

Mark Myers · Sandra Myers

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ark and Sandra Myers, founders of *The Black Cowboy: Man or Myth African American Culture Festival*, are native South Carolinians. Descendants of African American farmers and sharecroppers, they bought Rembert acreage formerly sharecropped by Sandra's family. Mark sold his family home in Horatio in order to fulfill his lifelong goal, which was accomplished in 1991 with the purchase of the aforementioned land. The property was named Greenfield Farm, representing the land that they projected as the site where they would build their dream home.

When Mark was twelve years of age and his father died, he was able to pull together his appreciation for strong family ties and spirituality which resulted in his placing a premium on cowboy values. Inculcated in these values is a love for the outdoors, open space, animals, and nature. Mark began to research and recognize that African American cowboys existed, many of whom roamed the land of Texas and cattle farms in the West. This led to thirst for the acquisition and dissemination of more knowledge about cowboys who were descendants of slaves in the United States and sought a better life for themselves.

Even though Mark is employed at the Camden DuPont plant and Sandra at International Paper of Eastover, they place a high premium on taking care of their farm and their animals. With eight horses there is enough work for both of them, including growing hay and providing horse riding lessons. They are committed to offering outreach activities to the community such as helping children with projects in the 4-H Club and providing day retreats for children, adults, and those with disabilities and special needs.

The inspiration for organizing an African American Cowboy Festival emerged from the realization that children in the Greenfield Farm community had never seen a black family with horses. Thus, the festival has come to be a source for all people to understand the life and times of African American cowboys. For seven years Mark and Sandra Myers have provided this festival experience and have provided an opportunity for attendees to research another aspect of the rich culture and history of African American heritage. They have even expanded the breadth of the festival to include an essay writing contest for children, a dinner-dance, and musical expressions such as gospel singing and drumming.

Appealing to South Carolinians and others throughout the Southeast, this couple has even formed a non-profit organization to plan and help to sponsor the festival. Mark and Sandra Myers are the proud parents of three sons - Kelvin, Mark, Jr., and Lance.



SEPTEMBER

2004

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 General Daniel "Chappie" James, Jr. named Commander-in-Chief of North American Air Defense Command in 1975.	2 Frank Robinson, professional baseball player, named MVP of the American League, 1966.	3 Charles Houston, NAACP leader, was born in 1895.	4 Louis Lalimer, inventor and engineer, was born in 1848.
5 George Washington Murray was elected to Congress from South Carolina in 1895.	Labor Day 6 The National Black Convention met in Cleveland in 1848.	7 Integration began in Washington, D.C., and Baltimore, M.D., public schools in 1954.	8 Althea Gibson became the first African-American athlete to win a U.S. national tennis championship in 1957.	9 Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915.	10 Mordecai Johnson, first Black president of Howard University, died in 1976.	11 "Duke" Ellington won Spingarn Medal for his musical achievements in 1959.
12 Jackie Robinson, first Black baseball player in the major leagues, was named National League Rookie of the Year, 1947.	13 Alain L. Locke, philosopher and first Black Rhodes Scholar, was born in 1886.	14 U.S. Cabinet member, Constance Baker Motley was born in 1921.	Rosh Hashanan Begins at Sunset 15 Dr. Mae Jemison first African-American female astronaut in space in 1992.	16 Claude A. Barnett, founder of the Associated Negro Press, was born in 1889.	17 United States Constitution signed in 1787.	18 Booker T. Washington delivered "Atlanta Compromise" address in 1895.
19 Atlanta University was founded in 1865.	20 First episode of "The Cosby Show" aired in 1984.	21 F.W. Leslie, inventor, patented the envelope seal in 1891.	First Day of Autumn 22 Ralph Bunch awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 1950.	23 John Coltrane, innovative and famed jazz musician, was born in 1926.	Yom Kippur begins at Sunset 24 Nine African-American students integrated Little Rock high school in 1957.	25 Barbara W. Hancock became the first African-American woman named a White House fellow, 1974.
26 Bessie Smith, blues singer, died in 1937.	27 "Memphis Blues" published in 1912.	28 "Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World" published in 1929.	29 Hugh Mulzac, first African-American captain of a U.S. merchant ship, launched with the "Booker T. Washington" in 1942.	30 Johnny Mathis, singer, was born in 1935.		