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Festival celebrates rich history of African-Americans in New Mexico

By Adrian Gomez / Journal Arts & Entertainment Editor
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Fat City will be part of the Cotton Club Gala on Feb. 13.

For five years, the New Mexico Black History Month Festival has promoted cross-cultural understanding.

And this year is no different.

Events for the monthlong festival begin on Thursday, Feb. 4, with performances of “Roots Revival II: More Than a Song.”

The show repeats at the African American Performing Arts Center on Feb. 5-7.

New Mexico Black History Month Festival

To see a complete schedule, visit nblackhistorymonth.org. Tickets and venues vary.

Cathryn McGill, festival founder, says the festival is an opportunity to build and strengthen our community from the inside out.

She says African-Americans have made important contributions to the state and should be recognized.

“New Mexico has a rich tapestry in history,” she says. “We want to be able to tell our stories as well, and this is an opportunity to learn about it.”



Actress Jasmine Guy stars in the production of “Raisin’ Cane: A Harlem Renaissance Odyssey” at Popejoy Hall on Feb. 26.

One of the highlighted events will be the “Cotton Club Gala: Funkalicious” on Feb. 13.

The gala is in the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance, and chicken and waffles from the critically acclaimed Nexus Brewery will be served.

Fat City will be performing, and 99.9 The Beat will also provide some music.

McGill says a portion of every ticket sold will benefit the Judith R. Harris Scholarship Fund of the Albuquerque Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Inc.

“This is one way we are giving back to the community,” she says. “It’s important for the entire community to come together to enjoy the rich history.”

Throughout the month, various venues will host events.

On Feb. 12, Sheryl Underwood will be joined by Mike Washington and David Raibon at the Kiva Auditorium. Underwood is a comedian, actress and co-host of “The Talk.” The three will perform a comedy show. Tickets are available at ticketmaster.com.

On Feb. 14, the Central New Mexico Community College Culinary Arts will host the “CNM Soul Food Cooking Class.”

More information can be found at nmblackhistorymonth.com.

And on Feb. 26 at Popejoy Hall, the traveling show “Raisin’ Cain: A Harlem Renaissance Odyssey” will be presented.

“Raisin’ Cain” is set in the early 20th century, as Harlem became the center of an explosion of art, culture, and social movement in the African-American community.

It celebrates the history of the Harlem Renaissance and its mission to use art to change society for African-Americans to find acceptance in it.

Award-winning actress Jasmine Guy weaves together poetry, song, dance and spoken word from the most noteworthy voices of the Harlem Renaissance, and the Avery Sharpe Trio offers an original, evocative jazz score.

McGill wants the entire community to enjoy the events.

“This is a perfect time to learn more about our history,” she says. “And there’s a lot of fun to be had.”

On Feb. 14, the



Comedian David Raibon will perform with Sheryl Underwood.



New Mexico Black History Month Festival founder Cathryn McGill.



“The Talk” co-host and comedian Sheryl Underwood will perform on Feb. 12 at the Kiva Auditorium.

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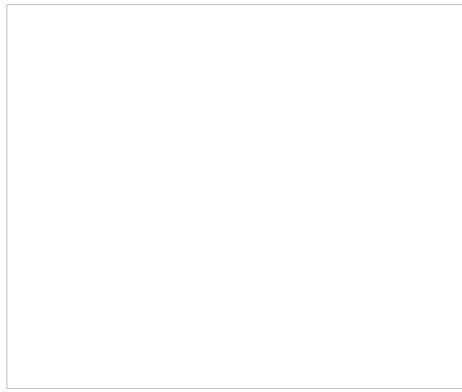
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