



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Little Rock Central High School
National Historic Site

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Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site News Release

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The Little Rock Film Festival and the National Park Service present the Reel Civil Rights Film Festival and 57th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock Central High School

Featuring members of the Little Rock Nine; Director Oliver Stone; Dr. Peter Kuznick; Dr. Eric Singer; Mary Liuzzo Lilleboe; Sally Liuzzo-Prado; Anthony Liuzzo; Joanne Bland; Lasker Bell; Rodney Block; Johanna Neumann; Charlie Soap; Kristina Kiehl; Solfood Catering chefs Marie Amaya & Maat. Ra Butterfly

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. - Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site commemorates the 57th anniversary of the desegregation crisis in September with the *Reel Civil Rights Film Festival* featuring special guests, panel discussions, and a special commemoration to honor local educators and civil rights activists. All events at local venues are FREE and open to the public; reservations are required for the September 20th evening program and may only be secured by logging on to www.eventbrite.com and searching "Little Rock Film Festival" or "A Night with Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick."

Friday, September 19, 6:00 p.m. - Riverdale 10 Movies (2600 Cantrell Road)
Student Films: Youth Leadership Academy and Little Rock Central High School Memory Project

The Youth Leadership Academy at the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site is designed to develop young leaders with a focus on social justice, youth empowerment, volunteerism and stewardship for the National Park Service; Little Rock Central High School's Civil Rights Memory Project immerses students in the oral history of civil rights and human rights through hands-on, intergenerational learning, requiring students to analyze causes and effects of historical events and also the resulting impact on both individuals in their families and institutions in our communities. Films will be screened from collaborative work with the National Park Service; Arkansas Education Television Network; the *Young Historians, Living History* collaboration with the Smithsonian Institute, Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, Historic Arkansas Museum, Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, Center for Asian American Media and Smithsonian Affiliations.

The films will be followed by a performance of the Memory Project's Readers Theater and a moderated discussion with student filmmakers and Casey Sanders, Arkansas Education Television Network producer.

Saturday, September 20, 12:00 p.m. - Riverdale 10 Movies (2600 Cantrell Road)
Been Rich All My Life

(Director: Heather MacDonald) – **Been Rich All My Life** follows the most unlikely troupe of tap dancers - the "Silver Belles," five women aged 84 to 96. In their heyday they worked at some of Harlem's most prestigious haunts, performing with legendary band leaders like Cab Calloway, Jimmie Lunceford and Duke Ellington. They met in the 1930's as chorus dancers at the Apollo and the Cotton Club. When the big band era ended, and with it the need for show dancers, they all went into other work. They regrouped in 1985, put their shoes back on and — sassy as they ever were — are still performing regularly. They may not kick as high, but they are hip-swaying and show-biz savvy. These women will disrupt any notions you have of old age.

The film will be followed by a moderated discussion with Chief of Interpretation and Education Enimini Ekong and Lasker Bell.

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Little Rock Film Festival presents The Reel Civil Rights Film Festival

Saturday, September 20, 2:30 p.m. - Riverdale 10 Movies (2600 Cantrell Rd)

Ending the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Project

Motivational Educational Entertainment (MEE) was hired by the civil rights advocacy group, The Advancement Project, to conduct qualitative, focus group research over a two-month period, with African American and Caucasian parents and African American, Latino and Caucasian teachers for the Advancement Project's *Ending the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Project*. Fourteen focus groups were conducted in Philadelphia, PA; Jefferson County, CO; Jackson, MS; Houston, TX; and Miami, FL. The overall purpose of the research was to identify messages and strategies that can be used to motivate parents and teachers to advocate for changes in school disciplinary policies. The findings from this research were used to inform The Advancement Project and its community partners as they prepared a strategic communications plan to launch local advocacy campaigns designed to bolster existing efforts related to the *Ending the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Project*.

The film will be followed by a moderated discussion and workshop with Dr. Joseph Jones, Founding Director of the Social Justice Initiative at Philander Smith College, and Ivan Juzang, Founder and President of MEE.

Saturday, September 20, 6:00 p.m. – Little Rock Central High School (1500 S. Park Street)

A Night with Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick
The '50s: Eisenhower, The Bomb & The Third World

(Director: Oliver Stone; Series Writers: Oliver Stone, Matt Graham, Peter Kuznick) - There is a classified America we were never meant to see. From Academy Award®-winning writer/director Oliver Stone, *The Untold History of the United States* looks back at human events that at the time went under reported, but that crucially shaped America's unique and complex history over the 20th century. This 60 minute episode examines: United States - Soviet relations post-World War II; Communism; nuclear rearmament; the Korean War; governmental policies toward the Third World; and the role played by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, including his orders to send the 101st Airborne to Little Rock, to enforce the *Brown v. Board* decision and prevent interference with court orders of integration.

The film will be followed by a moderated discussion between director Oliver Stone; Professor of History/Director of the Nuclear Studies Institute at American University and film/book co-writer Peter Kuznick; and Little Rock Film Festival executive director Craig Renaud. Dr. Eric Singer, *Untold History's* principal researcher and coordinator of the Untold History Education Project, will also be in attendance.

Sunday, September 21, 1:00 p.m. - Riverdale 10 Movies (2600 Cantrell Road)

Soul Food Junkies

(Director: Byron Hurt) – Inspired by his own family's complex relationship with "soul food" — fried chicken, ribs, macaroni and cheese, peach cobbler, and the whole panoply of down-home foods made with grease, sugar, and love — acclaimed filmmaker Byron Hurt asks whether this diet is nurturing or destroying the African American community. With humor and heart, Hurt questions the effects of "soul food" on the health of not only African Americans, but all who guiltily consume this most comforting of American comfort foods. Food habits and traditions are hard to change, especially when they're passed on from generation to generation and rich with family history and loving memories. Leaving behind the food you grew up with can seem like a rejection of family values and roots. In *Soul Food Junkies*, Byron Hurt (*Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes*) shares his journey from his New Jersey home through the South to learn more about African American soul food and its long-term effects on the community.

The film will be followed by a moderated discussion between Park Ranger Jodi Morris and Solfood Catering chefs Marie Amaya & Maat. Ra Butterfly.

Sunday, September 21, 3:00 p.m. - Riverdale 10 Movies (2600 Cantrell Rd)

Thunder Soul

(Director: Mark Landsman) - *Thunder Soul* follows the extraordinary alumni from Houston's storied Kashmere High School Stage Band, who return home after 35 years to play a tribute concert for the 92-year-old "Prof," their beloved band leader who broke the color barrier and transformed the school's struggling jazz band into a world-class funk powerhouse in the early 1970s.

The film will be preceded and followed by a brief performance by iconic jazz artist and musician Rodney Block.

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Little Rock Film Festival presents The Reel Civil Rights Film Festival

Sunday, September 21, 6:00 p.m. - Riverdale 10 Movies (2600 Cantrell Rd)

Besa: The Promise

(Director: Rachel Goslins) – BESA: The Promise is the never-before-told story of Albania – a small European country which opened its borders to shelter Jewish refugees, even as it endured a brutal Nazi occupation. It's witnessed through the prism of two men joined together in a remarkable and unexpected quest: Norman H. Gershman, a renowned Jewish-American photographer determined to record the bravery and compassion of the Albanians; and Rexhep Hoxha, a Muslim-Albanian toy shop owner who sets out to return three precious books to the last surviving member of the Jewish family his father sheltered sixty years before. When these two men meet, an extraordinary and utterly unexpected personal drama is set in motion – one that bridges generations and religions...uniting fathers and sons...Muslims and Jews.

The film will be followed by a moderated discussion with Skip Rutherford, Dean of the University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service, and film subject Johanna Neumann about her life in Albania during the Holocaust.

Monday, September 22, 6:00 p.m. - Riverdale 10 Movies (2600 Cantrell Rd)

The Cherokee Word for Water

(Director: Charlie Soap) – The Cherokee Word For Water is a feature-length motion picture inspired by the true story of the struggle for, opposition to, and ultimate success of a rural Cherokee community to bring running water to their families by using the traditional concept of “gadugi” – working together to solve a problem. Based on the true story of the Bell Waterline Project, the movie is about a community coming together to improve its life condition. Led by Wilma Mankiller, who went on to become the first woman chief of the Cherokee Nation, and full blood Cherokee organizer Charlie Soap, they join forces and build nearly twenty miles of waterline using a community of volunteers. In the process, they inspire the community to trust each other, and reawaken universal indigenous values of reciprocity and interconnectedness. The successful completion of the waterline sparked a movement of similar self-help projects across the Cherokee nation and in Indian country that continues to this day.

The film will be followed by a moderated discussion with Park Ranger Jodi Morris, Director/Producer Charlie Soap and Kristina Kiehl, Co-Writer and Producer.

Tuesday, September 23, 6:00 p.m. - Riverdale 10 Movies (2600 Cantrell Rd)

The New Black

(Director: Yoruba Richen) – From church pews to the streets to kitchen tables, The New Black follows the African-American community as it grapples with the gay rights issue in light of the recent same-sex marriage movement. The film follows the struggle over marriage equality in the state of Maryland, where the battle for the hearts and minds of black voters — almost a third of the electorate — is fought from the pulpit. Through the stories of activists, families, and clergy on both sides of the debate, the film charts the evolution of this divisive issue within the black community. In February 2012, after much discussion, the Maryland legislature passed a law allowing same-sex marriage. Immediately, opponents of the law geared up to put the issue before the voters through a ballot referendum — a strategy that had defeated same-sex marriage in other states. On one side, supporters of same-sex marriage included a number of black ministers who were challenging homophobia in the black church. Opposing them were other ministers who believed that gay marriage violated religious principles and who disagreed with placing the issue in the context of civil rights. Against this backdrop, the film traces the historical importance of the church to the black community, and explores the personal stories of African-Americans who, although raised in the church, felt unwelcome when they identified themselves as gay.

The film will be followed by a moderated discussion with members of the local LGBT community.

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**Wednesday, September 24, 6:00 p.m. – Mosaic Templars Cultural Center (501 West 9th Street)
Honoring Liberators of a Collective Conscious Community**

In commemoration of the 57th anniversary of integration at Central High School, Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site will honor local educators and social activists including: Dr. Dexter Booth, Dr. Beverly Divers-White, Othello Faison, Ed Hawkins (in memoriam), Nancy Rousseau, and Sammie Nell Irving Tollette.

The keynote will be delivered by Dr. Terrence Roberts, member of the Little Rock Nine; the ceremony will be moderated by Dr. Michael Twyman, director of the UALR Institute on Race and Ethnicity.

**Thursday, September 25, 6:00 p.m. – Mosaic Templars Cultural Center (501 West 9th Street)
*Home of the Brave***

(Director: Paola di Florio) - Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Paola di Florio directs *Home of the Brave*, a documentary about the impact of Viola Liuzzo's murder. A Detroit housewife and mother of five, Liuzzo was a civil rights activist who went to Alabama to help with voter registration in 1965. She was in town during the pivotal march organized by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which ended in violence at the Edmund Pettus Bridge near Selma. While trying to transport the tear-gassed marchers in her car, she was shot by three members of the Ku Klux Klan. Suspects Eugene Thomas, Collie Leroy Wilkins Jr., and William Orville Eaton were found guilty of civil rights violations and later acquitted. The film also explores the FBI investigation in the aftermath of her death, as well as the reaction in the Liuzzo home.

The ceremony will be moderated by Dr. Victor Snyder, former seven-term U.S. Congressman (D-AR, 2nd district).

The film will be followed by remarks from Mary Liuzzo Lilleboe and Sally Liuzzo-Prado, daughters of Viola Liuzzo.

Presenting Sponsor – Little Rock Film Festival

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