



BECK CULTURAL EXCHANGE CENTER

1927 Dandridge Ave | Knoxville, TN 37915 | 865.524.8461 | BeckCenter.net

5TH ANNUAL EIGHTH OF AUGUST JUBILEE

Red-Carpet Jubilee

RACISM, JUSTICE & THE RIGHT TO VOTE

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM 1919

1919 KNOXVILLE RACE RIOTS | 1919 KNOXVILLE BRANCH NAACP | 1919 WOMEN VOTE IN KNOXVILLE

... and

Premier Documentary

The Evers: The Family's Story of Medgar Evers

*With Special Guest, Producer Loki Mulholland & presenting
Reena Evers, Daughter of Civil Rights Activist Medgar Evers*

Thursday August 8, 2019

*Historic Tennessee Theatre
604 S Gay Street | Knoxville, TN*

EVENT SCHEDULE

Red-Carpet VIP Reception	4-5.3
Red-Carpet Event Program	6.3
Meet & Greet	

The Beck Cultural Exchange Center hosted its First Annual Eighth of August Jubilee, August 8, 2015. Since that time, Beck has continued to host annual events on August 8 and on the second Saturday in August to commemorate Emancipation in the State of Tennessee. Events include:

- The Annual Libation Ceremony at Freedmen's Mission Historic Cemetery Adjacent to Knoxville College, the graveside of those former slaves emancipated on August 8, 1863
- **The Annual Red-Carpet Jubilee Event**
- Annual Eighth of August Jubilee Festival

2019 EIGHTH OF AUGUST JUBILEE

In remembrance of the history of Emancipation in Tennessee, the Beck Cultural Exchange Center announces its Fifth Annual Eighth of August Jubilee.

The 2019 Eighth of August Red-Carpet Jubilee theme is Racism, Justice & The Right to Vote: The Fight for Freedom 1919. In Knoxville, a century ago, the Knoxville Branch NAACP was formed, the national guard was called in during the race riots in the heat of a red summer, and women went to the polls to vote for the first time. The Red-Carpet Jubilee is a special presentation of history and culture and will also include the screening of "The Evers," by award-winning producer Loki Mulholland. The film is the family's story

of Medgar Evers, Civil Rights Activist and NAACP Field Secretary. Joining Loki Mulholland will be Reena Evers, daughter of Medgar Evers. The special VIP reception will include a private screening of Knoxville's Red Summer: The Riot of 1919 produced by East Tennessee PBS and featuring never seen before footage of Knoxville immediately following the riots.

Thursday, August 8, 2019 at the Historic Tennessee Theatre in Downtown Knoxville, the VIP Reception will begin at 4P followed by general admission at 5.45P with the special event program at 6.30P. VIP Tickets are \$60 and General Admission Tickets are \$15. Each ticket purchased includes a complimentary copy of the recently re-released book "The Heat of a Red Summer" by Robert J. Booker valued at \$15.

ABOUT THE EIGHTH OF AUGUST

Andrew Johnson, Tennessee Military Governor, who would later become the 17th president of the United States, freed his personal slaves in Greeneville, Tennessee on August 8, 1863.

This date, August 8, became known as Emancipation Day. The first recorded celebration of the Eighth of August as Emancipation Day was in Greeneville, Tennessee in 1871. The best explanation of the origins of the celebration can be found in an August 8, 1921 article in the Knoxville Journal and Tribune. *"Today will be observed as a holiday by the negro residents and practically all places of business conducted by negroes will be closed for part of the day at least, according to promoters of the exercises. Local speakers will address the audiences. In most states January 1 is observed as Emancipation Day, but in Tennessee and a few other states, August 8 has been designated as the date for Emancipation Day exercises. This custom originated because negroes owned by Andrew Johnson, at Greeneville, were set free on August 8, and Sam Johnson, one of the former slaves of Andrew Johnson, worked for a long time and was successful in having August 8 set aside for Emancipation Day observed in this section."*

Eventually the Eighth of August was celebrated in at least seven states and 55 communities. It is still celebrated in Tennessee, Kentucky and Missouri. Three of the people freed on the Eighth of August are laid to rest in the Freedmen's Mission Historic Cemetery that is adjacent to Knoxville College.

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.

ABOUT BECK

Beck is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that was established in 1975 as a result of Knoxville's Urban Renewal projects. The Urban Renewal projects began in 1959 under Title I of the Housing Act of 1949. The projects relocated and displaced many black families and businesses. Much of the heritage of the black community was erased from the map. Except for one or two structures in the city and the historic buildings at Knoxville College, edifices that once stood as monuments to the struggles of early leaders no longer exist. Absent of the establishment of Beck, these places and the people may never have existed.

Beck is the only organization in the region dedicated to local and regional African American history and culture. Beck is the storehouse of African American history and culture and is designated by the state as a primary repository of black history and culture in East Tennessee. The House of Representatives of the Ninety-Third General Assembly of the State of Tennessee adopted House Resolution No. 83 on May 11, 1983 recognizing the important role that Beck plays in the research and preservation of the achievements of blacks in Tennessee.

BECK VISION

To be the desired place that people go to learn, discover and experience the rich legacy of African Americans inside a vibrant Cultural Corridor.

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 glamorous and 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.