

GUARDIAN

January 2011

Volume 17, Number 1

Opening night reception is Saturday, January 15 at 7 PM

HRCNCF co-hosts M.L. King Days event: “The Harlem Renaissance: As Gay as it was Black” at Pride Center

The Human Rights Council of North Central Florida and Pride Community Center of North Central Florida are co-hosting a special event in January as part of Alachua County Martin Luther King Days events. The exhibit is on loan from the Stonewall Library and Archives and is titled “The Harlem Renaissance: As Gay as it was Black.”

The exhibit will open on Saturday, January 15, at the community center with a wine-and-cheese reception from 7 to 9 PM and remain on display through February 19. The Center is located at 3131 NW 13th St., Suite 62, in Gainesville. The exhibition and reception are free and open to the public.

The Harlem Renaissance, which occurred in New York City during the 1920s and 1930s, shaped black culture for generations and influenced American society. The movement was “surely as gay as it was black, not that it was exclusively either of these,” according to historian Henry Louis Gates, whose research the exhibition’s title is extracted from.

“I think most people like to draw neat little identity lines around people,” said Jack Rutland, executive director of the Stonewall Library Museum Archive in Fort Lauderdale, which organized the exhibition. “With this exhibition, we hope to blur those lines to show that when people come together in a place at a time, amazing things can happen when identity ceases to matter quite so much.”

Few of the artists and writers profiled in the exhibition can be considered “out” or “gay” in any modern sense of the terms. The Harlem Renaissance was moved along by men and women who led double

Save the Date!

You’re invited to a very special fundraiser reception

to benefit the educational programs of the Human Rights Council of North Central Florida.

Your support is vital to help HRCNCF continue to work on our anti-bullying education initiative.

**Saturday, February 19, 2011
7 to 9 PM**

At the home of Bob & Lisa Jerry
2374 NW 28th Street
Gainesville, Florida

HRCNCF has been your **Hometown Equality Advocate** for LGBT rights since 1993 – leading the fight for Gainesville gender identity protections (2008), domestic partner registry (2007), domestic partner benefits for city employees (1999), and sexual orientation protections (1998). HRCNCF continues to conduct candidate questionnaires and forums to keep you informed where local candidates stand on LGBT issues.

lives. Many imbued their work with coded references to their sexuality.

Profiled are such famous people as writer Richard Bruce Nugent, whose “Smoke, Lillies and Jade” is praised as the first published black gay short story. Langston Hughes, who is considered one of the foremost writers of the Harlem Renaissance and author of “The Weary Blues,” also is featured. Zora Neale Hurston, a writer and folklorist whose best known work “Their Eyes Were Watching God” was set in Central and South Florida in 1937, is another leading figure profiled. Poet and novelist James Weldon Johnson, a Jacksonville native who with his brother John Rosamond composed “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” the song now known as the Negro National Anthem, is another artist the exhibition pays tribute to.

The exhibition also features a section acknowledging that not all contributors of the Harlem Renaissance were gay. Historian W.E.B. Du Bois; actor Paul Robeson; artist Aaron Douglas; dancer Bill “Bojangles” Robinson; songwriter Eubie Blake; bandleaders Duke Ellington and Cab Calloway; and musicians Louis Armstrong and Fats Waller are among those noted.

HRCNCF hosts Gainesville City Commission Candidate Forum on Monday, January 31, at Pride Center

On Monday, January 31, the Human Rights Council of North Central Florida will hold a candidate forum for the Gainesville City Commission at-large seat and seats in Districts 2 and 3. The forum will be held at Pride Community Center of North Central Florida, 3131 NW 13th St., Suite 62, at 7 PM.

Due to the large number of candidates anticipated in these races, a second forum may be held on another date.

Gainesville city elections will be held on Tuesday, March 15, with a runoff, if necessary, on Tuesday, April 12. Early voting will start 8 days prior to the March 15 election at locations to be announced. An absentee ballot can be obtained by calling the Supervisor of Elections at 352-374-5252. If you are not yet registered to vote in the state of Florida, you must register to vote up to 29 days prior to the election in order to be able to cast a ballot by the March 15 election.

As of this writing, there are three candidates for the At-Large seat: incumbent commissioner Thomas Hawkins, Dikassa Dixon and Don Marsh. Marsh ran last year for Gainesville mayor and was defeated in the runoff election by Craig Lowe. Marsh ran on a platform opposing the ordinance that protects LGBT rights in the city, and was a proponent of the unsuccessful 2009 ballot measure that would have eliminated gay rights protections in Gainesville.

In District 2, four candidates have filed to run thus far: incumbent commissioner Lauren Poe, Todd Chase, James Ingle and Robert Krames. Krames ran unsuccessfully against commissioner Jeanna Mastrodicasa in 2009, and comes with a history of working to repeal the city’s LGBT rights ordinance.

In District 3, five candidates have filed to run thus far: Ozzy Angulo, Susan Bottcher, Jimmy Harnsberger, Ramon Trujillo and Rob Zeller. There is no incumbent in this seat as Warren Nielsen is serving temporarily to fill out the term of Jack Donovan who last year left to run for Alachua County Commission.

Commission hopefuls must qualify by noon on Friday, January 28, so there may be even more candidates running. As always, the Human Rights Council of North Central Florida will send each candidate a questionnaire and will publish their answers in the *Guardian* newsletter, but nothing beats coming to the forum and asking your own questions. Put it on your calendar!

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
OF NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA
PO BOX 2112 GAINESVILLE, FL 32602
TEL: 352-372-5192 EMAIL:
HRCNCF@GMAIL.COM

— MISSION STATEMENT —

HRCNCF opposes discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in the interest of civic betterment and social welfare. HRCNCF also seeks to work in coalition with other organizations working to end discrimination based on race, gender, socioeconomic status, age, religion, national origin, or disability.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE HRCNCF BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 2011, AT 7:00 PM AT PRIDE COMMUNITY CENTER OF NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA, 3131 NW 13TH STREET, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

The *Guardian* is published quarterly.