

Arts & Entertainment Black History Events Local News

New Black History Film on a Mountain Town's Drive for Education

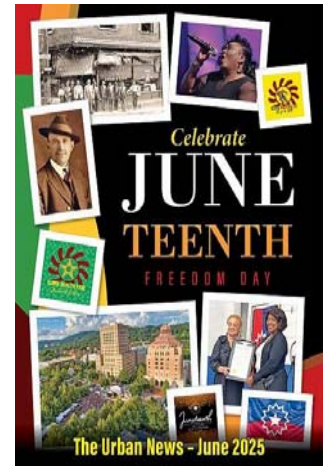
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Color Beyond the Lines premieres in June 2025

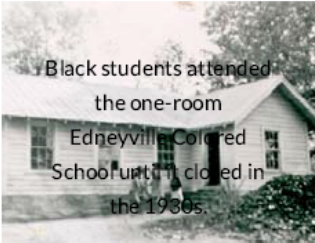
Hendersonville commemorates the 60th anniversary of the integration of its schools with a new film documenting the Black community's thirst for education when *Color Beyond the Lines*, a documentary from David Weintraub and the Center for Cultural Preservation, premieres on June 21, 2025.

According to Ronnie Pepper, President of Hendersonville's Black History Research Group, "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."

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. Ninth Avenue School, for instance, offered a quality education



while maintaining a close-knit family relationship. When the integration of public schools went into effect 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 the film’s 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 African American community in Henderson County and WNC 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, shortly after integration, with an unprecedented four Black students in the starting five.

Color Beyond the Lines will have its world premiere in western North Carolina on **Saturday, June 21, 2025** at 7 p.m., at the Thomas Auditorium at Blue Ridge Community College. The premiere will begin with a local musical performance, followed by the screening and ending with a discussion with local black leaders



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on progress and challenges ahead. Future screenings in WNC will be scheduled shortly. Refreshments provided by the Black History Research Group will be available to all after the screening.

To order tickets to this event, which are expected to sell out, order online at saveculture.org/shop/color-beyond-the-lines-premiere. Ticket buyers get \$5 off the price of the DVD if they buy it in advance.

The Center for Cultural Preservation is a cultural nonprofit organization dedicated to working for mountain heritage continuity through oral history, documentary film, education and public programs. For more information about the Center contact them at (828) 692-8062 or www.saveculture.org.

This film is made possible by the Community Foundation of Henderson County, the Arts Council of Henderson County, and North Carolina Humanities.

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