



**24th Annual  
Down Home  
Family Reunion**

*A Celebration of African American Folklife*

**August 15 - 16, 2014  
Richmond, Virginia**

**Elegba Folklore Society, Inc.**

**Richmond's Cultural Ambassador**

*101 E. Broad St, Richmond, Virginia 23219*

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**OFFICIAL PRESS KIT**

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## Fact Sheet

- WHEN** **Friday, August 15 • 6 - 10 pm**, \$15 for One, \$25 for Two, Under 12 Free  
**Saturday, August 16 • 4 - 11 pm**, Free.
- WHERE** **DoubleTree Hotel**, 301 West Franklin Street  
**Abner Clay Park**, Belvidere & West Leigh Streets (at I-95 & Exit 76B Interchange)  
Richmond, Virginia.
- WHO** A Family Festival Open to the Public.  
  
**Presented by Elegba Folklore Society, Inc.**  
**Richmond's Cultural Ambassador**  
Sponsored by: City of Richmond, Dominion, Wells Fargo, MetroPCS/T-Mobile, Martin's, Upscale Magazine, Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities, WRIR 97.3FM, Richmond Independent Radio  
Additional Support: Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium - Richmond, Henrico, Hanover and Radio Communications of Virginia
- WHAT** A Celebration of African American Folklife. **Returning for its Twenty-Fourth Year**, this Weekend Event **shares global African cultural influences** with An All-Star Line-Up of World Music and Dance, Entertainment and Material Culture Traditions.
- FEATURES** **Onstage**: Celebrated Balladeers, **Ray, Goodman & Brown**, Afrobeat with Nigeria's **Toby Foyeh & Orchestra Africa**, **Nathan & the Zydeco Chas**, **Proverbs Reggae Band**, African Dance, Music & the Oral Tradition with **Elegba Folklore Society**, plus blues, neo-soul and more.  
  
**Emceed by J. Ron Fleming**, A Master of the Spoken Word.  
**Friday**: Admission includes an Opening Reception and The Heritage Market.  
**Saturday in the Park**: Interactive Folkloric Demonstrations, The Heritage Market, Delicious Down Home Food, Annie Tyler Memorial New Skool Pavilion featuring youthful performers and cultural engagement plus Waverly Crawley Memorial Community Row.

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## 24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion/333

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **ELEGBA FOLKLORE SOCIETY PRESENTS 24th ANNUAL DOWN HOME FAMILY REUNION, A CELEBRATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FOLK LIFE**

**RICHMOND, VA** • The *24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion* explores a full spectrum of music, dance, stories, food, shopping and enrichment in this weekend **Celebration of African American Folklife**. Elegba Folklore Society, Richmond's Cultural Ambassador, presents this two-day heritage festival that takes attendees on a folkloric journey from West Africa, through the African Diaspora and as it occurs in America. Of course, Virginia is at the historic epicenter of the latter movement.

On **Friday, August 15, Opening Night** of the *24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion* will happen, **6:00 - 10:00 p.m.**, at **DoubleTree Hotel, 301 West Franklin Street**. On **Saturday, August 17**, the *24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion's Family Festival* will happen, **4:00 - 11:00 p.m.**, at **Abner Clay Park, Belvidere and West Leigh Streets**, downtown in Historic Jackson Ward. Elegba Folklore Society invites Virginians and visitors to a full weekend of activity designed to link West African and African American cultural traditions and to demonstrate ways these practices have influenced the American South.

The *24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion* is presented by the Elegba Folklore Society, Inc., Richmond's Cultural Ambassador and sponsored by the City of Richmond,

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## **24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion/444**

Dominion, Wells Fargo, Metro PCS/T-Mobile, Martin's, Upscale Magazine, Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities and WRIR 97.3FM, Richmond Independent Radio with partial support from Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium – Richmond, Henrico, Hanover and Radio Communications of Virginia.

The **24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion** occurs on two big days. On Friday the **Opening Night** anchor is **Toby Foyeh & Orchestra Africa**. With a blend of Nigeria's Afrobeat and Highlife with some western forms, this group encourages a multigenerational happy dance. Nigerian, Foyeh, composes the band's music and crafts it on guitar and flute for world-wide live and televised performances plus three CDs, "Here I Come," "Jalolo" and "Lagos Ilu Eko." With his musicians on gangan (talking drum), bata drums and keys plus dancer-singers, **Toby Foyeh & Orchestra Africa** are staples in Nigeria and have appeared in Japan, Canada, around the Caribbean and all over the United States.

Self described as "a free spirit trapped in a close-minded world," songwriter, singer and guitarist **Anhayla** will perform from her repertoire, an infusion of R&B, soul and alternative rock. She has released the mixtape, "If I Was," EP "U.G.L.Y." and single, "Call Me Selfish," among others. Her tours criss-cross the United States where she has shared stages with artists such as Chrissette Michelle, Cedric the Entertainer and George Benson. Elegba Folklore Society welcomes this native Virginian to the **24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion's Opening Night**.

Of course, Elegba Folklore Society's exciting and culturally enriching performance company will appear with a colorful and interactive program of African dance, music and the oral tradition that celebrates the oneness of the African Diaspora. The evening, which opens with a reception, offers something for many when Comedian Grave Digger takes the stage. He has been called "born funny" and the **Opening Night** audience can prepare to be tickled. A cash bar is available throughout the night.

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## 24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion/555

The **VIP Gold Circle** returns this year to Saturday's Family Festival. Festival attendees may obtain special seating at the stage throughout the day, complimentary food and beverages and a private meet and greet with the **24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion's** headliner, **Ray, Goodman & Brown**. Tickets are \$35.00 for one, \$65.00 for two and available at [www.efsinc.org](http://www.efsinc.org) or by calling or visiting Elegba Folklore Society's Cultural Center, 101 E. Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia, 804.644.3900.

**Ray, Goodman & Brown** were formerly known as The Moments. Either way, the names are a synonym for "classic love songs." Original members Harry Ray, Al Goodman and Billy Brown compiled a discography that lists multiple million record sellers like The Moments' "Love On A Two-Way Street," No. 1 on the Billboard R&B chart and No. 3 on the pop chart. After becoming Ray, Goodman and Brown, hit single "Special Lady," topped R&B charts and reached No. 5 on pop charts in 1979, "Look At Me I'm In Love," another No. 1 on the soul charts and No. 39 on the Billboard Hot 100 and "Sexy Mama," No. 3 R&B and No. 17 pop are a few of the songs that are hallmarks. After the deaths of original members Harry Ray and Al Goodman, Billy Brown leads today's group that includes Kevin Owens and Larry "Ice" Winfree.

"This is one of those transitional tight-harmony love-ballad groups from the '60s that paved the way out of the doo-wop era to become one of the leaders of R&B for nearly two decades," Terry Stewart, president and chief executive of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, said of this legendary group.

Appropriately, **Nathan and the Zydeco Cha-Chas** come with their family intact to Saturday's **Family Festival**. Leader, Accordion player and 2005 Louisiana Music Hall of Fame inductee, Nathan Williams with his guitarist brother, Dennis Paul Williams and rub-board cousin Sid "El Sid O" Williams – who has been described as the best there is – appear on the main stage. Attendees, dancing the zydeco two-step, will see why **Nathan and the Zydeco Cha-Chas** was voted the Top Festival Band in the country.

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## 24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion/6

**Proverbs Reggae Band** is a positive, reggae band with strong lyrical content and musical expressions. Based in metro Washington, DC, **Proverbs** maintains the authentic sound of Rasta roots reggae music and delivers socially conscious messages. The band endeavors to promote ancient wisdom through the art of music, thereby spreading the spiritual message of Jah Rastafari through word power and sound.

**Elegba Folklore Society's exciting and culturally enriching performance company** will appear with a colorful and interactive program of African dance, music and the oral tradition that celebrates the oneness of the African Diaspora. The festival's audience will be engaged in relatable stories and traditions no matter their age or background. "In a way that perhaps you will expect or in a way that is totally spontaneous, your energy will blend beautifully with ours, closing the gap between performer and audience. Participants find themselves swept up in the oneness of movement and rhythm that links them with the global significance of this timeless art form," says the group's artistic director, Janine Yvette Bell. The Chakaba masquerade (stilt walker) is featured. **Elegba Folklore Society's performance company** is an annual festival favorite.

**J. Ron Fleming**, Richmond's own noted storyteller and actor, emcees.

People **in the park** will revisit and participate in a variety of cultural traditions. As a highlight of the **24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion** attendees will have the chance to participate in four **Interactive Folkloric Demonstrations**. Attendees can learn the history of **African American Scientists & Inventors** from the curator of the African American Inventors Institute, **Dr. James Wright**, **African Wholistic Health Practices** from **Dr. Kokayi Patterson**, create dolls and doll-influenced figures with **Priyah Bhagat** and learn about **African Spiritual Traditions** from **The African Traditional Spiritual Coalition**.

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## 24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion/777

**Events for children and teens** are focused in the **Annie Tyler Memorial New School Pavilion** and include a showcase and contest of youthful performers, take-home craft making where youth can create family portraits, moon bouncing and a **Culture Kingdom Kids** program teaching how family time is celebrated throughout the African Diaspora. **Richmond Elite Basketball Team** will also conduct a clinic.

A captivating **Heritage Market** will offer an assortment of art, hand-mades and imports for browsing and purchase. Community service providers will inform from the **Waverly Crawley Memorial Community Row**.

**Food** is a familiar way to continue the celebration of shared traditions, and it continues to be a centerpiece for the **Down Home Family Reunion**. This year's selections will include Southern style chicken, corn-fried fish, an assortment of down home vegetables, frozen fruits and mouth-watering desserts that are African-inspired and Southern favorites.

**Down Home Family Reunion** is grateful to offer **parking** for the festival in the lots at Belvidere Medical Center, Ebenezer Baptist Church and Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church. Signage will help direct patrons to these locations.

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## 24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion/888

### 24TH ANNUAL DOWN HOME FAMILY REUNION EVENT SCHEDULE

#### Friday, August 15 – 6:00 - 10:00p.m.

- 6:00 Opening Reception**  
Complimentary Hors D'Oeuvres.  
Cash Bar and Heritage Market all night.
- 6:30 African Dance & Music with Elegba Folklore Society**  
Come into the Village!
- 7:15 Comedian Grave Digger**
- 8:00 Anhayla**  
R&B, Soul, Alternative Rock
- 9:00 Toby Foyeh & Orchestra Africa**  
Nigerian Afrobeat

#### Saturday, August 17 – 4:00 - 11:00p.m.

- 4:00 Vintage R&B Musical Revue**  
Local Entertainers
- 5:30 Nathan & the Zydeco Cha-Chas**  
Zydeco
- 6:45 Proverbs Reggae Band**
- 8:00 African Dance & Music with Elegba Folklore Society**  
Come into the Village!
- 9:30 Ray, Goodman & Brown**  
Billy Brown and Collaborating Vocalists Continue the  
Musical Legacy of the late, great Harry Ray and  
Al Goodman with Billy Brown
- 11:00 Event Closes**

**J. Ron Fleming emcees throughout the day. The Heritage Market, Annie Tyler Memorial New School Pavilion, Waverly Crawley Memorial Community Row and interactive activities in the park are ongoing from 4:00 - 11:00 p.m.**

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## 24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion/999

### **Directions to Doubletree Hotel 301 West Franklin Street 23220**

From the South: Follow I-95 into Richmond. Take exit 74A/I-95/Downtown Expressway. Go a half-mile to Belvidere Street and exit right on ramp. At the first traffic signal, turn right onto Belvidere Street. Go to the third traffic light and turn right on Franklin Street. Go three blocks to the Doubletree Hotel at 301 West Franklin Street on the right.

From the North: Follow I-95 into Richmond. Take the Belvidere Street exit 76B. Turn left off exit onto Leigh Street. Turn right at the first traffic light onto Belvidere Street. Go to the fifth traffic light and turn left onto Franklin Street. Go three blocks; the Doubletree Hotel at 301 W. Franklin Street is on the right.

From the East: Follow I-64 West to Richmond. Take the fifth street exit to Downtown Coliseum. Turn right onto Broad Street at the third traffic light. At the seventh light, turn left onto Belvidere Street. At the second traffic light, turn left onto Franklin Street. Go three blocks to the Doubletree Hotel Richmond.

From the West: Follow I-64 East to Richmond. Take I-95 South to the Belvidere Street exit 76B. Turn left off exit ramp onto Leigh Street. Turn right at the first traffic light onto Belvidere Street. Go to the fifth light and turn left onto Franklin Street. Go three blocks to the Doubletree Hotel at 301 West Franklin Street on the right.

### **Directions to Abner Clay Park West Leigh Street @ Belvidere Street 23220**

From I-95 South & I-64 East: I-64 merges with I-95. Take Belvidere Street, Exit 76B. Follow ramp to Leigh Street, turn left. Cross Belvidere at light. See Belvidere Medical Center on right, fire station and Ebenezer Church on left. Clay Park on right.

From I-95 North: Take Exit 76A, Chamberlayne Avenue. Turn left at light onto Chamberlayne Parkway. Proceed to next light at Bill "Bojangles" Robinson statue (Adams Street) and Leigh Street. Turn right. After about 1/2 block you will see Clay Park on left.

From I-64 West: Take 5th Street exit. Follow 5th Street to Leigh Street. Turn right. Follow Leigh Street several blocks. Watch for Bill Robinson statue on right at Adams Street. After passing the statue, in about 1/2 block you will see Clay Park on left.

### **Parking**

Complimentary parking is available on the streets surrounding the park. Signage will direct attendees to lots at Belvidere Medical Center, Ebenezer Baptist Church and Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church.

### **Accommodations**

The festival's host hotel is the Clarion Hotel, 3207 N. Boulevard 23230. Overnight guests can contact Elegba Folklore Society for details or the hotel at 804.359.9441.

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## 24th Annual Down Home Family Reunion/10

The Elegba Folklore Society is a widely recognized, not-for-profit organization that offers services in cultural arts programming and education. In addition to planning special events, services include organizing exhibitions of art and artifacts, presenting performance and teaching programs in dance theatre and music, and guiding cultural history tours. This group created the **Down Home Family Reunion** and has produced it annually since its inception.

*In its twenty-fourth consecutive year, the **Elegba Folklore Society** is partnering with several companies and cultural institutions to present the **Down Home Family Reunion**, a celebration of African American folklife. The **Down Home Family Reunion** interactively explores the folkloric connections between West Africa and the United States -- the cultural influences that are naturally a part of African American traditions and those that have become a part of Southern life.*

*Elegba -- eh LEHG bah -- is the name given to the Orisa --ohr• REE• shah-- (an intercessor or aspect of nature) who, in the Yoruba --YOUR• ruh• bah tradition of West Africa, is the gatekeeper. He opens the roads to bring clarity out of confusion. Through its various services, the Elegba Folklore Society hopes to provide road-opening experiences for its audiences. Janine Yvette Bell is the society's founder and artistic director.*

***The Elegba Folklore Society is Richmond's Cultural Ambassador.***

***Embrace the spirit!***

For more information, call the Elegba Folklore Society at 804/644-3900, email [story1@efsinc.org](mailto:story1@efsinc.org) or log on to [www.efsinc.org](http://www.efsinc.org). Find us on Facebook or Twitter.

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