BLACKVILLE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



May 2018 – Issue 127

**BLACKVILLE COMMUNITY CHOIR**

 The Blackville Community Choir was formed in 1965 by Catherine Carmona of Blackville, South Carolina as the Macedonia Tabernacle Choir. Carmona recognized a need to engage young people in her community in a positive way. With her love of music, she organized the choir, with the help of the Reverend H. B. Johnson, former pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church, and Mrs. Mary Johnson Elmore, who was very influential in organizing the choir. Carmona taught the songs she learned as a child, including African-American spirituals and the songs sung by enslaved African-Americans laboring in the fields. Carmona and her sisters grew up singing these same songs in church and at other events throughout the area.

The choir practiced at Tabernacle Baptist Church and Macedonia Baptist Church in Blackville. They led the youth choir at both churches, traveled to other states to perform, and sang at nursing homes and at various events throughout the region. The choir’s repertoire is rich and varied – members have always maintained their love of spirituals and singing a cappella. Former directors of the youth choir were Marshall Johnson and Marie Sanders Wilson.

In 1976, Sandra Beach became the choir director and the choir changed their name to The Blackville Community Choir. The group expanded to include members from different congregations and continued to sing at churches, festivals, funerals, weddings, banquets, public schools, and college graduations.

In 1985, choir members organized the first Blackville Community Youth Choir, through which they continue to pass on their legacy by mentoring young people through music. The Blackville Community Choir considers traditional African-American spirituals important to their community. As a tribute to their ancestors, the choir feels a strong obligation to carry on this musical legacy.

Choir members have organized and coordinated several programs, including “The Essence of Our Roots and a Journey Back in Time,” which explored their African-American musical and cultural roots. In 2017, they were involved with “Echoes from the Past,” a summer youth educational project tracing the origins of the spirituals and songs of enslaved Africans in the South. Choir members have been advocates for the arts, organizing an annual program featuring visual and performing artists, collectors, crafters, entrepreneurs, culinary artists, and storytellers. Looking ahead, the choir is planning a Youth Musical Workshop to teach traditional spirituals to young people in the community. Speaking to their joy in singing a cappella, one local minister commented, “They got more harmony than grits.”



Lucille Kearse, Cynthia Mole, Mamie Matthews, Rita Young, Walter Augustus, Roberta Lawton, Lillian Harrison, Jimmy Sanders, Saundra Beach, Carolyn Peacock

**MEETINGS**

* **May 3,** BlackvilleCommunity Development Corporation, Town Hall, 5:30 p.m.
* **May 7,** Blackville Civic Club, Edwards Heating and Cooling,

7:00 p.m.

* **May 7,** Music and Arts Festival, Russell’s Pizza, 6:00 p.m.
* **May 8,** Neighbor Hood Watch, Tabernacle Baptist Church, 6:00p.m.
* **May 8,** Barnwell County Council Meeting, Agriculture Building, Barnwell, 6:00 p.m.
* **May 14,** Blackville-Hilda District 19, School Board Meeting, Board Office Conference Room, (TBA)
* **May 21**, Town Council Meeting, Community Center, 6:30 p.m.
* **May 24,** Blackville Downtown Development Association, Russell’s Pizza, 6:00 p.m.
* **May 29,** Barnwell-Blackville Branch NAACP Meeting, Barnwell Masonic Lodge, Calhoun Street, Barnwell, SC 7:00 p.m.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

**May 1,** Zaire Williams

**May 2,** David Kenner

**May 4**, Aaron Green

**May 5,** Isaiah Harrison

**May 13,** Mrs. Ida Hutto

**May 13**, Betty Thompson

**May 15,** Robert (Bobby) Smalls

**May 16,** Saundra White-Minus

**May 20**, Kurtis Roosevelt O’Neal

**May 23**, Aneshia Arrington

**May 25,** Sandy Smalls

**May 25,** Zy’nyriah Lashay Brown

**May 30,** Wayne Beard

**May 30,** Micayala Black

**LIBRARY NEWS**

**Contact Miss Ruthie -803 284-2295**

**SCHOOL NEWS**

**MES**

May 3, SC PASS Testing

May 11, 4K Graduation - 9:00 a.m.

May 31, Awards Day

**MES and BHJH**

SC Ready Testing – Various dates in May

**No school – May 28, 2018**

**LAST DAY OF SCHOOL – May 31**

**Blackville-Hilda Teacher Gala**

**May 17, 2018 - 6:00pm**

**\*\*\***

**MUSIC and ARTS FESTIVAL**

**May 18 and 19, 2018**

**Main Street**

**DOWNTOWN BLACKVILLE**

**Featuring “LIVE MUSIC”, ART, CAR and BIKE SHOWS, VENDORS, FOOD, FUN, GAMES, PARADE and MUCH MORE**

**803 671-3121, 803 450-8697, 803 300-3486 website - bamfestival.com**

**\*\*\*\***

**BENEFIT DINNER SALE**

**GIRL SCOUT TROOP #765**

**May 6, 12noon – 3:00pm - $7.00**

**Blackville Community Center**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***

Published by the Town of Blackville and the Blackville Community Development Corporation. Contact vtalston@bellsouth.net, add “NEWSLETTER” to subject line. Newsletters available at Town Hall

***Town of Blackville is an Equal Opportunity Employer***