTRODUCTION OF THE CREOLE JAZZ SERENADERS

by Ms. Betsy Bradley, Jackson, Mississippi  
Director, Mississippi Arts Commission

#### *About the Creole Jazz Serenaders...*

The Creole Jazz Serenaders perform selections from the 1920 and 1930s, concentrating on songs and musicians of New Orleans, "The Birthplace of Jazz." These songs are by such notables as Joe "King" Oliver, Sidney Bechet, and Jelly Roll Morton, as by lesser known bands, such as The Sam Morgan Band.

Included in the repertoire are several Creole jazz tunes sung in the French patois of New Orleans. Indeed, the Serenaders are perhaps the only band that still performs this indigenous style of jazz.

The Serenaders' program shows the evolution of New Orleans jazz as it spread up river by way of musicians who traveled to other parts of the country and the world. The group presents an educational, historical program while maintaining the spirit that made these songs the dance tunes of the period.

*NOTE: Following this evening's concert, an informal, cash-bar reception honoring the Creole Jazz Serenaders will take place in the Peacock Bar and Grill at the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel. At that time, the group's CDs will be for sale and signing.*



This event is part of the 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration, June 2-6, 1999. Theme of this event is "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe." Free lectures are held daily at the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel Ballroom. Information about related, low-cost events is available at the Celebration's information desk in the hotel lobby. The Celebration is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and Natchez National Historical Park.

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The 10<sup>th</sup> annual NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION, NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI

PRESENTS

# MUSIC OF THE SOUTH

LYRICS, LITERATURE, AND LAGNIAPPE

JUNE 2-5, 1999



**Dan Vappie and the Creole Jazz Serenaders**  
of New Orleans, to perform in Natchez, 8 p.m., Thursday, June 3, 1999

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# FREE DAYTIME LECTURES

RADISSON NATCHEZ EOLA HOTEL

Elvis Presley biographer Peter Guralnick      New Orleans jazz experts Tom Piazza and Bruce Boyd Raeburn  
Blues authors David Evans and Robert Gordon      Country music historian Allen Dennis  
Historians David G. Sansing and Michael Allen  
Music enthusiasts Jim O'Neal, Elaine Dundy, Michael Allen, Lynn Abbott

## LOW-COST EVENTS

**CONCERTS:** Don Vappie and the Creole Jazz Serenaders of New Orleans, Swampwater Band, Memphis Blues Duo, and more

**TOURS, MEALS, & PARTIES:** Historic Mansions with Live Music, Jazz Brunch, BBQ & Blues, Catfish Supper, High Tea, & Receptions

**GRANDE FINALE:** Concert by St. Joseph Orchestra Ensemble, Program by Pulitzer Prize Nominee Clifton Taubert, and Grand Concert by the Mississippi Mass Choir

**AND MORE:** Song-writing Workshop, Exhibits, Films, Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards Ceremony, Booksignings, and a Special Event Honoring Gov. William Winter

**FOR INFORMATION AND TICKETS:** 601-446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724 – Web site: [www.colin.cc.ms.us/nlc](http://www.colin.cc.ms.us/nlc)

Sponsors: Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and the Natchez National Historical Park  
Partial funding: the Mississippi Humanities Council.



For statewide travel information,  
call 1-800-WARMEST.

The South's Warmest Welcome  
**MISSISSIPPI**



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## BAND BIOGRAPHY

Dedicated to contemporary performance and recording of classic jazz compositions from the 1920's and 30's, Don Vappie's Creole Jazz Serenaders' main goal is to provide today's audiences with a glimpse of "the real spirit of early jazz," a period when jazz was the "pop" music of the time.

"Several years ago, it became apparent to me that the label 'traditional jazz' had become more a repertoire of tunes chosen from a short list of familiar titles," band leader and arranger Don Vappie explains. "What I've tried to do with the Creole Jazz Serenaders, is bring both the spirit and sophistication of classic jazz back to life by presenting neglected songs from that era that are also lively and entertaining. I hope to illustrate the kinds of music played when jazz was young, as well as the complexity of many of these pieces. When we perform, I always try to provide a sense of fun and energy that demonstrates to modern audiences why this music was the dance music of that generation."

With the help of his wife Milly, a cultural historian and researcher, Vappie compiled a song list for the group's first recording, CREOLE BLUES, that includes lesser known tunes from the likes of Jelly Roll Morton, Jabbo Smith, Sam Morgan, and The New Orleans Owls. Drawing heavily on the Creole heritage of New Orleans, Vappie has included early Creole jazz tunes performed in the traditional French patois of the region. The Creole Jazz Serenaders are one of the few bands that incorporate French Creole jazz songs in their repertoire.

The group's second major project, "Searching for King Oliver" was sponsored by Robert Parker, an

Australian producer and host of the Public Radio International syndicated series, "Jazz Classics in Stereo." In 1997, the Creole Jazz Serenaders recorded 18 classic compositions from Vappie's transcriptions of songs originally recorded in 1923 by King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band. Parker described this recording as sounding more like King Oliver's music than anything done in the last 70 years.

In the spring of 1998, the Creole Jazz Serenaders, in conjunction with the Historic New Orleans Collection, presented "The Lost Manuscripts of Jelly Roll Morton" premiering never before performed or recorded Morton compositions which were recently discovered.

The Creole Jazz Serenaders consist of a group of young musicians from varied musical and historical backgrounds rooted in the traditions of New Orleans music. Successful musicians in their own right, the band embodies that uniquely American jazz heritage, sustained in New Orleans since the late 19th century, with several members having ties reaching back to the earliest jazz families. This stellar group of musicians has traveled the world performing at festivals and concerts from Hong Kong to Finland. Individually, they have recorded and/or performed with various artists such as Wynton Marsalis, Ruth Brown, Dr. John, the Neville Brothers, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra and the Preservation Hall Jazz Band among others.

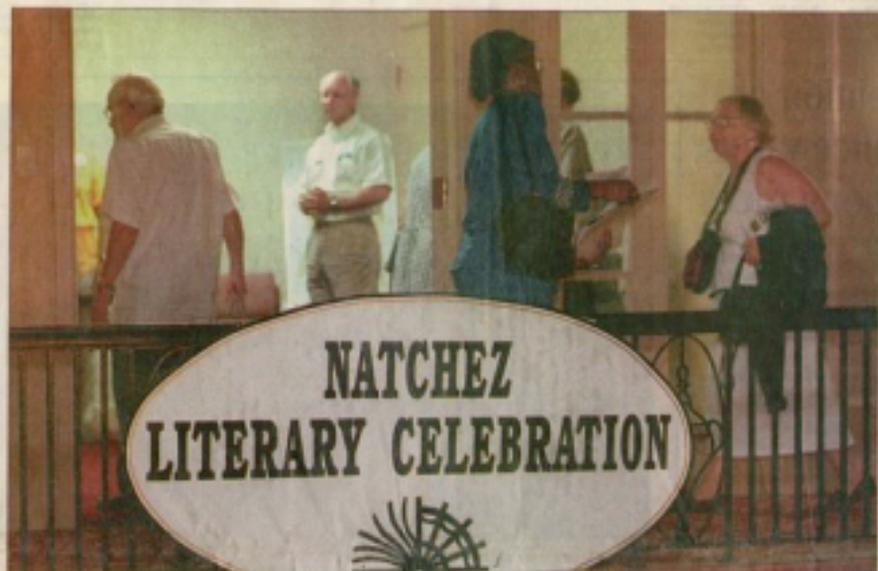
With a very real sense of living tradition, the Creole Jazz Serenaders breathe new life into classics of a bygone era, without resorting to the kind of self-conscious stiffness often found in historic recreations. Instead, the band delivers to contemporary audiences all the excitement and satisfaction this music first brought to audiences more than 70 years ago.

# The Natchez Democrat

Serving Natchez, Vidalia and the Miss-Low

Natchez, Mississippi

Friday, June 4, 1999



Participants of the Natchez Literary Celebration stroll by the bookstalls in the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel after being treated to the beautiful voices of Ellaline Holly and Rebecca Stephens during a lecture by David Searing titled "The Black Swan and the Swedish Nightingale Take a Bow." Searing is the author of "The Sesquicentennial History of the University of Mississippi," "Making Hanky Slowly" and "Natchez: An Illustrated History."

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# Radisson Eola 'shakes, rattles and almost rolls'

## Natchez Literary Celebration heats up during second day

By MARK LAFRANCES  
Special to The Democrat

The walls of the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel shook, rattled and almost rolled Thursday with the low, booming, scuffing tones of blues music and the high, operatic, soprano notes from the Black Swan's repertoire.

That range of sound — as if such lush lyrics and compositions could be called mere sound — demonstrated the breadth of music that sprang from and still reverberates in the soil of the South.

The music was played, listened to and reported on during the second day of the 10th Annual Natchez Literary Celebration, which

has adopted as its theme this year: "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe."

A day of lectures and song was held at the Eola and the Carriage House Restaurant. The NLC continues today with more free lectures at the Eola.

Two key lecturers — among the five on Thursday's lineup — gave vastly different views of music in the South.

The blues and jazz — and the recent movement to discount blacks' influence in jazz — was covered by Tom Piazza of New Orleans, author of "Blues Up and Down: Jazz in Our Time," and "Classic Recorded Jazz."

"The blues is like a river; jazz is a city on



that river," Piazza said. "It (jazz) has many accents and many neighborhoods; it draws its sustenance from the surface of the water near-by ... the endlessly renewing river."

However, the waters are being stirred by "disinformation and misinformation," Piazza said.

While Piazza extolled the contribution blues has made to practically all American-bred music — particularly jazz — he soundly condemned those who would dismiss blacks' part in shaping jazz and their attempt to say that jazz music is singularly a product of white musicians, singers and writers.

Piazza earned strong applause for his lecture and his selection of musicians and singers to illustrate his points.

They ranged from the relatively unknown

See Celebration page 3A

continued from 1A

Blind Lemon Jefferson, who sang the blues, to Louis Armstrong, the jazz great.

Great musical range was the focus of a key afternoon presentation by Dr. David Sanzing, of the University of Mississippi, and a frequent presenter at the NLC.

He told how the lives of two singing phenomenon of the 19th Century were interwoven. One was the Jenny Lind, the "Swedish Nightingale," and the other Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield, the "Black Swan."

Both had a Natchez connection: Greenfield was a slave in Natchez before she became a worldwide celebrity. Lind was an international opera and popular music star who sang in Natchez.

Greenfield was eventually fired by her owner whom she followed to Pennsylvania where Greenfield was discovered. Greenfield packed concert halls — some of the same houses that were filled years earlier dur-

ing Lind's American tour, one that made her wealthy, Sanzing said.

Greenfield's and Lind's vocal prowess was replicated Thursday with songs by Ellistine Holly of Jackson, associate professor at Jackson State University; and Rebecca Stephens of Natchez, local singer and soloist at Parkway Baptist Church.

Holly and Stephens held the audience of about 300 spellbound with

their versions of the two singers' abilities and music.

Other lectures Thursday were by Bruce Boyd Raburn, curator at the Hogan Jazz Archive of Tulane

University in New Orleans; Dan Tyler, songwriter, editor and publisher from Nashville; and Michael Allen, author from the University of Washington.

THE NACHEZ  
DEMOCRAT 6-4-99

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# Literary celebration a bookworm's delight

Once again Eastern National is proud to be associated with this year's 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration. Working closely with Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the National Park Service, we have developed our popular custom book store, which is located this year on the second floor adjacent to the lecture hall at the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel.

The book store houses written works of the guest lecturers invited to this year's event. We encourage you to come and attend the many free lectures and special events associated with the conference.

Today you will hear Dr. Allen Dennis on "The History of Country Music," Dr. David Evans on the "Folk Roots of Blues Music," Robert Gordon on "Memphis Blues" and Peter Guralnick on "Elvis in History."

At the end of the day a panel discussion on "Writing Down the Sound: The Challenges of Documenting Musicians" will be held. Book signings at 11:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. today will honor today's speakers.

Special events this evening include musicians performing at various clubs in Natchez (\$10 ticket required) and a Barbecue with Blues entertainment at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center (\$15 ticket required).

And if this isn't enough, a special showing of the 1968 comeback performance of Elvis Presley will be shown at 8:30 p.m. at the Eola. This is truly a program that offers something for everyone.

Saturday will be just as entertaining. We start off with Lynn Abbott speaking on "Crying Holy"; Jubilee Singing, Barbershop Harmony, and the Birth of the Modern Black Gospel Quartet Phenomenon followed by this year's pre-



Top of the Morning  
Deborah Cowart

sentation of our Richard Wright Literary Excellence awards to Professor Sterling D. Plumpp of the University of Illinois at Chicago and Barry Hannah of the University of Mississippi, Oxford.

A large book signing will take place at 11:30 a.m., honoring Mr. Abbott, Mr. Plumpp and Mr. Hannah as well as such famous returning lecturers, lecture chairs and award winners as Patti Carr Black, Ellen Douglas, Sue Eakin, Jack Elliott, Joan Gandy, Thomas H. Gandy, Herschel Gower, Peggy Whitman Preshaw, David Sausage, Michael P. Smith, Clifton Taulbert, Emily Toth, Jerry W. Ward Jr., Clyde Ray Webber, Charles Reagan Wilson and Christine Wilson.

Next on the program is a workshop on songwriting led by Dan Tyler of Nashville, a No. 1 hit songwriter, music publisher and entertainment attorney. He is also author of Music City Confidential (\$25 ticket required). Those who want to tour historic houses can do so with a musical flair. The mansions Cottage Garden, Lawrence House and Rosalie will be on tour with live performers to greet you (\$15 ticket required).

Also various Natchez night clubs and restaurants will once again entertain with live performers (\$10 ticket required).

Our Grand Finale will be at 7:30 p.m. at

the City Auditorium. Former Governor of Mississippi William Winter, who has so graciously served as Master of Ceremonies at all 10 Natchez Literary Celebrations, will be honored, followed by performances of the St. Joseph Orchestra Chamber Ensemble.

Clifford Taulbert of Tulsa, author of "Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored," will speak on "The Power of Music to Change Our Lives and Build Our World," followed by a grand concert of the Mississippi Mass Choir, the No. 1 gospel choir in America. This will be their first performance ever in Natchez.

We will close this year's event with a book signing for Mr. Taulbert at the auditorium, followed by a gala reception at the Historic Natchez Foundation (\$10 ticket required) hosted by the Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture.

Books by all the 1999 celebration's authors and award winners will be available at the custom book store or at the book signing locations.

Eastern National has supported this and other special events in Natchez since the creation of the Natchez National Historical Park in 1990.

As a non-profit educational organization, our mission has been to support the National Park Service and the parks we operate in.

You, in addition, by supporting this event are also supporting your community with returned investments used to continue such award-winning events as the Natchez Literary Celebration.

We hope to see you there!

*Deborah Cowart is the Business Manager for Eastern National book stores located at Melrose Mansion and the Natchez Visitors Reception Center.*

The Natchez Democrat

Friday, June 4, 1999

# Opinion

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*FIRST TIME IN NATCHEZ!*  
IN CONCERT

# THE MISSISSIPPI MASS CHOIR

WINNERS OF

*#1 Spiritual Album in America • #1 Black Gospel Album  
Stellar Awards for Traditional Choir of the Year • Best Sellers Award  
#1 Gospel Album in the Country for 12 Months • Grammy Award Nominee*

**7:30 P.M., SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 1999**  
**NATCHEZ CITY AUDITORIUM, NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI**

TICKETS: \$15

CALL 1-601-446-6345 OR 1-800-647-6724



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The evening's program includes:

- Ceremony honoring Gov. William Winter, celebrating 10 years as Director of Proceedings for the Natchez Literary Celebration
- Mini-concert by St. Joseph Orchestra Ensemble
- Remarks by Pulitzer Prize nominee Clifton Taulbert, Tulsa, Oklahoma (*Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored*)
- Grand concert by the Mississippi Mass Choir



Gov. William Winter



Clifton Taulbert

Presented by the Natchez Literary Celebration

Sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and the Natchez National Historical Park

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THE 10 annual NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION  
"MUSIC OF THE SOUTH: LYRICS, LITERATURE, AND LAGNIAPPE"

presents

## MUSIC: THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

7:30 p.m., Saturday, June 5, 1999  
Natchez Municipal Auditorium, Natchez, Mississippi

OPENING CEREMONY: Honoring WILLIAM WINTER, Jackson, Mississippi  
Former Governor, State of Mississippi; President, Board of Trustees, Mississippi Department of Archives and  
History; and Director of Proceedings, Natchez Literary Celebration, 1990-1999  
Conducted by James F. Barnett, Jr., Robert Dodson, and Carolyn Vance Smith, NLC Co-chairmen

\*\*\*

IN CONCERT: The SAINT JOSEPH CHAMBER ENSEMBLE  
of The Saint Joseph Orchestra, Saint Joseph, Louisiana  
*Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (Allegro, Romanze, Menuetto, Rondo)* by Mozart

\*\*\*

A PRESENTATION: *The Power of Music to Change Our Lives and Build Our World*  
by CLIFTON TAULBERT, Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Pulitzer Prize Nominee and Author of *When We Were Colored*, *Watching Our Crops Come In*, *Last Train North*,  
*Eight Habits of the Heart*, and *Little Cliff and the Porch People*

\*\*\*

IN CONCERT: THE MISSISSIPPI MASS CHOIR, America's No. 1 Gospel Choir  
Jackson, Mississippi

Since it was formed in 1988, the choir has won a Grammy Award for Best Gospel Album by a Choir; a Dove Award; Stellar Awards for Choir of the Year, Traditional Choir of the Year, Album of the Year, Best New Artist, and Best Gospel Video; *Billboard* magazine's awards for Album of the Year, Gospel Artists of the Year, Gospel Record of the Year, and Special Achievement Award for remaining No. 1 on *Billboard's* Top Gospel Chart for an entire year; the Heritage Award from the Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts; the Best Sellers Award from the National Association of Record Merchandisers; and the Innovation Award from the 3M Corporation. In addition, in 1997, the choir was chosen to perform for Pope John Paul II in Rome. The choir's motto is "Mississippi Mass hits the high notes. God gets the glory."

### NOTES

- (1) Books by Clifton Taulbert are for sale in the lobby of the auditorium. Following the program, Mr. Taulbert will sign books.
- (2) A reception with food and beverages after the program will honor William Winter and Clifton Taulbert as well as Barry Hannah and Sterling Plumpp, winners of the 1999 Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards. The event, hosted by the Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture, is at the Historic Natchez Foundation, 108 South Commerce Street. Tickets are \$10, available at the door.



This evening's event is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History,  
and the Natchez National Historical Park.

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# Literary Celebration brings words of music to life

By TRACY BISCHOFF

The Natchez Democrat

Five days of honky-tonkin', hoe-downin', Praise the Lordin' music levin' begins next week in Natchez with the onset of the Natchez Literary Celebration Wednesday.

Headliners this year will include the Mississippi Mass Choir, Don Vappie and the Creole Jazz Serenaders, "When We Were Colored" author Clifton Taulbert, and No. 1 country hit songwriter Dan Tyler of Nashville.

This year, which marks the tenth anniversary of the festival, is a salute to music of the South and the words behind it, both in the lyrics of the music and the literature written about the music.

The festival, dubbed "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe," opens June 2 with a welcome by the celebration's emcee, former Gov. William Winter, who will also be honored at the conference for his 30 years of contribution as the Director of Proceedings.

A "Mississippi Roots of American Popular Music" lecture by author Jim O'Neal of Kansas City will directly follow the opening ceremony.

The festival, a theme-based lecture series enhanced by films, concerts, exhibits, book sales, book signings, workshops, award ceremonies, river field trips and social events, is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the Natchez National Historical Park.

A new corner this year is "Hot Times in the Old Town," where festival folks can get a feel for Natchez's night hot-spots while being entertained by live local and regional bands.

Hot Times is a fund-raiser for the celebration and will be held throughout the evening June 4 and 5 and all day Sunday, June 6.

Local hot-spots participating include

Biscuits and Blues, Cock of the Walk, The Corner Bar, Dimplex, Lady Luck Casino, Pully Bones, Under the Hill Saloon, and the Wharfmaster's House.

With the purchase of a \$10 voucher, patrons can catch a ride on the trolley traveling back and forth between the participating establishments. The voucher is also good for a complimentary drink and cover charge waivers in some places. The vouchers will be available throughout the literary celebration.

Tickets to the literary celebration are on sale now at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center and, beginning at noon June 2, they will be available at the Celebration's registration desk in the lobby of the Tola Hotel.

Many of the events during the festival are free but there are some ticketed events, with prices ranging from \$30 to \$25.

The following events will sell out early or will be closed out in order to allow caterers to prepare:

- A salute to Jerry Lee Lewis, Preece Whitaker, Mickey Gilley and Jimmy Swaggart at Tacey Plantation and Forsyth Mansion at 5:30 p.m. June 2. Tickets are \$25 and the event will include supper, music and a tour.

- A jazz brunch at Carriage House Restaurant at Statton Hall with lunch and a lecture by songwriter and author Dan Tyler on noon June 3. Tickets are \$20.

- A High Tea and Music at Cherokee Mansion with the Marvin McDonald Trio at 5:30 p.m. June 3. The event will include a meal and tickets are \$15.

- Barbecue, Brews and Blues. Overlooking the River with music by the Memphis Blues Duo of Memphis at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center at 6 p.m. June 4. Tickets are \$15.

Tickets for the above events should be purchased immediately. Other tickets will be available throughout the festival.



The Mississippi Mass Choir will headline this year's Natchez Literary Celebration.

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## Tyler teaches songwriting class

By TRACY BISCHOFF  
The Natchez Democrat

Sitting in a law class at the University of Mississippi, Dan Tyler never saw himself wrapped up with country music sensation LeAnn Rimes.

But then, who could envision the eclectic successes Tyler has accomplished. He has enjoyed a professional career as an entertainment attorney, a country songwriter, a music publisher, and — with his latest foray into the arts — a novelist.

Tyler will be one of the guests at the 10th Annual Natchez Literary Celebration — where he will conduct a songwriter's workshop, perform, lecture and sign copies of his novel.

This year's conference theme is "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe," and "It will exploit why the Southland gave birth to the blues, as well as to jazz, rock 'n' roll, country, spirituals, gospel — in fact, all music that is truly American," said Carolyn Vance Smith, founder of the literary festival.

Tyler's songwriting workshop and lunch

will be held from noon to 3 p.m. June 5, and tickets are \$25. Participants must register in advance and can do so by calling 1-800-647-6724.

Tyler said participants are asked to bring one song they've recorded so he and the class can critique it.

Tyler said that during the seminar, the class will analyze the elements of a good song, discuss what a music publisher is and does and discuss the paperwork and administrative aspects of getting a song published such as copyright procedures.

"And of course I'll throw in a few war stories," he said.

At noon on June 3, Tyler will participate in a jazz brunch at the Carriage House Restaurant at Stanton Hall. After lunch, Tyler will present a lecture on his experiences in Nashville as a songwriter.

Tickets to the jazz brunch are \$20.

Tyler will also be available to sign copies of his novel, "Music City Confidential," and he will perform at Dimples June 4.

June 1999

ON THE RIVER

## Mississippi Mass Choir brings up tail end of Natchez Literary festival

By TRACY BISCHOFF  
The Natchez Democrat

It's in the word.

In fact, the actual meaning of "gospel" is "the good news."

And as Katrina Williams is likely to tell you: "It really doesn't matter whatever gets you there — but the word, ultimately, is what you're there for."

The Word — Which is perhaps what has given gospel music its deep and widespread hold as a root of the South's musical heritage.

The Word — Which is also perhaps why it is a genre heralded this year at the Natchez Literary Celebration, appropriately dubbed "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe."

The Word — And thirdly, it is perhaps why the Mississippi Mass Choir, a headliner of the celebration, has enjoyed such massive appeal.

The Mass Choir will perform Saturday, June 5, bringing up the tail end of the grand finale program of the celebration.

Tickets for the program, which also features a tenth anniversary salute to former Gov. William Winter as director of proceedings, a seminar on "The Power of Music to Change our Lives and Build Our

World," by "When We Were Colored" author Clifton Taulbert, and a mini-concert by the St. Joseph (La.) Orchestra Ensemble, are \$25, and are available at through the Natchez Visitors Center box office. The program begins at 7:30 p.m.

The more than 150-member, Jackson-based choir, comprised of professionals from all walks of life sprinkled across the state, has spent nearly 10 years setting unprecedented records in the wide world of gospel.

Today, with a five-album discography, massive international tour dates, and a performance for the pope under its belt, the choir comfortably rests at the forefront of gospel music — and 150 "ordinary Mississippi folk," as Williams calls them, are some of the biggest gospel stars in the world.

The secret to the choir's success is simple — it's in The Word — and as the group's 1990 album reminds us, "God Gets the Glory."

"If Frank was here today, he'd be ecstatic to know that his little dream has turned into this mountain of reality," Williams said. "And no matter where we go, we remember who we are and we remember where we came from."

June 1999

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# The Natchez Democrat

Saturday, June 3, 1999

Serving Natchez, Vidalia and the Miss-Low

Natchez, Mississippi

30 cents

## 'Writing down the sound' highlight of Literary Celebration

A look at tomorrow's events, SA.  
California native gives private poetry evening, SA.

By TRACY BIRSCHOFF  
The Natchez Democrat

One thing holds true for Peter Guralnick, Robert Gordon and Jan O'Neal.

They all love what they do.

A fact that became abundantly clear to the nearly 80 people gathered at the Radisson Natchez Vela Hotel for a panel discussion with the three acclaimed

authors Friday.

The discussion was one of the highlights of Friday's activities for the Natchez Literary Celebration, which is dedicated to music in the South this year.

The theme, "Writing Down the Sound: The Challenges of Documenting Musicians," and the three men covered a sweeping range of topics from racial issues to self-revelations, from the deeply philosophical to the tedious logistics of

using a tape recorder and transcribing notes.

But what remained pervasive in all the responses by all three men was the respect they have for the music and the subjects they write about.

"I write about the music and the musicians I admire, and I try to write about them with the dignity and respect they deserve," Guralnick said, responding to a question from the audience asking why he thought it was his job to give these musicians a voice.

Later, a hush in the audience stood and told the authors that that dignity and respect was evident in their books and their discus-

sion.

"Very refreshing," she said. "It's rare, and I hope you keep it."

Her remarks were validated by the rest of the audience with a round of applause.

Guralnick is most known for his documentaries on the life of Elvis Presley, including "Last Train to Memphis," and "Careless Love: The Making of Elvis Presley."

O'Neal, a Mississippi native, is the founding editor of "Living Blues" magazine and author of "All Music Guide to the Blues," who has interviewed and written about many

blues greats, including Muddy Waters and Skip James.

Gordon, a Memphis, Tenn., author, is most noted for his books "Down King on the Road" and "It Came from Memphis."

The panel was chaired by Shelley Hiner of Jackson, curator of The Old Capitol Museum of Mississippi History.

The discussion was followed with book signings by the three authors.

Lectures and performances for the Celebration are scheduled to continue throughout the weekend.



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# The Natchez Democrat

Serving Natchez, Vidalia and the Miss-Ess

Natchez, Mississippi

Sunday, June 6, 1999

\$1.50

## Hannah, Plumpp earn top honors

By TRACY BIRDWELL  
The Natchez Democrat

Plumpp is the top in a list of an advanced undergraduate for winning first place in the Natchez Literary Contest. She earned the top prize with the words of her choice.

Hannah, 20, earned first place in the list of an advanced undergraduate for winning first place in the Natchez Literary Contest. She earned the top prize with the words of her choice.

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Continued from page 14

The award, established in 1960 to honor the internationally known author Richard Wright, a Natchez native, is sponsored annually by Natchez Newspapers Inc. and cosponsored this year by "Black America" magazine.

Winners are honored each year for a body of literary work, and they must be outstanding, living writers with a strong Mississippi connection.

Hannah is author of "Garden of Eden," "High Lonesome" and "Sisters Wife," and is a writer and resident of The University of Mississippi.

Stirling Plumpp of the University of Illinois at Chicago and author of "Black Rituals," "Gone with Smoke," "Development Arrested" and "Blues Narratives" was also honored with the literary excellence award.

Plumpp gave an equally excellent address on life in the South, presenting a useful and emotional picture of the Black man's South.

Some 30 former award winners, lecturers and lecture attendees were seated after the award ceremony, including 20 years of the Natchez Literary Celebration.

Carlyne Marie Smith, founder of the N.C., and the collaborative level of

this year's festival was as high as it has ever been.

"The compliments I've heard the most are on the high level and top quality of the presentations and the hospitality of the community as hosts," she said.

"This lecture hall has been our classroom," she said of the Ballroom Natchez Folk Hall audience, "but the town has been our laboratory. There's no way we could carry this thing off without the support of the entire community."

The grand finale of the literary celebration was scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Sunday, with a ceremony honoring 20-year donors of ceremonies, lit-

erary Gen. William Winter, a concert with St. Joseph (L.A.) Orthodox Ensemble and the Mississippi Mass Choir and a lecture by author Clifton Johnson. Winter said in a special tribute to Wright, it was to be announced that the most outstanding scholars of the Literary Celebration beginning next year will be known as the William Winter Scholars.

Winter said plans for next year's celebration would also be announced. Next year's celebration will be held June 1-4, 2000, and the theme will be "The Sacred South: Struggles from the Bible Belt." The literary celebration will close Sunday with a continuation of "The Time is the Old Time."



"The Bible Belt" by author Harry Hannah, one of two recipients of the Richard Wright Award, signs copies of his work during the final day of the 1999 annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

"It seems to be working ... people just keep coming."

Bob Dodson, Natchez National Historical Park superintendent



Ray Pitts of Sacramento, Calif., explores the Natchez Visitors Reception Center during a Natchez Literary Celebration event Friday evening. More than 100,000 visitors have toured the center in its first year open.

The Natchez Democrat, Laura Skelton

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# Build it ... and they do come

MONROE DEMOCRAT - JUNE 6, 1989

One year after opening, visitors center earns praise for making vision a reality

By KERRY WHIPPLE  
The Natchez Democrat

On a typical afternoon at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center, a father and daughter chatter in German as they collect brochures about Natchez and the surrounding region. Two couples gather on the skywalk to gaze at the river.

In audio presentations, Natchez Mayor Larry L. "Blanch" Brown tells tourists about the city's relationship to its mighty Mississippi while Kathleen McClain Jenkins explains why Natchez's antebellum houses were designed the way they were.

And in the parking lot we see cars from California, Missouri, Wisconsin, Kansas.

A year after the visitors center opened, has it done what city officials wanted - increase

tourism, increasing numbers

Mayor Larry L. "Blanch" Brown boasts that the center was built entirely without local tax dollars. Federal dollars and grants largely funded the \$1.4 million center.

But its proximity on the highway may be generating more dollars for the local economy.

The center's own operation statistics show that the number of visitors has been steadily increasing since it opened. While the fall and winter months slackened off a bit, spring sees record numbers passing through the visitors center.

The center keeps those statistics with an electronic eye at the door. The number counted is divided in half to give the center a conservative estimate of the numbers.

But do those numbers mean tourists are just stopping at the center, or are they venturing into Natchez?

The answer, from most sources, is a resound-

ing yes to the second part of the question. Mary Miller, Historic Natchez Foundation executive and a hotel and breakfast owner, said the center has done just what it was designed to do - draw tourists from the highway who might not otherwise stop in Natchez. Miller's business at the Westcott House has been up in the last year.

"Instead of stopping upon one house, they are exposed to the whole range of heritage tourism," Miller said.

Just the fact that there's a restaurant for travelers to stop at is an improvement, Miller said.

But Natchez's Visitors Center - also an official Mississippi Welcome Center - was designed to offer much more than a brief stop.

Plenty to see and do

There's a map that lights up various sections of the city at the touch of a button, a kiosk that

See CENTER, page 7A



Inside:  
 ■ Attendance numbers.  
 ■ The road from idea to reality. 7A



# Center endured 'long road' from idea to reality

By KERRY WHIPPLE  
The Natchez Democrat

From her office at the Natchez Visitors Reception Center, Connie Tanton can see tourists as they come in from the parking lot.

"It's very exciting to see the attraction from the visitors when they see our center," said Tanton on the city's visitors services coordinator, who has overseen the 11 day-to-day operations at the center in its first year.

The visitors center had a long and bumpy becoming reality. In the early 1980s, several studies pinpointed the need for a center that would welcome tourists, said Miss Miller, director of preservation at the Blue and White Natchez Foundation.

"Everybody that looked at our site and we needed a visitors center," said Miss Miller.

After Mayor Larry L. "Blanch" Brown took office in 1982, the city began looking for funding for the project. Brown showed it to funding it a money for the multi-million dollar rail modernization project.

"Everybody said, 'No, you can't do it,'" he said. "But it grew on itself."

In 1982, the city requested funds from the Federal Highway Administration's ISTEA - the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act.

At the time, \$4.2 million was all that was available to the city. Later, the National Park Service was authorized by Congress to add a little more in \$3 million to the project.

The next step was to add the Mississippi Department of Transportation into the mix, so that the center would be an official Mississippi Welcome Center.

"They agreed to do that and we got a contract from them for annual operations funding," Brown said.

Much of the coordination of the project fell to the city's engineering department.

"It was a challenge, but it's been most new riding," said city engineer David Gardner.

Two contractors did the work on the project. The first was Louisiana Construction Co. of Vidalia, which performed the dirt work, filling holes on the property at the corner of Canal and John R. Jenkins.

The second contract, for \$6 million, went to Carothers Construction of Water Valley.

In addition, Gardner said, there were architect fees from New Orleans, movie producers from Texas, and cable designers from Boston.

(Federal officials)

see these

applications and say "this'll never work" or "they're just dreaming."

Somebody took a chance on us,

and now they're using (the center) as a

guide to go by."

David Gardner  
City Engineer

## Center

(Continued from page 14) gives weather information and even requests for local businesses, a 32 movie that tells "The Natchez Story" through the eyes and voices of residents, and a skywalk that offers views of the river.

There is also a bookstore run by Quanta National with information about Natchez, the region and other national parks, and a Natchez logo shop.

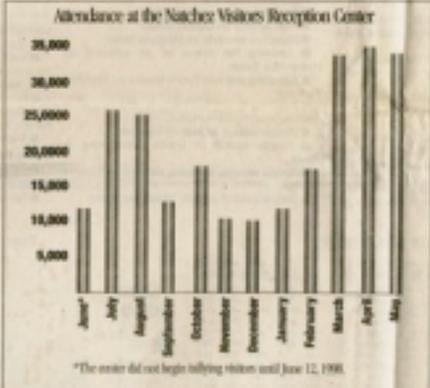
"It's very exciting to see the reaction from the visitors when they see our center," said Connie Tanton, the city's visitors services coordinator, who has overseen much of the day-to-day activity of the center in its first year.

The building houses offices for the visitor center, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, the city's Office of Tourism Management, and the National Park Service.

The mayor deserves credit for "taking all of those disparate entities" and putting them in one building, Miller said.

In that one building, visitors can buy tickets for the movie, the trolley, carriage tours, bus tours and coach parties. In the last couple of months, they've also been able to buy tickets for the Natchez Opera Festival and the Natchez Literary Celebration.

The percent of the profits on tickets



"The center did not begin taking visitors until June 12, 1988.

seen. "A large part of it does relate to tourism," he said.

Many of the people who work in the center sell similar statistics of visiting visitors who were "just passing through" and thought they'd stop in Natchez a

"We've said all along we thought the visitors center would serve as a signal to more traffic from the highway," Brown said. "Once we had this in the building we could sell that road center on Natchez."

"It seems to be working. Occupancy rates are higher, more stops are higher

Welcome Center, but because it does not own the Natchez Visitors Center, legal problems prevented a loan paying for security this year, Brown said. That problem should be worked out by the next fiscal year.

Looking to improve

In the future, for the most part, city and tourism officials simply want more of the same.

Comment cards throughout the center give visitors a chance to offer advice, praise and praise. A few comments have asked about e-mail access, which Tanton said the center is considering.

Another area she wants to work on is keeping car traffic away from downtown.

"We still are not where we want to be as far as getting the visitors to leave their cars" and travel downtown by trolley, bus or carriage, Tanton said.

A new tourism management director, Walter Tipton, has moved into an office in the visitors center. He will oversee most of the financial aspects of the department and the center.

After a work on the job, Tipton said he's impressed with the facility that houses his new office and hopes to improve on the amount of visitors who come - and stay.

In the next few weeks, New Orleans Mayor Marc Morial will visit the center, accompanied by a tourism official on that city who sees the center while on vaca-

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Natchez Literary Celebration

*Music of the South*  
Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe

presents

"Hot Time in the Old Town"  
Fri.-Sun., June 4-6, 1999

Live music, drinks, food, and  
FUN at these historic  
downtown spots:

*Biscuits & Blues, 315 Main*  
11 a.m. - 11 p.m., June 6

*Cock of the Walk, 200 N. Broadway*  
6-10 p.m., June 4-5

*The Corner Bar, Canal at State*  
4 p.m. - until, June 4-5

*Dimples, 324 Main*  
7:30 p.m. until, June 4-5

*Pulley Bone's, 200 State*  
12-4 p.m., June 4-5

*Under-the-Hill Saloon, 25 Silver*  
10 p.m. - 2 a.m., June 4-5  
8-12 p.m., June 6

*WharfMaster's House, 57 Silver*  
12-4 p.m., June 6

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(Please present this stub to driver.)

REDEEMABLE FOR ONE RIDE ON  
"JOLLY TROLLEY" 6-11 p.m., June 4-5  
(Please present this stub to driver.)

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Ticket No 83	Price \$25.00	Price \$25.00
<b>Ferriday Supper Tour</b> Ferriday, LA Wednesday, Jun 2, 1999 5:45 PM - 8:30 PM Tacony Plantation Ferriday, LA Museum		Ferriday Supper Tour June 2, 1999 5:45 PM-8:30 PM  83

Ticket No 201	Price \$20.00	Price \$20.00
<b>Jazz Brunch</b> The Carriage House Natchez Literary Celebration Thursday, Jun 3, 1999 12:00-2:00 PM		Jazz Brunch Carriage House June 3, 1999 12:00-2:00 PM  201

Ticket No 344	Price \$15.00	Price \$15.00
<b>High Tea</b> Cherokee Natchez Literary Celebration Thursday, Jun 3, 1999 5:30-7:30 PM		High Tea Cherokee June 3, 1999 5:30-7:30 PM  344

Ticket No 561	Price \$15.00	Price \$15.00
<b>Creole Jazz Concert</b> St. Mary Minor Basilica Natchez Literary Celebration Thursday, Jun 3, 1999 8:00 PM Don Vappie and the Creole Jazz Serenaders of New Orleans		Creole Jazz Concert St. Mary's June 3, 1999 8:00 PM  561

Ticket No 65	Price \$15.00	Price \$15.00
<b>Barbeque &amp; Blues</b> Natchez Visitor Center Natchez Literary Celebration Friday, Jun 4, 1999 6:00-8:00 PM		Barbeque and Blues NVRC June 4, 1999 6-8 PM  65

Ticket No 383	Price \$15.00	Price \$15.00
<b>Concert-Clifton Taulbert</b> Natchez Literary Celebration City Auditorium Saturday, Jun 5, 1999 7:30 PM St. Joseph Ensemble MS Mass Choir		Concert Taulbert June 5, 1999 City Auditorium 7:30 PM  383

No 314

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No 314

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## Start your week with good news

**G**ood morning and good Monday. As we start another week of summer vacation, we pause to reflect on the good news of the week gone by:

■ Congratulations to organizers and sponsors of the Natchez Literary Celebration.

For the 10th year in a row, this cultural gem delighted audiences and participants with an innovative and educational offering. The celebration continues to be a feather in the cap of Natchez, Mississippi and the South, and we applaud all those involved.

■ And, kudos to Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez, which on Saturday named buildings on its campus in honor of six people who have had a tremendous impact on the school.

The historic dedication event honored Willie Mae Dunn, Ellmore A. Redd, Troy Watkins, W.L. Nelson, Tom Reed and Joey H. Paul.

We're glad to see the school honoring such worthy individuals, and we congratulate the administration on making this effort.

Monday, June 7, 1999

# Opinion

The Natchez Democrat

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# SOUTHERN STYLE

THE CLARION-LEDGER ■ JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

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ADVICE/PUZZLES — 4-5

COMICS — 4-6

TV LISTINGS — 4-5

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1999

High part 2  
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## Events: Mississippians pick Neshoba County Fair, State Fair as best

I  
F

**From JD**  
 cover of front and back porches, where cool tea flows like silk and honey.

"It's a family vacation without the hassle of schedules and sight-seeing," says Dr. Bill Mayo of Oxford, who has been attending the fair for 23 years — with his wife (whose family is from Philadelphia) of 20 years.

"The draw for my family is the fact that our entire extended family gathers under the same roof. It's a reunion for everyone, and it's like that at most cabins," says Mayo, who confides to stealing away to the upstairs air-conditioned back

**POLL RESULTS**

Results of poll for favorite recurring event in Mississippi:

1. Neshoba County Fair  
 2. Mississippi State Fair

Remaining votes were split among:

■ Jubilee Jam	■ Choctaw Indian Fair
■ Mardi Gras	■ Mo'z St. Paddy's Day Parade
■ B.B. King Homecoming	■ Art exhibits in Jackson
	■ International Ballet Competition
	■ Canton Flea Market
	■ Natchez Literary Celebration

where children spend most of their days, and the garden in the center of the fairgrounds, where adults,

the down-home diet. Many Mississippians welcome October and the Mississippi

people are coming from everywhere. They plan their vacations around the fair."

Whether they go for the rides, the kiddish games, the livestock exhibits, the talent, the lights or the fabulously listening food, the State Fair has long been an annual routine for many voters.

"I have gone to the fair since I was 3 years old," says Chris Lawrence of Hinds County. "I can still remember getting candy apples and being in awe of all the lights when I was a little boy. Now, I take my 3-year-old son, and he loves the same things I did."

## WITH MISSISSIPPAINS



■ Readers pick Neshoba County Fair and Mississippi State Fair as state's top recurring events

**By Paige Porter**  
 Clarion-Ledger Staff Writer

If Philadelphia is Neshoba's county seat, then the Neshoba County Fair must be its crown.

Some 174 votes were cast in The Clarion-Ledger millennium poll to select the state's best recurring event. Named No. 1 by 58 readers, the Neshoba County Fair has drawn everything from covered wagons (in 1888, when the fair was founded) to mini vans and sport utility vehicles (in 1999).

"I was reared in Neshoba County, and I grew up going to the fair every summer," says Carol Vickers of Decatur. "Sixteen years ago, we broke down and got a cabin at the fair, and we now sleep at least 10 people a night in that little cabin."

Coming in second with 42 votes was the Mississippi State Fair.

The Neshoba County Fair — dusty, hot and brimming with energy, side-by-side cabins — is the home away from home for many Mississippians. For nine days every summer, the fair is a melting pot — literally — of good friends, extended families, Southern food and old-fashioned fun.

"It's a throwback to a former, simpler, less frantic time," says Vickers.

Clarion-Ledger photo

# Cirque du Soleil Mississippi visit not so novel now

■ State has come far  
in past decade

CHARLIE MITCHELL



Managing Editor  
The Vicksburg  
Post

VICKSBURG—The guy who sat down next to us had just one question: "Do y'all know how long this lasts?"

My wife and I said we didn't. We'd just been seated ourselves in the magnificent theater custom built at Beau Rivage in Biloxi for Cirque du Soleil.

I sized the guy up as being, like us, from somewhere inland. He'd probably lost a couple of hundred dollars at the tables in the elegant complex's vast casino and been offered a "comp" ticket to the in-house show. He appeared eager to get back to the dice.

His agitation didn't abate as the lights went down and the fantastic blend of music, dance, flipping, dancing and swinging began. One or two acts into the 90-minute spectacular, he slipped out.

Cirque du Soleil didn't change that gambler, but it — and a lot of other things — are changing Mississippi.

Maybe a lot of us can't see it because we're so close, but Mississippi as the decade ends is not the state it was when the 1990s began.

Development of 30 or so casinos blended with a robust national economy have combined to more or less end the state's isolation from the rest of the world.

Yes, the Neshoba County Fair remains. Yes, governance in most counties is still conducted 90 percent of the time from a pickup and 10 percent of the time in a boardroom. Yes, putting a worm on a hook and pulling bream from the lake at a state park is a big and enjoyable vacation for those of us who avoid being snooty. The things that typify this state as rural and its people as uncomplicated remain. They're what make it great, if you ask me.

But a layer has been added. There are more options in education, in use of leisure time and even in selection of jobs.

First lady Pat Fordice and exhibit organizer Jack Kyle had a lot to do with it. *Palaces of St. Petersburg* and *Splendors of Versailles* events in Jackson demonstrated to the rest of the world — and, more importantly, to us — that Seattle, New York and Boston weren't the only cities that could effectively debut internationally touring art.

Communities large and small have added or placed new emphasis on the arts, on museums and on festivals ranging from literary weeks in Natchez and Oxford to the Elvis Presley Festival in Tupelo.

Communities large and

small have also added meeting and convention facilities, notably Hattiesburg and Tupelo, but also Vicksburg and Natchez.

There's ballet and concerts, and Thalia Mara Hall in Jackson is host to traveling Broadway shows several times a year.

As for Cirque du Soleil, it's hard to say whether such a show would have landed in The Magnolia State absent events earlier in the decade.

I don't have a lot of prized possessions, but one of them is a matchbook cover I picked up when Harrah's opened the first casino-hotel in Mississippi in 1993.

It says, "Harrah's" on the front, of course, but my favorite part is the list of company locations on the back: Las Vegas, Reno, Lake Tahoe, Atlantic City, Vicksburg.

Since then, of course, Harrah's has expanded to other cities in Mississippi and elsewhere, but just seeing Vicksburg listed with resort destinations signaled something very different was going on.

It's not at all a put-down to say this, but Mississippi has not been a state where important things happened.

Hollywood is the epicenter of movies, New York for theater, Orlando for theme parks. Now moviemakers are common in the state and so are shows.

Bill Cosby, who previously had traveled to Mississippi only to offer words of encouragement to graduates of Rust College, now comes to the state to make money. He's done shows at Silver Star in Philadelphia and on the Gulf Coast this year.

Cirque du Soleil, based in Montreal, offers its clowns from Russia and fire-knife dancer from Tahiti in the capitals of Europe — and at Beau Rivage in Biloxi, Mississippi!

The new layer has not changed the fundamentals of the state. But it will eventually change the way Mississippians think about Mississippi. These days, everything no longer happens someplace else.

Write Charlie Mitchell at *The Vicksburg Post*, Box 821668, Vicksburg MS 39182, or e-mail (cmitchell@vicksburg-post.com).

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By Robin Miller  
Features reporter

**H**ow do I even begin writing this? The mere thought of gathering my memories in an overwhelming, memories of a man I admired so much, whose life was rich with experience, who knew virtually everyone from presidents to the late John F. Kennedy Jr.

Yet this same man, with all the faces that had to be stuffed into his memory bank, never forgot me.

"McComb, right?" he asked on our second meeting. Our first was in McComb, Miss., where I worked as a reporter for the local newspaper.

We didn't meet again for at least two years, and I knew the names, faces and experiences had to have made that first meeting hay if not blacked out all together, but he remembered "McComb, right?"

His first words to me, stinging me out in a con-  
vulsing fit.

Right, McComb. And my name is Robin. Right, Robin. He never forgot.

Though reminiscing about my days in McComb isn't my favorite pastime, I was handed a few great opportunities while there. One was meeting him, Willie Morris.

There we sat those three years ago, across a table from him. Stacks of his books formed a stack on each side, the most notable being a stack of his children's story, *Good Old Boy* and the *Book of Names*.

It was his most recent release at the time, the majority of which was written at a doctor friend's house in McComb. He said a devil worshiper had in the city a couple of years before inspired the story.

Of course McComb readers were ecstatic to get hold of the book, buying copies, signing a line. This was a signing, after all.

**An interest in people**

But on the moment of his signing, Willie wasn't really interested in talking about the book at all, come to think of it.

"Where are you from?" he asked.

I was taken aback. He wanted to talk about me.

So boring compared to his life. Still so boring. But I complied, telling him I was born and raised just outside of Baton Rouge. And, yes, to never be his most gawdian, I'm an LSU graduate.

I knew Willie it Ole Miss fan. Anybody even familiar with Willie knew he was a die-hard Rebel.

Not exactly the best situation for an LSU Tiger displayed in Mississippi, but Willie didn't hold it against me, and I was to learn that he never would.

In this case, we were Southeastern Conference athletes, especially after he learned that I'd played in the LSU Tiger Stadium.

"The Golden Bared from Tupperland," he said. He knew.

Just as I knew his Ole Miss marchers are known as the Pride of the South.

He stared at me for a moment through half closed eyelids. That's how he always looked, as if sleepy or maybe a bit too mellow.

For Willie it was just his calm demeanor and natural grace. Only in words did he seem to get excited about anything, which is appropriate, because Willie's true love was words.

**And Skip**

That is, the moment of our first meeting in McComb, though, his attention attracted to his love of University of Mississippi football and a particular game against LSU.

It was played in Tiger Stadium only a couple of weeks ago. He said, "Were you there?"

Yes, I was in the south end zone. And where did you sit?

In the north end zone.

Ah, right across from each other.

The line at the table grew longer. Willie didn't seem to notice.

He remained, instead, of how his Rebels had to sit on the field with the Tigers, how the cheerleaders down to the third seconds and LSU did he habit only two points.

All that was needed to win was a field goal, and the Tigers sent out their most potent weapon, a field goal named Dave McHenry.

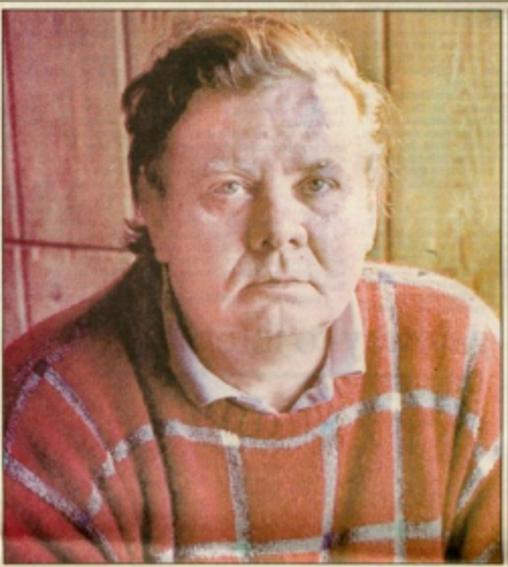
Bromley, Willie said, was at the time the best kicker in the SEC. His kick had only to travel 30 or so yards to make the goal, and he already had kicked two successful 30-plus yard shots.

Concentration point to kick the ball in the south end zone—the end zone in which he sat.

Willie covered his eyes.

Rebonly he kicked. And missed.

Willie would later compare it to the children's story *Coney and the Hat*.



Associated Press

## Remembering Willie Morris

*His words will live forever in our hearts*

Accurate as they may be, these words fall short. All words in this case are hopelessly inadequate when describing Willie.

*It is his how his true love falls in this case.*

But it does. Which is good, I suppose, because it's sort of like describing a painting as priceless. Just as there is no way of placing value on such places, there is no way of adequately describing Willie.

But I can tell about him, how he always referred to me as not a reporter but fellow writer. That meant so much to me, so, because he was what I call a real writer, not someone who sits around spouting so-called knowledge to cover up the fact that he or she can't put a sentence to paper.

He was a writer in the truest sense, and he referred to me as such. What a privilege. And if my writing ever touches a fraction of his level, but things in which he wanted to include me.

He also referred to me as his friend. Always in his friend.

**Passing friends**

I knew so weren't friends in the sense of cordiality. We were more passing friends, people who meet up every once in awhile, people who correspond.

He always had something new to tell me, two things that everyone else probably already knew, but things in which he wanted to include me.

"You know, we're going to be filming 'My Dog Skip' in May," he said.

This was our last face-to-face meeting in 1998. Willie's book, *The Obscure of Madras Evers*, had just been released, and Lemuria Book Store in Jackson, Miss., hosted the book signing. I decided to make the drive.

We talked for a little while, and I told me about the filming. It was to be based on his book *My Dog Skip*, probably Willie's most touching story.

His cause of death was a heart attack. It must have happened suddenly. He'd just returned from attending a screening of the completed "My Dog Skip" in New York. Life was good at home with his Jo Ann Fritchard and his five cats.

He was even collaborating with his only child David Ray, a photojournalist out of New Orleans, on a new book.

All is gone now. All but memories and his words.

So how do I begin writing this, my memory of Willie Morris?

I've just hung up the telephone with my newspaper friend in Mississippi, who informed me of the news as it moved across the Associated Press wire.

"I don't want to ruin your night, but I know you'd want to know this," the friend said.

Yes, I did want to know, and now I sit here on the night of Aug. 2, writing this as the thoughts flow in no certain direction through my head.

How? How do I begin writing this?

I look around and grab the nearest pen. Words from the heart flow better from pen to paper than from keyboard to screen in these cases, and the pen is already in hand.

I notice something as I put it to the paper. It's a felt-tip pen.

Willie always wrote his manuscripts in felt tip. Someone else typed them into the computer. He used felt tips for everything, in fact.

Signing books, writing letters, even writing out checks.

I look at this felt tip, and the empty feeling inside begins obbing. I know, and I'll be writing using this - with a felt tip pen.

The words move so easily with this thought. I think of the time my friend Owen Packer told me she and the Pike County Arts Council tried to get Willie to speak at one of their functions. Mrs. Packer was an English teacher in McComb, located in Pike County, and heavily involved in all the groups on there.

Willie was the writer-in-residence at the University of Mississippi at the time.

I envied her for having the opportunity to play witness to this event.

Like the other memories, fancy ones. Like the time Willie visited Alexandria in 1996 as the day's keynote speaker for the state librarians association convention.

Willie stood in front of the audience, which consisted mostly of ladies, and charmed them all - even the ones who'd never heard of him.

Imagine that, librarians who'd never heard of Willie Morris, the youngest editor to head Harper's magazine. That was in the 1960s, and he was 33 at the time. He turned that magazine into one of the most poignant, not to mention controversial, in the nation.

Such writers as Norman Mailer and Tom Wolfe were his contributors. He wrote of the experience his memoir *North Toward Home* in 1967 after leaving the magazine.

Some people believe *North Toward Home* is his most noted work. Maybe so. It certainly established him as a literary figure.

And many of the librarians visiting Alexandria that day had never heard of him. They knew him when leaving, though, all running up to speak to this wonderful writer.

He and I sat and talked afterward, he telling me that Myrtle Evers and William Styron would attend the Natchez Library Celebration that year.

"You have to come," he said.

I didn't need much convincing.

Then he began his trek out of the Alexandria Convention Hall, where this event took place. That's when I first noticed it.

The entire back lining of his coat was loose and hanging from the bottom hem, flapping against his knees.

He'd dangled those ladies, either not knowing or not caring that his ensemble was in this condition.

That's how Willie was.

The coat, though, was intact for the library celebration, where we met again. I wrote about Myrtle Evers Williams, widow of slain Civil Rights worker Medgar Evers, and sent a copy of the article to Willie, thanking him for the tip.

A few months later, I received an invitation from Castle Rock Productions to be the premiere of the film "Ghosts of Mississippi," in which Myrtle Evers was the central character.

Willie had worked as a consultant on the film. He'd also arranged my invitation.

I was honored.

Finally, there is last September when I traveled to Baton Rouge to interview *Forrest* Grand author Winston Groom. He and Willie were great friends, having worked together at the Washington Star.

**A good prankster**

Willie liked to play pranks, and he and Groom dinked the newspaper's food editor. So when the food editor wasn't looking, they added an extra ingredient to a recipe.

I won't mention the ingredient, but I will say that it doesn't smell good.

Willie and Groom thought the food editor would catch the little addition before the paper was published. He didn't, and his adversaries worked backhanded from editors.

SHL Willie thought it funny enough to write about it in yet another edition of the *Oxford American*. He also wrote of being the first person to read Groom's manuscript for *Forrest* Grand.

Willie, incidentally, was also one of the first people to read John Grisham's manuscript for *A Time to Kill*.

Writers respected his opinion, so much that they'd seek his guidance.

But that's getting off the subject. Groom says Willie at our meeting last September, referring to him as "Ole Morris." Ole Morris had invited Groom to Mississippi for the filming of "My Dog Skip."

Ole Morris took Groom to the act, and before Groom knew it, he was in the film, working as he would bill me, with those "damned tick dogs."

Willie dedicated *My Dog Skip* to Groom, Groom's wife and his dog, named, of course, *Forrest* Grand.

His final completed book, *My G*, will be released in October.

I could recount other conversational anecdotes, but I won't.

**My tale of Willie**

This will be my tale of Willie Morris who was born in Jackson and near City, graduate from the University of Mississippi, completed his education at Oxford Rhodes Scholar.

The writer who, after leaving H author of more than a dozen books, whatever you can find on the list.

And writing so eloquently.

They're losing them, these eloquent writers. We're losing them to one-by-one.

Some, there are younger writers in the world who have enough education to carry on, but it seems there aren't as many.

Willie wrote from the heart. That's about a cliché when speaking of Willie, but it's true.

He wrote about things that mattered to him, childhood, baseball, civil rights, the South.

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## Books document life of the King of Rock 'n' Roll

By Robin Miller

Features Reporter

NATCHEZ, Miss. — They spoke of Elvis on Friday. That was in Memphis, not Natchez.

They had spoken of Elvis in Natchez in early June.

In Memphis, Elvis' entourage of buddies, and maybe some so-called buddies, gathered to tell the masses about Elvis.

An analogy could be made here, one that would involve a religious comparison, of how followers converge on Memphis each year to honor their king's image and hear his disciples spread their message.

When thinking about it, it seems these disciples would become weary of telling the same stories over and over. It seems the story of Elvis could not possibly be told differently.



Robin Miller — Staff reporter

Peter Guralnick signs copies of his books in Natchez, Miss.

after all, a man known worldwide by his first name.

It might even be a safe bet that people living in the depths of the most remote countries wouldn't recognize the president of the United States, but, oh, give them a photo of the king of rock 'n' roll, and "Elvis" would automatically ring throughout.

Elvis of the early days when his offstage demeanor was that of a shy Mississippi boy and his looks were that of a Greek god.

Elvis at the peak of his fame, when girls literally screamed and fainted as he moved his pelvis in outlaw situations.

Elvis of the gaudy rhinestones and cheesy fish as fame flocked to his shows in hope of past glory.

But if cut. In a literary way at that.

Peter Guralnick proved as much in that aforementioned Natchez conversation. He, in fact, proved as much in 1994 with the release of *Last Train to Memphis: The Rise of Elvis Presley*.

That was the first of his two-part biography on Elvis. The second, *Careless Love: The Unmaking of Elvis Presley* was released earlier this year.

The first book received reviews of praise; the highly anticipated release of the second book met as many accolades.

Why? The books were about Elvis Presley.

And Elvis couldn't quite deliver that past glory in his final years, succumbing to a drug-induced death.

Ask anyone. Most people will be able to cite Elvis' chronology in simple terms. He was the beautiful king; he became hated and drowned in drugs.

### Many left questioning

Somewhat, some way, his fame spiraled upon his death. Which left some people asking, "Why?" Of course, most fans are still mourning, the disciples still following, telling their stories.

There are even some people who believe that Elvis is still alive, that he will surprise all of his fans with a comeback at one of those gatherings known as Elvis Week, which takes place in Memphis the week before the anniversary of Elvis' death.

Elvis died Aug. 16, 1977, in his home of Graceland by the way.

Elvis Week 1999 officially ends tomorrow, the actual date of Elvis' death, with an "Elvis Memorial Gathering" from noon to 3 p.m. at the University of Memphis. More disciples will be there to tell their stories.

Events leading up to the service have included a Sunday brunch with Elvis' favorite gospel group the Blackwood Brothers; daily bus trips to the Elvis Memorial Chapel in Tupelo; an Elvis Memorial Dinner at the Peabody Hotel; an Elvis Fan Club Festival; the Stamp Run concert, featuring Elvis' former backup singers; an Elvis Pink Cadillac Dance Party; and "Conversations on Elvis," featuring his, well, disciples.

Guralnick isn't one of those people, these disciples.

This is obvious on first sight.

One reporter has described him as effin, which, when thinking about it, is accurate. More than accurate. For Guralnick is small in stature, appearing more 35 than his 55 years.

He's also quiet, someone who stands in the background and listens, which is probably his best quality as a writer. His quiet approach has won him interviews with such blues greats as Muddy Waters, Solomon Burke and Skip James and earned their friendship as well.

Such probably wouldn't have been the case had Guralnick been the aggressive reporter type. That's where so many people take a wrong turn in journalism.

Still, Guralnick isn't so much a journalist as a writer of stories, someone who searches and delves, yet at the same time seeks to present his story in the journalistic ideal of balance.

Guralnick manages to do this in his writings, too. He did it when writing of blues legend Robert Johnson in a small book simply titled *Searching for Robert Johnson*. He does it, too, in his two massive volumes documenting the life of Elvis Presley.

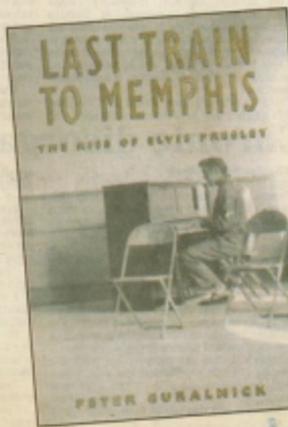
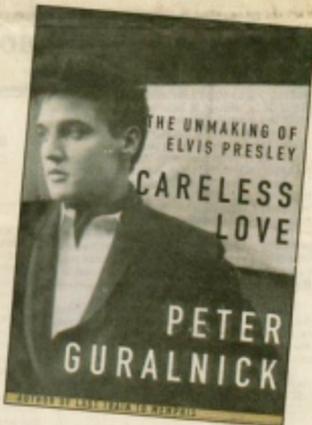
He talked of his career in that Natchez meeting, having participated in the Natchez Literary Celebration. The theme of the event was "Music of the South: Lyric, Literature and Language."

The theme was certainly rich. Limitless, too.

Just think about it. The South has produced a number of musical styles from jazz to blues to country to rock 'n' roll.

Yes, rock 'n' roll.

Elvis certainly didn't single-handedly develop the



■ Please see ELVIS, E-6

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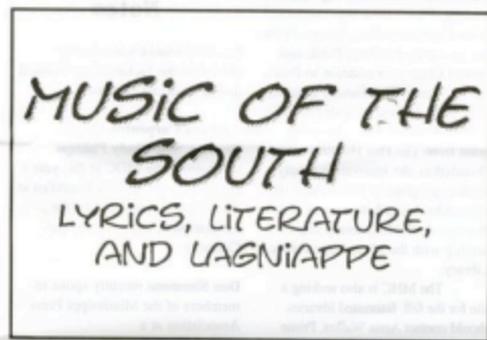
## NATCHEZ TAKES A LOOK BACK AT TENTH ANNUAL LITERARY CELEBRATION

"Readin', Ritin', and Rejoicin'!" That's what the Three R's stand for in the historic river city of Natchez, Mississippi. So says Natchez Literary Celebration founder and co-chairman Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez.

Celebrating its tenth anniversary from June 2 to June 5, 1999, the literary conference will again use a broad theme for more than a dozen lectures and presentations. The 1999 theme, "Music in the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe," will be both explored and enjoyed, Smith said.

"We'll have nationally known writers and scholars as well as famous musicians to present concerts this year," she said. "We're expecting a huge crowd because everyone loves music."

Since it began in 1990, supported by a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council, the



Literary Celebration has attracted more than 1,000 people each year, Smith said. "All of them love to read, and they share the joy of books."

The cost of each year's literary and cultural event is very low,

Smith said, because of the hard work from the three sponsoring agencies, Copiah-Lincoln Community College, the Natchez National Historical Park and the Mississippi Department of Archives. "We are also grateful for generous

grants from the Mississippi Humanities Council, International Paper Foundation, *Oxford American* magazine and civic, corporate and business donors," she said.

"Because of this, plus widespread volunteerism, we can keep our lectures free," Smith said. "And we price all meals, tours, concerts and other special activities at low cost."

Conference co-chair with Smith are Robert Dodson, superintendent of the Natchez National Historic Park, and James Barnett of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Presented each year in early June, the Natchez Literary Celebration features about a dozen lectures by nationally known scholars and writers, enhanced by related tours, book signings, exhibits, films, plays, readings, con-

Natchez  
continued on page 8

## SUPPORT THE HUMANITIES

[ ] Here's \$15 to keep FOCUS magazine free to all Mississippians who request it.

I wish to donate the following amount in support of all humanities programming in Mississippi:

[ ] \$25 FRIEND [ ] \$100 BENEFACTOR  
[ ] \$50 SUPPORTER [ ] \$500 FOUNDER

All contributions are 100% tax deductible.

Please mail your check and this form to:  
Mississippi Humanities Council  
3825 Ridgewood Road, Room 311  
Jackson, Mississippi 39211

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING MHC!

### Awards

continued from page 1

ideas. All Mississippians are invited to make nominations for these awards. Nominations are reviewed by a panel, which selects the year's awardees.

Awards last year went to Dr. Jerry Ward of Tougaloo College, Mrs. Carolyn Vance Smith of Natchez, and "Visions for Leadership" on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Dr. James Pat Smith, Director. Those honored in the past include Dr. Ben Bailey, Mayor Edward Bishop of Corinth, the "Eudora Welty Writer's Symposium," Dr. Ginger Hitt, Director, Dr. Robert Jenkins, Dr. Alfredreen Harrison, Dr. Peggy Whitman Preshaw, Dr. Katherine Rea, Dr. Billy B. Thomas, and Garrison William

### Natchez

continued from page 1

certs, entertainments and meals.

Since the beginning, many people have returned each year for the Celebration, including The Honorable William F. Winter, former governor of Mississippi and longtime president of the Board of Trustees for the Department of Archives and History. "We are so grateful to him for his yeoman service each year as the Celebration's Director of Proceedings," Dodson said.

"Over and over, the Literary Celebration has proven that people hunger after top-quality conferences devoted to literature, history and the arts," Dodson continued.

And top-quality it is, according to Dr. Charles Lowery, chairman

Natchez Literary Celebration is unique among humanities programs," Lowery said. "It is beyond question the best program I have been part of during many years of involvement in Mississippi and elsewhere. It is remarkably successful for several reasons: the richness of its humanities content, the happy choice of program participants, and the virtually flawless execution of a carefully planned program."

The conference has won many awards, including the Governor's Award for Tourism Achievement; a Cultural Olympiad award for outstanding programming from the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games; Most Outstanding Festival or Event in Mississippi from the Mississippi Tourism Commission; and the Public

Council.

Each year's conference deals with some general aspect of Southern history. Some of the noted speakers have been writers Eudora Welty, Margaret Walker Alexander, William Styron, Willie Morris, Ellen Douglas, Ernest Gaines, Elizabeth Spencer, Nikki Giovanni, Myrtle Evers-Williams, and Maya Angelou; Richard Wright scholar Michel Fabre of Paris; and historians Robert V. Remini, David Sansing, William Scarborough, John D.W. Guice, Jay Gitlin, John Basingame, Michael Wayne, and Douglas Lewis.

Special events have included the dedication of the mansion Melrose and the House of William Johnson to the National Park Service, concerts by the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra, filming of the conference by Mississippi Educational Television, and tours of nationally important historic houses.

One of the results of each NLC is the bringing together of var-ious constituencies; young and old, male and female, scholar and student, the highly educated and the under-educated, the African-American and the Caucasian. "Indeed, the Celebration is one of the few places in the Deep South where Blacks and Whites g large numbers with a com- to rejoice over books," Sm

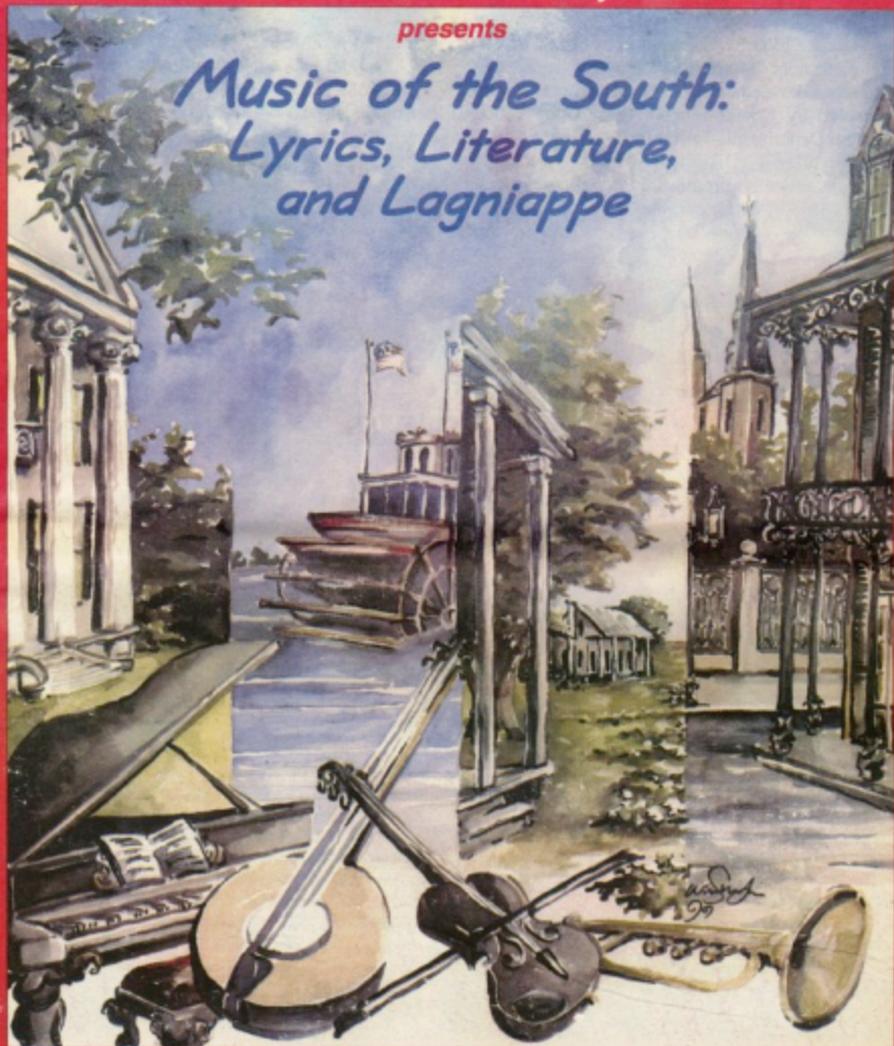
"The Literary Cele definitely lives up to its na year," she said. "It is a true tion which brings people to from all walks of life, peo

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The 10th Annual Natchez Literary Celebration

presents

*Music of the South:  
Lyrics, Literature,  
and Lagniappe*



June 2-6, 1999 • Natchez, Miss.

EVALUATION FORM FOR THE 1999 NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION  
JUNE 2-5, 1999, NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI  
"MUSIC OF THE SOUTH: LYRICS, LITERATURE, AND LAGNIAPPE"

Please complete this form and return it in the enclosed envelope to  
Mrs. Carolyn Vance Smith, P.O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121.

Please comment on the effectiveness and worth of the program.

What were your favorite parts of the Celebration?

Please circle the number that corresponds best to your opinion:

	yes, strongly agree	yes, agree somewhat or perhaps	probably no	no
1. If a similar program is held, would you like to come again?	1	2	3	4
2. Did this program have an impact on you?	1	2	3	4
3. Did the scholars in the humanities contribute to your understanding of the conference theme?	1	2	3	4

## The Literature of Song

by Dan Tyler

The southern storytelling tradition expresses itself in several ways, novels, plays, short stories, humor, and, my specialty, songs. Songs are probably as old as language itself, and southern songs can be traced back to the ancient folk songs of Ireland and Scotland and the field songs slaves adapted from their African sources.

The theme for this year's Natchez Literary Celebration is "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe." As a lifelong songwriter (well, since the age of thirteen) I'm delighted the organizers of this year's festival have seen fit to treat the art of songwriting as a "literary" enterprise, and I'm even more delighted that I will be in Natchez the first week in June to participate in, and hopefully contribute to, the proceedings.

I do believe that sometimes songwriting does achieve the status of literature. "Ode to Billy Joe" by Mississippi singer-songwriter Bobbie Gentry is one example of a song that will probably be remembered and studied and enjoyed as long as any short story by Faulkner or Welty. Songs like that are rare, but so are stories like "Why I Live at the P.O."

My point is, it is possible for a song to transcend time and place and establish itself as an authentic expression of the human spirit, eternal and universal. To become in a word, art. In moments of crisis, in times of sorrow or joy, songs provide a powerful connection among human beings and remind us that our most essential feelings, hopes and fears are shared by all people.

Can you imagine a world without "Amazing Grace"? What would Christmas be without the wonderful songs that sacred season has inspired? And any discussion of songs would be incomplete without acknowledging that which has caused more songs to be written than any other emotion or experience - love. Songs about falling in love, staying in love, falling out of love, love requited and unrequited, and on and on. What would love be like without love songs?

As in most forms of art, the South has produced its share and more of great songs. From Stephen Foster on, the South has given the world some of its greatest songwriters and the songs they created. The current capitol of songwriting is a southern city, Nashville, northern terminus of the ancient Natchez Trace and destination of songwriters everywhere. I look forward to driving south from Nashville on the Trace to southwest Mississippi, land of my youth and source of my songs, to

more

2

share my thoughts about and my experiences in the literature of song.

Dan Tyler of Nashville, Tenn., is a native of McComb, author of the novel, "Music City Confidential" and one of a dozen program presenters at the 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration. During his 30-year career as a songwriter, Tyler's songs have been recorded by LeAnn Rimes, Kenny Rogers, Keith Whitley, The Oak Ridge Boys, B.J. Thomas, Marie Osmond, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Eddie Rabbitt and many others. He will speak after lunch June 3 at the Carriage House Restaurant on the role of Nashville in Southern culture and will present a songwriting workshop June 5 at Deposit Guaranty National Bank meeting room. Tickets are available by calling the Natchez Visitor Center, 601-446-6345 or 1-800-647-6724.

#



# The Natchez Literary Celebration

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e-mail carolyns@nat.colin.cc.ms.us

March 22, 1999

Mrs. Laura Godfrey  
Natchez Convention and Visitor Bureau  
640 South Canal Street  
Natchez, MS 39120

Dear Laura:

Thank you for your recent message that the 1999 Natchez Literary Celebration will receive matching funding for certain promotional ventures from the Mississippi Division of Tourism. That financial assistance is very needed and welcomed.

I am writing to ask for a slight change in the request for matching funding. Here is the situation:

Because the deadline to advertise in the *Oxford American* magazine occurred prior to notification from the Mississippi Division of Tourism that matching funding was available, I did not put into the ad the required MDT logo and message. I did not want to presume that the funding would be available and thus had to go to print without the MDT logo and message.

However, since the MDT information did not appear in the ad, I understand the MDT will not be able to help fund its cost, which is \$450.

May I substitute another use for the approved matching grant of \$450 for another promotional purpose? I propose spending that money on additional Mississippi Press Service advertising in newspapers. Please advise if this will be approved.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely yours,

*Carolyn Vance Smith*

Carolyn Vance Smith  
Founder and Co-chairman  
Natchez Literary Celebration

1999 part 2  
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March 18, 1999

To: Jim Barnett and staff  
From: Carolyn Vance Smith  
Re: Natchez-area distribution of Natchez Library Celebration rack cards

Take bundles of 200 to the following:

1. Armstrong Public Library, S. Commerce St.
2. Cover to Cover Books and More, Washington St.
3. Natchez Pilgrimage Tours, Canal St. Depot
4. National Park Service bookshop, Intermodal Center
5. National Park Service office, Intermodal Center
6. Natchez High School library, S. S. Prentiss Drive
7. Natchez Eola Hotel front desk, N. Pearl Street
8. Bookland, Natchez Mall
9. Ramsade Hilltop Inn, John B. Junkin Drive
10. Guest House Historic Inn, N. Pearl Street
11. Lady Luck Hotel, S. Canal Street
12. Howard Johnson Lodge, S. S. Prentiss Drive
13. Days Inn, Highway 61 South
14. Natchez Chamber of Commerce, Institute Building, 108 S. Commerce
15. City Hall, S. Pearl Street
16. Chancery Clerk's Office, County Courthouse, Market Street
17. Concordia Parish Library in Vidalia, tell librarian these are for Vidalia Library and Permythy Library and for Permythy Museum
18. Grand Village and Jefferson College  
At Vidalia Welcome Center

Note: 6 pages  
Re: Rack Cards

March 24, 1999

To: Welcome Center Manager

From: Carolyn Vance Smith, Co-chairman, Natchez Library Celebration

Re: Rack cards

Please distribute the enclosed rack cards through your Welcome Center. If you run out of cards, please call me at 601-446-1208, and I'll be happy to send you additional cards.

Thank you very much!

State Advisory Committee  
April 15, 1999  
Page 2

In addition, Lynn Gamzell is hosting a party at her lodge south of Hattiesburg, on Sunday morning, May 9. It is designed as an opportunity for friends of the Center to gather and renew our friendships, as well as bring new people into the fold. You will be receiving a more formal announcement about this soon.

This is an exciting time on the University of Mississippi campus, and we are looking forward to sharing our plans with you. Please try to join us for our meetings.

July



The  
University of Mississippi

Oxford • Jackson • Tupelo • Southaven

Center for the Study of Southern Culture  
University, MS 39277  
(662) 915-3963  
Fax: (662) 232-5884  
E-mail: [csf@olemiss.edu](mailto:csf@olemiss.edu)  
URL: <http://www.olemiss.edu/csfcps/cscsf/>

April 15, 1999

**TO:** State Advisory Committee  
**FROM:** Charles Reagan Wilson  
Director and Professor of History

I am writing to let you know good Center news and to advise you of the next meeting of our State Advisory Committee. We have been busily engaged in several matters, and it is time to share them with you.

Bud Martin, CEO of Saks Department Stores, has donated \$200,000 to be used to support the Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference over the next four years. His donation will secure the conference's immediate future, and he holds out the possibility of permanently endowing it in the future. The funds will cover conference expenses and provide for selected high school teachers to attend and take back knowledge of Southern literature to their schools.

This exciting announcement is part of a new fundraising drive that the Center will soon be launching. At our next two meetings we want to talk with members of our State Advisory Committee about this effort, which will be part of the University of Mississippi's Sesquicentennial Capital Campaign. We are working closely with the Chancellor and the University Development Office and believe this campaign offers the promise of insuring the financial future of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

We are scheduling a meeting of the Advisory Committee for Saturday, June 5, in Natchez, in conjunction with the Natchez Literary Celebration. We will also meet with the Advisory Committee on Saturday, July 24, here in Oxford, at the beginning of the Faulkner Conference. We hope you can attend one or both of these meetings and hear our plans for the fundraising campaign and other exciting news about Center programs and activities. As part of our effort for increased planning of the Center's future work, we have a new plan of Center objectives to share with you.

file  
MCC  
publicity

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COPIAH-LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION  
30 CAMPUS DRIVE  
NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI 39120  
(601) 446-1165

file  
NLC

April 29, 1999

Dear ILR Member:

Our general membership meeting will be held on Friday, May 21, 1999 at 10:00 a.m. in the Vocational Technical Multi-purpose room. Our speaker will be Carolyn Vance Smith, Co-Chairman of the Natchez Literary Celebration. Mrs. Smith will speak on the NLC (Natchez Literary Celebration), its history and what we can look forward to at this year's event. This is the tenth anniversary of the NLC and the theme is "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature and Lagniappe" it promises to be wonderful, fun and very entertaining as usual.

Please make every effort to attend this meeting, as we will be electing officers for the upcoming year. Also encourage a friend to come with you. I will be sending you a list of candidates for office in the next week.

Your continued support and help is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Sue Savino*

Sue Savino  
Coordinator of Adult and Continuing Education

**The Place to Be.**

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May 23

Two musical performances worth noting a feature on the Jazz concert on St. Mary Basilica by Don Vappo and the Choral Jazz Orchestra of New Orleans (a group of professional musicians who teach in universities) and the Mississippi Mass Choir Concert (which will be accompanied by a concert by the St. Joseph Orchestra). Two stories likely. Again, contact Carolyn Vance (ask for phone numbers, etc.) - by Tracy Skelton

May 25

Interview with William Wines on what's coming up, what's ahead, something on 10 years of the Library Celebration and what is new in the city, to the state, etc. (For A feature) - by Kerry Whipple

May 30

Overview on the festival, with lineup of speakers, address on what's sold out, etc. - by Tracy Skelton

- Get my photo of c. 6 w/ 2/3 instruments for some day  
- Give to [unclear] writer/photo to come (by 26 May 12) for pic. etc.

MEMPHIS NEWSPAPERS, INC.  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38103  
425-2222

file  
publishing  
N.C.

STACY DRAWING

Thursday, May 4, 1999

MEMPHIS Editorial Staff  
RE: Library Celebration coverage

Following is an updated newspaper coverage for the Memphis Library Celebration. If you have any questions, please let me know. Unless otherwise noted, stories will publish in the Daily edition and need to be completed by 4 p.m. Thursday for Sunday publications or 7 p.m. Monday for Wednesday publications.

Each preview article should include the topic, along with a pull-out box of related news, notes, costs, where to buy, etc. Kerry, please be responsible for building that box for Christmas's design library and let others know what should be included.

Keris is wanting all related photos (including speaker sign) into a folder within the people folder. Please be sure and coordinate speaker signs with articles.

Thanks

May 9

Preview story on Dan Tyler of Nashville (former of McComb, friends with Winkler lawyer Jack Lugans) author, songwriter, producer, music and entertainment attorney, will present a program on music Nashville at a jazz brunch on Monday June 1 and will conduct a songwriting workshop on June 3 (planned to 40 people). He will perform at Memphis the night of June 4. Contact-Caroline Vance South for phone numbers and possible names of registrants for the songwriting workshop. (Would like a subtitle on the workshop and the book/dvd etc. of a best songwriter-hospital) - by Tracy Skelton

June 1  
June 3  
June 4  
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June 7  
June 8  
June 9  
June 10  
June 11  
June 12

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4/21 1:14

May 12

A tribute to Pierrelly musicians Jerry Lee Lewis, Mickey Miller, Foyvan Winkler, and Jimmy Swaggart will include a raffish supper at Twain Place with live music by the same name band and hours of Pierrelly and the new Pierrelly records. A film feature on the musical history of Pierrelly and how it's being resurrected in the celebration - by Nina McCombs

May 14

A preview of the upcoming historic house tour. These houses: Jerry Crowl's Cottage Garden, the Honey' Loveman House and Rowles will be featured. The first two have never been open for tours/viewing before, and we need preview pics and stories from the homeowners. (This could run 1L) - by Kerry Whipple

May 19

A look at how food plays a role in the festival. A preview on the high tea and live music by the Marvin McDowns trio at Cleverly (Main Field) (Keris is covering) along with a nibble on the other food-related events, including barbecue and Blues at the Visitors Center and Hot Time in the Old Town evening event - by Christine Hall (lead music) and Kerry Whipple (other on other events)

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## COPIAH-LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION  
30 CAMPUS DRIVE  
NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI 39120  
(601) 446-1165

May 6, 1999

Dear ILR Member:

As you know on May 21, 1999 at 10:00 a.m. we will have a general membership meeting. At this meeting we will be electing officers for the upcoming year. Carolyn Vance Smith will be the featured speaker at the meeting.

Our nominating committee composed of Jack Stubbs, Marie Boyd, Eloise Reed and nominated members for the following offices, President, Vice-President, Secretary, Associate Secretary and Treasurer. The following names were submitted and approved by the committee:

Frank Rowe	President
Joyce Borum	Vice-President
Marjorie Kinds	Secretary (now Associate Secretary, she will automatically move up to the position of Secretary).
Vera Woods	Associate Secretary
Zelma Kennon	Treasurer
Marie Boyd	Board Member

All nominees accepted the nominations so the membership will vote on them at the meeting on May 21, 1999. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting. Also, bring someone with you. We will have a schedule of activities for the summer, or at least for June and July available at the meeting.

Thank-you for your continued support of the Institute for Learning in Retirement at Copiah-Lincoln Community College.

Sincerely,

*Sue Savino*

Sue Savino  
Coordinator of Institute for Learning in Retirement

**The Place to Be.**

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# REMINDER

## ILR MEETING

FRIDAY, MAY 21, 1999 AT 10:00 A.M.

SPEAKER: CAROLYN VANCE SMITH

WILL SPEAK ON THE "NATCHEZ  
LITERARY CELEBRATION"

WHERE: CO-LIN VO-TECH MULTI-  
PURPOSE ROOM

REFRESHMENTS, AND DOOR  
PRIZES. PLEASE COME AND BRING  
A FRIEND.



## The Natchez Literary Celebration

Sponsored by  
Cotiah-Lincoln Community College  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
Natchez National Historical Park

*file - publicity*

Post Office Box 894  
Natchez, MS 39121-0894  
(601) 446-1208  
Fax (601) 446-1214  
e-mail carolyns@nat.colin.cc.ms.us

May 22, 1999

To: The Rev. and Mrs. Jimmy Swaggart  
From: Carolyn Vance Smith, Co-chairman, Natchez Literary Celebration  
Re: You're invited to the upcoming conference!

As you can tell from the enclosed brochure, the 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration will honor you and your legacy of music on Wednesday, June 2, 1999.

At 3:30 p.m. that day at the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel Ballroom, Amanda Taylor, librarian in Concordia Parish, La., will discuss the many books written about you and your music. Later that day, about 200 conference participants will go by bus to Ferriday and the Ferriday Museum. Then the group will go to Tacony Plantation for supper and live music by the Swampwater Band. At 8:30 p.m. the film, "Great Balls of Fire!" will be shown at the Eola Ballroom.

With this letter I invite you to be our special guests at the Literary Celebration. We would very much like to have you at all or part of the event.

Please let me know your wishes by calling, faxing, or emailing me. See above numbers and address. Thank you.

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To Roscoe - 2 pages total



# The Natchez Literary Celebration

Sponsored by  
Cypress Landing Community College  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
Natchez National Historical Park

Post Office Box 904  
Natchez, MS 39021-0904  
(601) 448-1204  
Fax (601) 448-1214  
e-mail: [cecc@postoffice.nhps.ms.us](mailto:cecc@postoffice.nhps.ms.us)

May 26, 1999

To: Roscoe

From: Carolyn Vance Smith

Re: Spots with ticket giveaways

Please run this spot as often as you can, leading up to June 5, 1999. I am mailing you five pairs of tickets to the event at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, June 5, 1999, at the Natchez City Auditorium. These can be distributed to folks in or in any other way you see fit which will help promote attendance at the event. Thank you so much!

The Natchez City Auditorium will ring to the rafters at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, June 5, at the 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration. The conference, using the theme, "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe," will present a four-part grand finale June 5. First will be a tribute to William Winter, the conference's longtime director of proceedings. Then will be a mini-concert of the work of Mozart, presented by the St. Joseph Orchestra Chamber Ensemble. Third is an inspirational talk by Pulitzer Prize nominee Clifton Taulbert, author of *When We Were Colored*. The conclusion will be a grand concert by America's No. 1 gospel choir, the Mississippi Mass Choir.

For a pair of free tickets to this spectacular evening, call \_\_\_\_\_ (phone number to call). You can pick up your tickets at the radio station. For information about the three and one-half day conference, call 601-448-6345 or 1-800-647-6734.

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Note: 2 sets  
to: Jack

full  
publicity



# The Natchez Literary Celebration

Sponsored by  
Cypress Landing Community College  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
Natchez National Historical Park

Post Office Box 904  
Natchez, MS 39021-0904  
(601) 448-1204  
Fax (601) 448-1214  
e-mail: [cecc@postoffice.nhps.ms.us](mailto:cecc@postoffice.nhps.ms.us)

May 26, 1999

To: Joe Bonetti, Public Radio in Mississippi

From: Carolyn Vance Smith, Co-chairman, Natchez Literary Celebration

Re: Give-away tickets for evening of Sat., June 5

Please run this spot as often as you can in the next week. I am mailing you five pairs of tickets to the event at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, June 5, 1999, at the Natchez City Auditorium, corner of Jefferson Street and North Canal Street in downtown Natchez. My fax number is 601-448-1214. You can fax me the names and phone numbers of the winners. Thanks so much!

The Natchez City Auditorium will ring to the rafters at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, June 5, at the 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration. The conference, using the theme, "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe," will present a four-part grand finale. First will be a tribute to William Winter, the conference's longtime director of proceedings. Then will be a mini-concert of the work of Mozart, presented by the St. Joseph Orchestra Chamber Ensemble. Third is an inspirational talk by Pulitzer Prize nominee Clifton Taulbert, author of *When We Were Colored*. The conclusion will be a grand concert by America's No. 1 gospel choir, the Mississippi Mass Choir.

For a pair of free tickets to this spectacular evening, call (insert your phone numbers of the station). Your tickets will be waiting for you at the door of the Natchez City Auditorium. For information about the 3.5-day conference, call 1-800-647-6734 or 1-601-448-6345.



## The Natchez Literary Celebration

Sponsored by  
Capitol-Louisiana Community College  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
Natchez National Historical Park

Post Office Box 694  
Natchez, MS 39121-0694  
(601) 445-1224  
Fax (601) 445-1214  
e-mail: [caroly@louisiana.edu](mailto:caroly@louisiana.edu)

May 26, 1999

To: Joe Bonell, Public Radio in Mississippi  
From: Carolyn Vance Smith, Co-chairman, Natchez Literary Celebration  
Re: Public Service Announcement

Please run this PSA as often as you can in the next week. Thanks so much!

The 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration June 2-5 will have you patting your foot and humming along. The theme this year is "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe." Nationally known authors and scholars will explore the question: "Why did the South give birth to the blues, and to rock-n-roll, jazz, country, spirituals and so much more of America's music?" The free lecture series will be enhanced by concerts and tours. For information, call 1-800-647-6724 or 601-445-6345.



## The Natchez Literary Celebration

Sponsored by  
Capitol-Louisiana Community College  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
Natchez National Historical Park

Post Office Box 694  
Natchez, MS 39121-0694  
(601) 445-1224  
Fax (601) 445-1214  
e-mail: [caroly@louisiana.edu](mailto:caroly@louisiana.edu)

May 28, 1999

To: Roscoe  
From: Carolyn Vance Smith  
Re: Public Service Announcement for Natchez Literary Celebration

The 10th annual Natchez Literary Celebration June 2-5 will have you patting your foot and humming along. The theme this year is "Music of the South: Lyrics, Literature, and Lagniappe." Nationally known authors and scholars will explore the question, "Why did the South give birth to the blues, rock-n-roll, jazz, country, spirituals, and so much more of America's music?" The free lecture series at the Radisson Natchez Eola Hotel will be enhanced by concerts and tours. For information, call 601-445-6345 or 1-800-647-6724.

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From: "BARBARA CARPENTER" <barcar@MHC STATE.MD.US>  
To: carter@post.com to me ok  
Date sent: Thu, 20 May 1999 14:24:00 -0500  
Subject: Re: MHC meeting end 94.0  
Priority: normal

Carter--As I was driving this morning I heard your great segment on PMA! WONDERFUL for the humanities. I also got your letter and information about the librarian I am to interview (I don't have it in front of me and don't remember her name), which is just fine. Our board will meet until 2:00 this afternoon, but I'll just stand at open to the Eds after that.

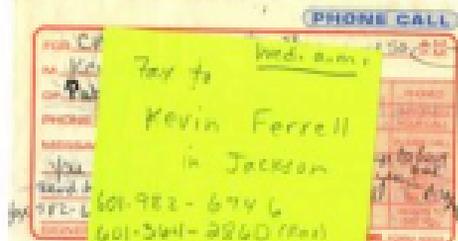
I will see them this weekend to discuss our schedule. Your letter indicated that we would both be guests, but I don't want to take advantage of your hospitality. Certainly we can pay for MHC tickets and will be happy to do so. We will let you know on Monday what we wish for the schedule.

Our newsletter came from the printer Tuesday and will be going out today and tomorrow, with your article front page. It goes to about 3,000 of the people most likely to attend the conference.

I am looking forward to seeing you and Marion on Tuesday evening, and certainly we will understand your late arrival or early departure. Jim Barnett has indicated that he will come to the reception but has to leave to attend a show at catching that evening, so we appreciate your coming at all. I'd be in touch Monday.

Barbara

file w/ c  
publicity



send  
file publicity

## Celebration

Post Office Box 894  
Baltimore, MD 21211-0894  
(410) 441-2288  
(410) 441-2214  
e-mail carter@post.com or to me

From: [redacted] Chairman, Matched Literary Celebration

Re: Radio show about the Celebration

Kevin, I was told by several friends that the radio show about the Literary Celebration aired Thursday morning, May 20. Unfortunately, I did not get to hear it. I was not told when the program would air and neither were Jim Barnett or Bob Dodson, whom you also interviewed.

We are all eager to hear the broadcast.

Will the show be aired again? If so, when? If it won't be aired again, is there a chance you could send me a copy of the tape? Not only would I like to hear it, but I'd like to put the tape into the Celebration archives.

I received several calls concerning the Celebration as a result of the program. Thank you very, very much for doing it!

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## PLANS UNDERWAY FOR PUBLIC HUMANITIES ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS BANQUET

Dr. Jack White, Chair of the Mississippi Humanities Council, has released the names of individuals and organizations to be honored at the MHC Awards Dinner February 19, 1999, in Jackson. Those to be recognized include a public supporter of MHC's work, a scholar who has brought the disciplines of the humanities to the public, an institution recognized for a project of extraordinary quality, a K-12 educator who has shown a lifelong commitment to humanities education for Mississippi's children, and outstanding humanities educators at the state's institutions of higher learning.

Dr. Larry Chappell of



Larry Chappell

Mississippi Valley State University will be honored with the Humanities Scholar Award and Dr. T.W. Lewis, III, of Jackson will be honored with the Public Humanities Achievement Award.

The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, Macy Hart, Director, will be recognized with the Chair's Award for Special Achievements in the Humanities. Linda Clifton of Tupelo Middle School will be honored with the K-12 Humanities Educator Award for her lifelong commitment to humanities education for Mississippi's children. Dr. Jack White, Chair of the Mississippi Humanities Council will preside



T.W. Lewis, III

over the occasion.

Each year the Council recognizes persons who have supported its work through public programs across the state based in the branches of learning concerned with human thought and relations, such as history, literature, culture, values, and ideas. All Mississippians are invited to make nominations for these awards. Nominations are reviewed by a panel, which selects the year's awardees.

Awards last year went to Dr. Jerry Ward of Tougaloo College, Mrs. Carolyn Vance Smith of Natchez, and "Visions for Leadership" on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Dr. James Pat Smith,



Macy Hart

Director. Those honored in the past include Dr. Ben Bailey, Mayor Edward Bishop of Corinth, the Eudora Welty Writers' Symposium, Dr. Ginger Hitt, Director, Dr. Alfredteen Harrison, Dr. Robert Jenkins, Dr. Peggy Whitman Preshaw, Dr. Katherine Rea, Dr. Billy B. Thames, and Governor William Winter.

The Public is invited to join the Council and its supporters in honoring these persons who have made enormous contributions to Mississippi. For more information about the awards, the recipients, the awards dinner, or the Mississippi Humanities Council, contact the Council offices at 601-982-6752.



Linda Clifton

### CAPPS MUSEUM A MISSISSIPPI TREASURE

Two of the most influential men in the history of Bolivar county and Mississippi, whose public lives crossed just as one's career was ending, have come together in the Charles W. Capps, Jr., Archives and Museum Building at Delta State University.

The building, named for senior statesman and Cleveland native Charlie Capps, is the new home of the Walter Sillers, Jr., Papers.



Charles W. Capps, Jr., Archives and Museum Building

Donated to the university in 1968 by his widow Lena Sillers, the papers are a treasure-trove for those interested in Mississippi political and legislative history and the development and activities in the Delta, ca. 1916-1966. Additional Sillers family papers followed, including those of Walter Sillers,

Sr., Florence Sillers Ogden, and Florence Warfield Sillers. The Sillerses were planters, lawyers, political players, and civic leaders. Their collections shed light on the family itself, the levee system, plantation management and operations, farming and labor, political sentiment and activities, legislation, and women and family life in the Delta. Together, the papers of the Sillers family measure over 250 cubic feet.

CAPPS MUSEUM  
continued on page 8

#### \*\*\*FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE\*\*\*

National Connections Literacy Project  
MHC Receives Hardin Grant  
Prime Time Update  
Grant Year 1998 in Review  
Mississippi Humanities Council Calendar  
Teacher Awards  
MHC Deadlines  
ECCC Honors Vickers  
The Writing of African American Identity

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1999 - Dee Ray and Julia Cannon from Ole Miss

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10<sup>th</sup> Annual Natchez Literary Celebration

**CAROLYN VANCE  
SMITH  
NATCHEZ, MS**

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