



BECK CULTURAL EXCHANGE CENTER (BECK)

African American History & Culture

1927 Dandridge Avenue | Knoxville, Tennessee 37915

Email: BeckStaff@BeckCenter.net | Website: www.BeckCenter.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact: Karen Walker | BeckStaff@BeckCenter.net | 865.524.8461

“In Remembrance of the Day of Emancipation in the state of Tennessee, August 8, 1863, the Beck Cultural Exchange Center, announces its 9th Annual Eighth of August Jubilee events open to the public with events on Sunday August 6 and Tuesday August 8.”

KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE – Beck announces its commemoration events for its 9th Annual Eighth of August Jubilee: **Sunday, August 6 at 7:30am at Freedmen’s Mission Historic Cemetery adjacent to Knoxville College** Beck will host its **Annual Libation Ceremony**, a special tribute to enslaved descendants freed August 8, 1863 with special guest Ned Arter, great-great grandson of Sam Johnson who was emancipated August 8, 1863 and considered the father of Emancipation Day celebrations; **at 4pm Tuesday, August 8** Beck will return downtown to the **Historic Tennessee Theatre** for its premier Red-Carpet ticketed movie event with the premier of **EMMETT TILL: WHITE LIES, BLACK DEATH** by Emmy-winning filmmaker Loki Mulholland featuring Pulitzer-nominated investigative reporter, Jerry Mitchell. The **VIP Reception begins at 4:00 pm, doors open for general admission ticket holders at 5:30pm and programming starts at 6pm**. AARP Tennessee is a Gold Sponsor for this event.

Emmett Till wasn't killed because he whistled. He was killed because he was Black. Emmy-winning filmmaker, Loki Mulholland, and Pulitzer-nominated investigative reporter, Jerry Mitchell, crisscross the country and the Mississippi Delta to uncover the true story of the lynching of Emmett Till and the lies that were buried with him for over fifty years.

An exclusive VIP reception opens at 4:00 pm with a meet & greet of special guests including, Loki Mulholland and Jerry Mitchell along with live entertainment and heavy hors d'oeuvre. Following the reception, doors open to the general public at 5:30pm with a program and film to begin at 6pm. Tickets are \$50 for VIP and \$10 for general admission.

Tickets can be purchased at Beck (Tuesday – Friday 10A – 5PM & Saturday 10A -3P) and can be reserved at [RESERVE TICKETS](#) with no additional fees required or at the Historic Tennessee Theatre ticket office with no additional fees. Tickets can be purchased online at [Ticketmaster](#) **Fees Apply**.

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2023 EIGHTH OF AUGUST JUBILEE EVENTS

SUNDAY AUGUST 6 | 7.3A

ANNUAL LIBATION CEREMONY – TRIBUTE TO THOSE EMANCIPATED IN TENNESSEE

FREEDMEN'S MISSION HISTORIC CEMETERY ADJACENT TO KNOXVILLE COLLEGE

FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

SPECIAL GUESTS INCLUDE: NED ARTER, GREAT-GREAT GRANDSON OF SAM JOHNSON WHO WAS EMANCIPATED AUGUST 8, 1863 AND CONSIDERED THE FATHER OF EMANCIPATION DAY CELEBRATIONS

TUESDAY AUGUST 8 | FILM: EMMETT TILL: WHITE LIES, BLACK DEATH | 4P (VIP RECEPTION) 6P (PROGRAM)

EIGHTH OF AUGUST RED-CARPET

HISTORIC TENNESSEE THEATRE

604 SOUTH GAY STREET

TICKETED EVENT & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: VIP \$50 & GENERAL ADMISSION \$10;

PURCHASE TICKETS: TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED AT BECK (TUESDAY – FRIDAY 10A – 5PM & SATURDAY 10A -3P & YOU CAN [RESERVE TICKETS](#) ONLINE AT BECK WITH NO FEES) OR AT THE HISTORIC TENNESSEE THEATRE WITH NO FEES. TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED ONLINE AT TICKETMASTER (FEES APPLY) [TICKETMASTER](#)

ABOUT EMMETT TILL: WHITE LIES, BLACK DEATH

Emmett Till wasn't killed because he whistled. He was killed because he was Black. Emmy-winning filmmaker, Loki Mulholland, and Pulitzer-nominated investigative reporter, Jerry Mitchell, crisscross the country and the Mississippi Delta to uncover the true story of the lynching of Emmett Till and the lies that were buried with him for over fifty years.

ABOUT LOKI MULHOLLAND

Loki Mulholland is an Emmy-winning filmmaker, author, activist and son of civil rights icon, Joan Trumpauer Mulholland. Loki's work has received over 40 Telly Awards and his films on race and social justice issues have won 20 Best Documentary awards. His first book, "She Stood For Freedom" was nominated for the 2017 Amelia Bloomer Award. His film, "The Uncomfortable Truth" has been viewed over half-a-million times on Amazon. Loki is a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated and speaks all over the country on issues of race and social justice. Loki is the founder and Executive Director of the Joan Trumpauer Mulholland Foundation which was created to end racism through education.

ABOUT JERRY MITCHELL

He has been called "a loose cannon," "a pain in the ass" and a "white traitor." Whatever he's been called, Jerry Mitchell has never given up in his quest of seeking justice.

Since 1989, the investigative reporter in Jackson, Mississippi, has unearthed documents, cajoled suspects and witnesses, and quietly pursued evidence in the nation's notorious killings

from the civil rights era. His memoir for Simon & Schuster, *Race Against Time*, tells the story of his pursuit of unsolved murder cases from the Civil Rights Era, leading to convictions in some of the nation's most notorious murders.

His work helped put four Klansmen behind bars: Byron De La Beckwith for the 1963 assassination of NAACP leader Medgar Evers; Imperial Wizard Sam Bowers, for ordering the fatal firebombing of NAACP leader Vernon Dahmer in 1966; Bobby Cherry, for the 1963 bombing of a Birmingham church that killed four girls; and Edgar Ray Killen, for helping organize the 1964 killings of civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner (popularized by the fictional movie about that case, *Mississippi Burning*).

Oprah magazine praised *Race Against Time* for capturing these stories as well as the current political moment: "Nail-bitingly exciting ... Readers can expect an electric feeling on every page ... as his remarkable shoe-leather effort finally brings the justice Martin Luther King Jr. dreamed of."

[Read Full Bio>>](#)

ABOUT THE EIGHTH OF AUGUST

History records that on January 1, 1863 the Emancipation Proclamation declared that all those enslaved in the United States were henceforth free. Notwithstanding, Tennessee Military Governor and future president, Andrew Johnson, freed his personal enslaved on August 8, 1863. This date became known as Emancipation Day. Rather than being defeated by the scourge of slavery, this small group of people promoted their Freedom Day with annual celebrations, dating back to as early as 1871. As a result, for over 150-years people across our region have celebrated the Eighth of August as Emancipation Day.

In 1937, the Knoxville Flashlight-Herald, an African American weekly, sponsored the "Bronze Mayor Contest" in an effort to provide the local African American community "elected" leadership. The poll favored Dr. James H. Presnell and he became the "Bronze Mayor" and the "official" spokesman for Knoxville's African American population. July 22, 1939, Mayor Presnell signed a proclamation urging all employers in the City to release as many colored citizens as is practicable, in order that they may participate in the activities and the celebration on Tuesday, August 8, 1939 in Chilhowee Park.

During this period of legal segregation in Knoxville, Chilhowee Park was only open to African Americans one day a year, August 8, and this continued until 1948.

The Beck Cultural Exchange Center hosted its First Annual Eighth of August Jubilee, August 8, 2015 in Chilhowee Park. Since that time, Beck has continued to host annual events during the week of August 8 to commemorate Emancipation in the State of Tennessee.

[READ MORE>>](#)

ABOUT BECK

Beck is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that was established in 1975 as a result of Knoxville's urban renewal projects. Black families, schools, churches and businesses were uprooted and displaced by these federal projects. The demolition began in 1959 under the provisions of the

Title I of the Housing Act of 1949 with the purpose entitled, “Slum Clearance and Community Development and Redevelopment.” The federal government provided grants to local public agencies to provide the means to eliminate blight, slums and substandard housing in urban communities throughout the country.

Knoxville, like many cities throughout the country, was grappling with strict segregation, civil rights, and at the same time urban renewal.

There were three urban renewal projects in Knoxville that disproportionately affected the Black community. The first project was the Riverfront-Willow (known to residents as The Bottom), the next was Mountain View and the final project was Morningside. In Knoxville like many cities, Urban Renewal was dubbed Urban Removal. While it certainly destroyed shacks, and flooded neighborhoods, it also demolished stately homes Black businesses and communities. Much of the heritage of the Black community was erased from the map by the time the destruction of urban renewal ended in 1974. Absent of the establishment of Beck, these places and the people may never have existed.

For nearly 50 years, Beck has amassed a rare collection of more than 50,000 artifacts covering more than 230 years of Black history and culture and has remained the storehouse of great antiquity. Among this unique collection are approximately 5,000 documents, photos, materials and audiovisual recordings related to Knoxville’s urban renewal program, all of which help tell the story of the ramifications of urban renewal on the largely African American population it affected.

Beck recognizes that providing access to this rich history and culture will enrich Knoxville’s cultural memory and deepen its residents’ understanding of and connection to the past. Beck understands the importance of presenting a more complete story of the past. Beck seeks to change the perception of Knoxville’s African American history so that it is seen not as something marginal or unconnected, but rather central to the understanding of who we are as a community, as a nation, and as human beings. In so doing, the result will be a transformation that enhances the public reckoning of history and connects it to the present.

ABOUT THE BECK CULTURAL CORRIDOR

Beck is committed to preserving and promoting the history of Knoxville that was destroyed by urban renewal. While the physical reminders of historic buildings and monuments may have been razed, Beck is creating a vibrant cultural corridor of historical markers and monuments to educate the public on what was once here.

The Beck Cultural Corridor is a project that recognizes African American related historical and cultural monuments in public spaces including the first Urban Renewal area known as The Bottom, now the site of the development of the baseball stadium complex. Working with the community and the project developers, Beck is seeking to ensure the preservation of Black history and culture by establishing an innovative, educational and engaging cultural museum as part of the stadium complex, located in the heart of Knoxville’s historic Black neighborhood. Further, Beck is committed to identifying street and building naming opportunities, memorial tributes throughout the complex, historically significant statues, murals, exhibitions, and virtual technology on the site.

ABOUT THE DELANEY MUSEUM AT BECK

The Delaney Museum at Beck is devoted to telling the story of one of the greatest modern painters of the twentieth century, Beauford Delaney. The only remaining ancestral home of the Delaney family will be dedicated to sharing the storyline of our native son Beauford, his younger brother and fellow renowned artist Joseph, and the Delaney family.

The Delaney Museum is an internationally significant historical site, anchored by Beauford Delaney's only remaining ancestral home acquired by his elder brother Samuel Delaney in 1948. The Museum will help restore public memory of life in Knoxville throughout the ages by reframing history through the lens of the Delaney family.

In 2015, Beck acquired the Delaney family home built in 1910 and situated on the adjoining property of the Beck Center. Beck hosted a groundbreaking ceremony Monday, August 30, 2021, announcing the start of construction for the Delaney Museum at Beck, an international museum celebrating the history of the Delaney family.

BECK MISSION

To be the place where African American history and culture are preserved, nurtured, taught, & continued.

JAMES AND ETHEL BECK

Beck is named in honor of James Garfield (1881-1969) and Ethel Benson (1897-1970) Beck. James and Ethel were two of the most influential members of the Black community in Knoxville during the period of the 1920s-1960s and were the last people to live in the Beck mansion. Funds from the Beck Estate were used to establish the Beck Cultural Exchange Center.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHEN IS THE EIGHTH OF AUGUST RED-CARPET EVENT?

The Eighth of August Red-Carpet Event is Tuesday, August 8, 2023 at the Tennessee Theatre in downtown Knoxville.

WHAT TIME IS THE EIGHTH OF AUGUST RED-CARPET EVENT?

The Eighth of August Red-Carpet Event for VIP Ticket holders is at 4pm with live entertainment and heavy hors d'oeuvre with special guests.

The Eighth of August Red-Carpet Event for General Admission Ticket holders begins at 6pm. The doors open at 5:30pm.

WHAT IS THE EIGHTH OF AUGUST RED-CARPET EVENT?

The history of the Eighth of August dates back to August 8, 1863. This date became known as the day of emancipation in the State of Tennessee or Freedom Day.

The Red-Carpet event is an opportunity for the entire community to join Beck in pursuit of Freedom for all through historical reflections and didactic programming.

IS A TICKET REQUIRED FOR THE RED-CARPET EVENT?

Yes. The Red-Carpet event is a ticketed event.

HOW MUCH ARE THE TICKETS FOR THE RED-CARPET EVENT?

The VIP Tickets are \$50 and the General Admission Tickets are \$10.

When you purchase a ticket(s) and/or become a sponsor of this event, you are supporting the work of Beck.

CAN I PURCHASE RED-CARPET TICKETS AT BECK?

Yes. Tickets may be purchased at Beck during operating hours. **No additional fees apply.**

CAN I RESERVE TICKETS ONLINE?

Yes. Beck has an allotment of VIP Tickets (\$50) and General Admission Tickets (\$10) with no additional charges or fees attached. These tickets are not allowed to be sold online. For this reason, guests doing online transactions must first reserve tickets and then payment can be arranged. [Reserve Tickets](#)

HOW DO I PAY FOR MY RESERVED TICKET(S)?

- After you [reserve your tickets](#), a Beck representative will contact you to take payment over the phone or
- Guests may stop by Beck during operating hours and pay with cash, check or charge
- Guests are also welcome to mail a check to Beck

WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE FOR MY RESERVED TICKETS?

- All Reserved Tickets must be paid within 48 hours of [reserving tickets](#) or the reservation order will be cancelled.

HOW DO I GET MY TICKET(S) FOR THE EVENT?

- Guests are welcome to pick up paid tickets from Beck during operating hours.

- All paid tickets remaining after Friday, August 4 will be taken to The Tennessee Theatre will-call and will be available for pick up at the ticket booth at the opening of the event. Photo ID required to pick up paid tickets.

CAN I PURCHASE TICKETS AT BECK?

- Yes. Tickets may be purchased at Beck during operating hours.

CAN I PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE?

- Yes. Guests may purchase tickets and pay online through [TicketMaster](#)
- **Additional fees and charges apply.**

CAN I PURCHASE TICKETS AT THE TENNESSEE THEATRE?

- Yes. Guests can purchase tickets at the Tennessee Theatre Box Office during operating hours.
- Guests can also purchase tickets at the Ticket Booth prior to the show while supplies last.

~ [FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION](#) ~

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Tuesday – Friday 10am-5pm; Saturday 10:am-3pm
CLOSED: Sunday & Monday