

"Harrisburg Proud" makes history lesson entertaining

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featuring the first black man on the city's school board, the publisher of the Steelton Press, an abolitionist/entrepreneur and a Civil War correspondent/attorney. But William Howard Day, Peter Blackwell, Jane Chester and T. Morris Chester are not simply characters, they are true swatches in the quilts of Pennsylvania's black history.

"I didn't want to create characters," King said in her cozy office at PSH. "I wanted to see what we had done locally."

In other words, entertainment should be mixed with a little history — an understandable approach for those of us who nodded off through interminable history classes in high school. So King put on her lab coat and went to work.

"The script was meant to celebrate local African-Americans," she said. "We forgot local heroes. I wanted to see what we had done around here."

That would prove to be fairly difficult. After realizing no such work was done in the area before, King was able to secure a grant to begin to study. She assembled a team of researchers who went to work digging up a poorly kept piece of history.

"We were limited to these characters," King explained. "We couldn't find enough information on others."

Working off original documents and primary sources, King and her PenOwl team began to piece together the lives of the four

characters. Their goal was to take James Loewen, author of "Lies My Teacher Told Me," and his advice to heart. He suggested the United States often deliberately interprets history incorrectly. Historians, he says, should go to primary sources for research.

Out of King's four characters, Jane Chester is the only one who left little primary material to work from. Her character had to be extrapolated to some extent. The others were based directly on their own words and deeds.

Once the leg work was done, King went to writing her script and enlisting Frazier, whom she had met while working in theater in New York City. The two began patching history's bare spot — King's script hoping to capture the essence of heritage, Frazier's music trying to capture the nuances of the day.

Most of the audience thought they did exactly that after an abridged Martin Luther King Jr. Day performance at PSH and two full performances at The First Lutheran Church in Carlisle (Feb. 14) and HACC's Rose Lehrman Arts Center (Feb. 16). One woman said she couldn't believe the music was original. Many more, however, said they appreciated the history lesson even more, King included.

"I've learned so much about black history from this project," she said lamenting the lack of black history in area schools now as well as when she went. "When we're taught about American history in schools, we're stuck with this 'America can't be wrong' notion."

She would prefer a balanced record be



Photo courtesy of Dorothy King

Professor/playwright Dorothy King and musician Grenoldo Frazier breathed life into the stories of four African-American leaders in their play "Harrisburg Proud"

taught. Teach much of the current curriculum but strike a balance with what has been ignored, she said; add stories about the underground railroad, slave narratives and other similar minority contributions to the formation of this country.

In essence, let America have its wrongs and learn from them — like your history teachers always told you.

"As long as you're stuck in that 'America can't be wrong' attitude, you're sidestepping history."

And leaving an unavoidable hole in the fabric of our heritage.

WPSH broadcasting, still expecting growth

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Right now the station is working on training new students to work with the equipment, get them familiar with the studio and feel comfortable being live on the air.

WPSH is a big supporter of local bands as well. They love to get stuff from small, upstart groups to help get them heard.

As well as music, the disc jockeys include news and weather into their air shifts while making various announcements for the events of student clubs and organizations.

The station operates Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-5 p.m. with a Lion's Den Lunch Hour Jam from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Nothing seems to be etched in stone for how far this station is willing to go however. They have plans for band interviews and a possible campus music festival.

"We try to keep an open forum for students to voice their opinions and ideas," said Moist. "After all, we are the students' radio station."

Answers to this issue's crossword

	C	A	N		B	O	D	A		S	E	A
D	A	M	E		T	S	A	R		A	N	T
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When Valentine's Day arrives, some guys will never win

J I L L
A
C
K



Dear Jack and Jill,

I purchased some flowers and a card for my girlfriend for Valentine's Day last week and was feeling great because I was being the romantic one this year. Needless to say, she made me look bad again this year when she got us two tick-

ets to Tahiti for spring break. Now I feel terrible. How do I make it up to her? What should I do?
-Belittled boyfriend

Dear Belittled,
Sounds like she's rich -- what's the problem? You obviously are doing something for her, so don't get all into your head and ego about the money thing. Just keep from being a jerk and go with it, baby. -Jill

Dear Belittled,
You sir, are obviously in deep trouble. She will remember these types of things forever. Furthermore, she'll make sure you don't forget it either. Here's your options: 1) get out now before you get in too deep, 2) confront her about it to see how she feels, 3) beg, steal or borrow to cover your tail, or 4) ride the money ship as long as she is willing to spend. Just remember my masculine brother, no matter how many times someone tells you, "It's the thought that counts," counting involves money not thinking. -Jack

Now we're even harder to resist.

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