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One-Man Play -- "A Killing in Choctaw" -- to Highlight Annual Banquet

Jan-30-2009

Tickets will be on sale through Wednesday, Feb. 4, for the 2009 African-American Heritage Celebration banquet, being held on the campus of Eastern Illinois University.

This year's event, set to take place Friday, Feb. 6, will feature the one-man autobiographical play, "A Killing in Choctaw," presented by Carl Ray. While being questioned by a white man in 1962, in the small town of Butler, Choctaw County, Ala., the then 18-year-old Ray responded by saying "yes" and "no" instead of "yes, sir" and "no, sir," which was the customary response when addressing white people. He was severely beaten for being disrespectful and, an hour later, the man went to Ray's home and shot his father as Ray looked helplessly on.

"A Killing in Choctaw" examines how this incident defined Ray's life, and how he eventually reached the point for forgiveness and healing. The play will be followed with a question-and-answer session by Ray. (See <http://www.carlraye.com/> for more information.)

The banquet will begin with a 5 p.m. social, followed by the dinner at 6 p.m., in the Grand Ballroom of the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union. Tickets, priced at \$15 for adults and \$8 for students, are available at Eastern's Gateway Office (581-6692), Blair Hall, Room 2170. No credit cards accepted.

Additional activities are also scheduled to take place on the EIU campus in commemoration of African-American Heritage Month 2009. Admission to all events is free (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public.

Events scheduled for the week of Feb. 1 through 7 are as follows:

- **"Eating for a Healthy Life and Soul,"** presented by James Painter and Karen Armour, EIU School of Family and Consumer Sciences, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 2, Oakland Room, MLK Jr. Union.
- **"Yes We Can: A Celebration of History in the Making,"** 7 to 9 p.m. Monday, Feb. 2, 7 th Street Underground, MLK Jr. Union (basement, east wing). Folks are invited to come and share their experiences as to where they were and how they felt when they heard that the United States had elected its first African-American president.
- **"Hope and History: The Obama Presidency and the Fate of Racism,"** presented by Dave Roediger, the Kendrick C. Babcock Professor of History at the University of Illinois, 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3, Coleman Hall, Room 1255.
- **"Diversity in America and Its Impact on Education,"** presented by EIU's Office of Faculty Development, noon to 1:30 p.m. Charleston/Mattoon Room, MLK Jr. Union.
- **"China in Africa,"** panel discussion, 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, Coleman Hall, Room 1255.
- **"The Mis-Education of a Black Greek,"** presented by Phi Beta Sigma, 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, Lumpkin Hall, Room 2030.
- **S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Women's Workshop,** facilitated by Rhonda Bowdry, EIU School of Family and Consumer Sciences, noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7, Effingham Room, MLK Jr. Union.
- **Gospel Explosion,** presented by the Unity Gospel Choir, 6 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7, Grand Ballroom, MLK Jr. Union.
- **"Miracle at St. Anna"** (movie), 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7, Buzzard Hall Auditorium.