

JOIN ELEGBA FOLKLORE SOCIETY

It's the 30th

DOWN HOME FAMILY REUNION

A CELEBRATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FOLKLIFE

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R i c h m o n d , V i r g i n i a

Elegba Folklore Society, Inc.

Richmond's Cultural Ambassador

101 E. Broad St, Richmond, Virginia 23219

804/644-3900 (PH) 644-3919 (F) • story1@efsinc.org

www.efsinc.org

OFFICIAL PRESS KIT

Details: [Elegba Folklore Society](#)
804/644.3900
story1@efsinc.org

Fact Sheet

WHEN Sunday, September 12 • 2 - 7 pm, Free.

WHERE Kanawha Plaza, 701 E Canal St, Richmond, Virginia.

WHO A Family Festival Open to the Public.

Presented by [Elegba Folklore Society, Inc.](#)

Richmond's Cultural Ambassador

In Partnership With: City of Richmond, Richmond Memorial Health Foundation, Dominion Energy, Wells Fargo, Capital Area Health Network and Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities.

Additional Support: CultureWorks' Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium - Richmond, Henrico, Hanover

WHAT A Celebration of African American Folklife. **Returning for its Thirtieth 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: The Legendary Blue Notes Pay Tribute to Harold Melvin**, Music from the African Diaspora, **The Sahel Band**, **Another Level Band** featuring “**James Brown**,” African Dance, Music & the Oral Tradition with **Elegba Folklore Society** and more.

In the Park: Interactive Folkloric Demonstrations, The Juanita Ragland Heritage Market, Delicious Down Home Food, Annie Tyler Children’s Place plus the Waverly Crawley Community Row.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ELEGBA FOLKLORE SOCIETY PRESENTS 30th DOWN HOME FAMILY REUNION, A CELEBRATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FOLK LIFE

RICHMOND, VA • The *30th 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 cultural arts festival that takes attendees on a journey of heritage and folklore from West Africa into the Americas.

On **Sunday, September 12**, the *30th Down Home Family Reunion* will happen, **2:00 - 7:00 p.m.**, downtown at **Kanawha Plaza, 701 E. Canal Street**. After a year off, at a different month and in a different location this year, Elegba Folklore Society invites Virginians and visitors back to this event designed to link West African and African American cultural traditions and to demonstrate ways these practices have influenced the American South.

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The **30th Down Home Family Reunion** is presented by the Elegba Folklore Society, Inc., Richmond's Cultural Ambassador in partnership with the City of Richmond, Richmond Memorial Health Foundation, Dominion Energy, Wells Fargo, Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities and the Capital Area Health Network. Additional support is provided through the CultureWorks Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium - Richmond, Henrico, Hanover.

After a year of health and equity revelations, attendees can **Renew and Refresh** in this Celebration of African American Folklife — a celebration of the soul, a celebration of culture and ongoing presence. The influences of Africans and African Americans on the fabric of America interweaves endless impact that has shaped our world in the sciences, in design, in mathematics, in literature and all forms of the arts, in athletics, in foodways traditions, politics, social change, education and more. America would not recognize itself otherwise. Renewal and refreshment are rites of good life.

The Legendary Blue Notes headline this year's event. The group is all about heritage, keeping the late Harold Melvin's musical legacy alive. Arguably the most covered group in Philly Soul history, **Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes** were 1970's-era icons from the recording house, Philadelphia International. Led by Melvin and famed by lead singer, Teddy Pendergrass, some of their most important recordings include, *If You Don't Know Me By Now* (#1 Billboard R&B, #3 pop), *I Miss You* (#7 R&B, #58 pop), *The Love I Lost* (#1 R&B, #7 pop, 1973) and socially conscious songs such as *Wake Up Everybody* (#1 R&B, #12 pop). *Bad Luck* (#4 R&B, #15 pop) holds the record for its 11 week-run as the number-one hit on the Hot Dance Music/Club Play Chart. Lovingly managed by Mrs. Harold Melvin (Ovelia), **The Legendary Blue Notes** pay tribute to the late, great **Harold Melvin**.

Washington, DC's **The Sahel Band** will appear at the **30th Down Home Family Reunion** and interpret musical genres from various locations throughout the African Diaspora. Performing Zouk, Reggae, Senegalese Mbalax, Samba, Funana, Salsa and more, **Sahel's** music is blended colors of culture on the canvas of African rhythms.

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Created by its multilingual lead vocalist and band leader, Jean-Francis Varre, **The Sahel Band** is inspired by tradition and dedicated to the progress of music that moves the world. Varre is a child of Senegalese and Cape Verdean immigrants. Inspired by heritage, Jean-Francis and **The Sahel Band**, like the ***Down Home Family Reunion, A Celebration of African American Folklife***, are dedicated to building cultural bridges through the music of the African Diaspora.

Festival attendees will get a double dose of soul from **Another Level**. From Motown and soulful R&B, to classic and contemporary hits, **Another Level** delivers an impressive combination of passion and personality to welcome attendees to the ***30th Down Home Family Reunion***. Joining **Another Level's** multi-disciplinary ensemble, a Richmond favorite, **Oscar Fields** gives a dynamic impersonation of soul icon, the King of Soul, **James Brown**. Fields is dedicated to paying musical homage to ancestral artists and filling the hearts of the people who loved them.

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 company performs domestically and internationally. They will engage the festival's audience with 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. **Elegba Folklore Society's performance company** is an annual festival favorite.

People **in the park** will revisit and participate in a variety of cultural traditions. As a highlight of the ***30th Down Home Family Reunion***, attendees will have the chance to participate in three **Interactive Folkloric Demonstrations**. Attendees can try out the dye pot at **Indigo Dying Traditions** with Kibibi Ajanku. They make **Art From the Soul** with artist and educator, **Baba Raa**, and men are invited to **Barbershop Talk** to explore cultural strengths with African American studies professor and documentarian, **Adofo Uhuru Ka-re**.

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Events for children and teens are focused in the **Annie Tyler Children's Place**. Participants can create a craft to take home along the **30th Down Home Family Reunion's** theme, **Refresh and Renew**. Plus, there will be games, contests, the moon bounce and more.

A captivating **Juanita Ragland 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 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 will place signage to lead attendees to convenient parking. While the festival disallows attendees to bring coolers, animals and tents, there will be a drop off and pick up point in front of the park at 8th and Canal for those who need it.

30TH DOWN HOME FAMILY REUNION EVENT SCHEDULE

Sunday, September 12 • 2:00 - 7:00p.m.

- 2:00 The Sahel Band**
Music from the African Diaspora
- 3:00 Another Level featuring "James Brown"**
West African Afrobeat
- 4:30 African Dance & Music with Elegba Folklore Society**
Come into the Village!
- 5:45 The Legendary Blues Notes Pay Tribute to Harold Melvin**
Classic R&B
- 7:00 Event Closes**

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The **Annie Tyler Children's Place, Juanita Ragland Heritage Market, Waverly Crawley Community Row** and **Interactive Folkloric Demonstrations** are ongoing from **2:00 - 7:00 p.m.**

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 (minus 2020) since its inception.

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, the public can call the Elegba Folklore Society at 804/644-3900, email story1@efsinc.org, log on to www.efsinc.org and find Elegba Folklore Society on Facebook or Instagram or Twitter.

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