

CARDINAL & PINE

SUBSCRIBE

SUPPORT

North Carolina News You Can Use

New film highlights historic school integration in one North Carolina community



Coach Jim Pardue instructs the starting five from Hendersonville's 1971-72 state championship team. Team members from left to right are Johnny Landrum, Dennis Braswell, Brian Tallent, Tippy Creswell and Harold Albany.

Hendersonville commemorates the 60th anniversary of the integration of North Carolina schools with a new film documenting the Black community's thirst for education when "Color Beyond the Lines," a new film by David Weintraub and the Center for Cultural Preservation, premieres on June 21.

“Color Beyond the Lines” will begin at 7 p.m. June 21 at Blue Ridge Community College’s Thomas Auditorium in Flat Rock. The premiere will begin with a local musical performance, followed by the screening and ending with a discussion with local Black leaders on progress and challenges ahead.

“Going back to when our people were enslaved, we realized that if we were going to truly be free it was important to have a good education,” said Ronnie Pepper, president of Hendersonville’s Black History Research Group.

Despite the fact that Black students were forced to use old, tattered books and attend schools far from their home, the schools they created became treasured institutions. 9th Avenue School, for instance, offered a quality education while maintaining a close-knit family relationship. When integration of schools went into affect in 1965, the Black community was excited to have access to resources that they never had before, but it came at a high price — the loss of their cherished schools.

According to film director David Weintraub, “what struck me as I interviewed Black elders throughout the county was their great desire to instill a good education in their children. Although most embraced integration of schools, they were saddened by the loss of precious institutions like the 9th Avenue school.”

Edward King, an alumnus of 9th Avenue who is interviewed in the film says, “Growing up we knew that we had to out-perform, out-think and out-read the white community if we were to succeed. We had a great pride in our Black schools and we felt like something was taken away from us.”



The film documents the tremendous discrimination the Black community in Henderson County and Western North Carolina faced and how they overcame it by building a nurturing, supportive community led by area churches such as Star Bethel Baptist Church. Sports also played an important role after integration in developing unity in the community. And Black athletes excelled as demonstrated by the 1972 Hendersonville High Bearcats that took the basketball state title with unprecedented four Black students in the starting five, shortly after integration.

To order tickets, which are expected to sellout, order online at www.saveculture.org. Ticket-buyers get \$5 off the price of the DVD if they buy it in advance. Future screenings in WNC will be scheduled shortly. Refreshments will be available to all after the screening provided by the Black History Research Group. For more information about the Center for Cultural Preservation, call (828) 692-8062 or visit www.saveculture.org.