



SANDHILLS SANKOFA NEWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SANDHILLS FAMILY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION



SFHA RECOGNIZES WOMEN'S DAILY CONNECTIONS TO THE LAND



SANKOFA GARDENING AND GLEANING in the North Carolina Sandhills

WOMEN'S CONNECTIONS TO THE LAND

Highlighting Black Women's Connections to Land Paula C. Johnson, Syracuse University Law Professor / Gardener



Everything that we do, or aim to do, is governed by our relationship with the earth—to its inspiration and resources, to our consciousness of its relationship to the cosmos, to our affinity with human and other-than-human life...Our knowledge and affinity with the earth, in all of its richness of life and diversity, stretches from the tiniest particles, waves and cells, to its plant forms and ecosystems, its rivers, mountains, and seas, to the majesty of our solar system, galaxies, and outer edges of the universe. – Carl Anthony, Reflections on the Purposes and Meanings of African

American Environmental History Carl Anthony, an environmental justice activist, described his experience in reading an important book about environmentalism and the need for human beings to better understand themselves in relation to the earth. The book was instrumental to his awareness about these connections; yet, there was a gaping omission: “It didn’t appear to include Black people at all.” “In fact, African Americans’ experiences were not included in any of the environmental literature I could get my hands on about people’s relationship to the land,” he recalled.



In the course of my work as a researcher on Black women’s legal and cultural history in the United States, Africa, and the African diaspora, I, too, have confronted the absence of Black women’s histories, narratives, and images in many areas that are considered significant and worthy of academic study and general societal interest. This pattern of omission is evident, for example, in regard to Black women’s connections to the land.



Ammie Jenkins stands on her family’s property that was purchased in 1882.

The historical circumstances of Black people's coming to the United States are inextricably and ignobly linked to the land. Yet, that Black people have grown crops and gardens for personal subsistence, aesthetic, spiritual, and medicinal purposes during enslavement, Postbellum, and present-day as attests to Black peoples' legacies of struggle and survival, culture and my research which explored Black women's lives in relation to their connections to the land.

For example, Black women acquired knowledge about gardening and farming through cultural traditions and lived experiences, work training programs and educational study in colleges and universities, particularly Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Black women also joined and formed garden clubs and farming cooperatives to share knowledge, resources,



and creative ideas surrounding their gardening and agricultural activities. Black women's diverse individual voices tell a comprehensive story about Black women's connections to land. For this reason, I am conducting interviews with Black women across the United States who are involved in land-related activities. The interviews take place in women's homes and local environments, and will form the individual narrative about their lives and experiences.

A photographic dimension to provide portrayals of Black women and their creative visions in relation to gardening, farming, and related activities.

In July 2008, I came to Spring Lake, North Carolina and met with several members of the Sandhills Family Heritage Association (SFHA). SFHA members Ammie Jenkins and Mavis Fleming vary in age, background and life experience, and who collectively share a deep reverence for the land, gratitude for its bounty, and recognition of their roles as stewards of knowledge and traditions for future generations.

With the mythic Sanfoka Bird of the Akan people of Ghana as their symbol, SFHA epitomizes the meaning of Sankofa, which is the imperative to create strong foundations for future generations of Black people by maintaining cultural linkages between the past and present, and maintaining connections to the land.



The Late Ms. Mavis Fleming grew her own garden and canned fruits and vegetables

VERONICA WATSON, ARMY VETERAN GREEN THUMBS COMMUNITY GARDEN



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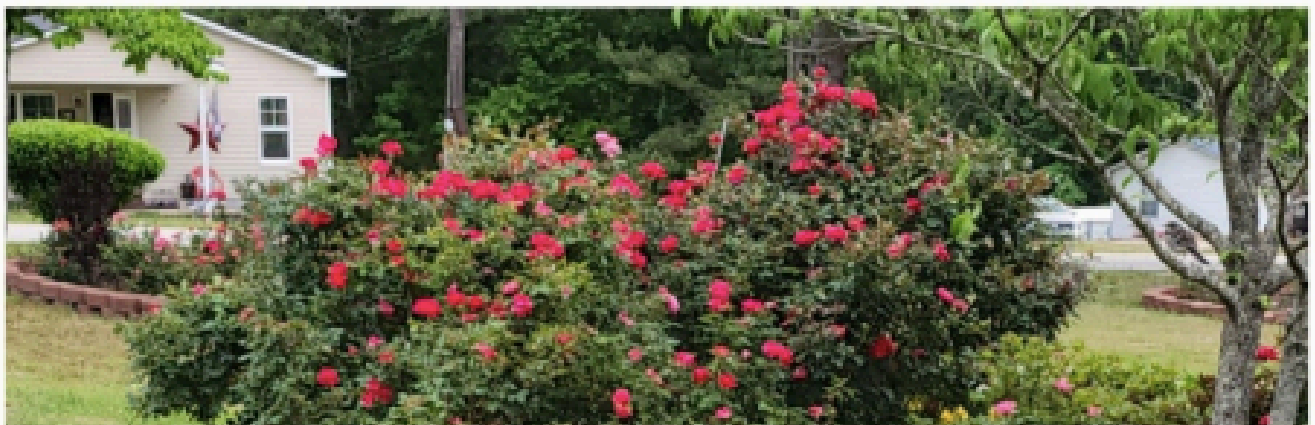
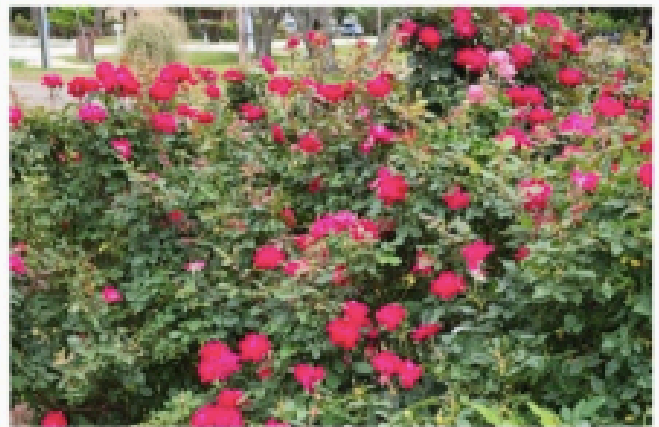
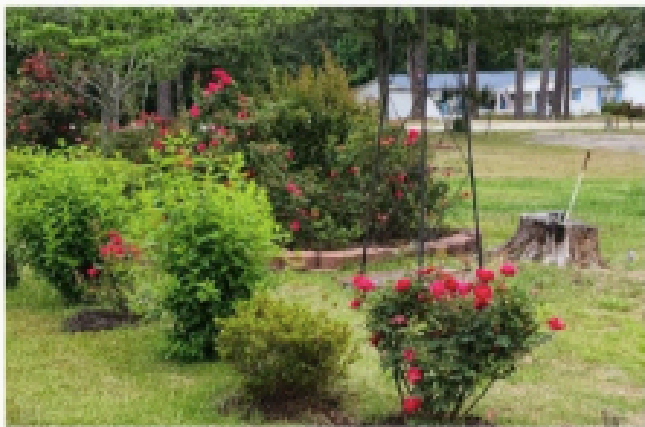
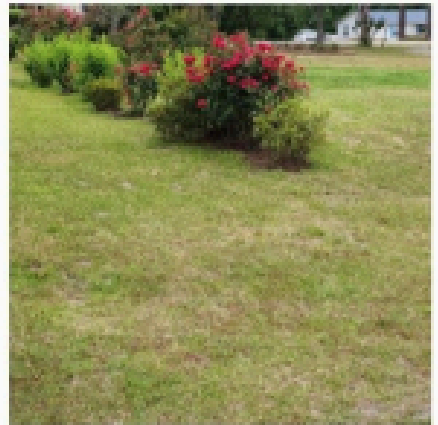
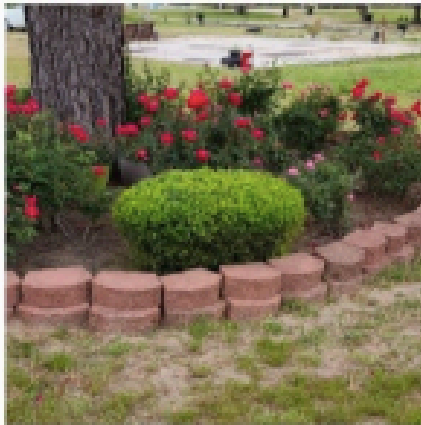
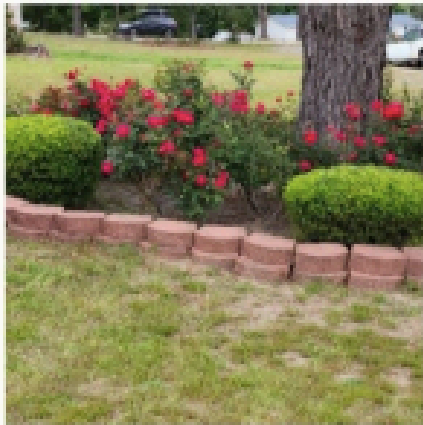
<https://www.ednc.org/rural-church-develops-green-thumb-under-army-veteran-leadership/>



VERONICA WATSON FARMERS MARKET VENDOR AT SFHA FARMERS & HERITAGE MARKET IN SPRING LAKE



WILLIETEEN JACKSON'S PASSION FOR FLOWER GARDENING





TAYLOR'S NATIVE PLANT TRAIL



VANESSA'S GARDEN TOUR



KARLA'S TEACHING HER CHILDREN HOW TO PLANT

AMMIE MCRAE JENKINS GRANDCHILDREN'S STORY GARDEN



LAVENDER GARDEN



**PICKING GRANDMA'S
BLUEBERRIES**



MULLEIN PLANT



BUTTERFLY BUSH

FOLK MEDICINE AND HOME REMEDIES FROM THE SANDHILLS FOREST



Rabbit Tobacco



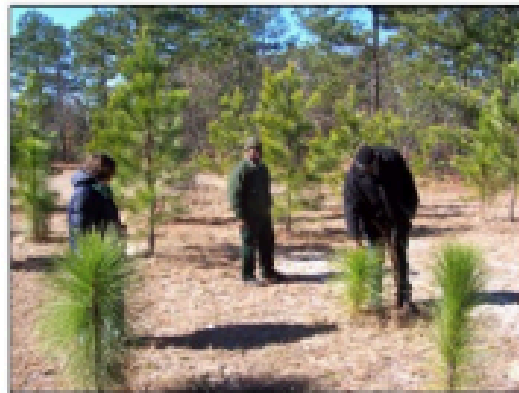
Mint



Yellow Root



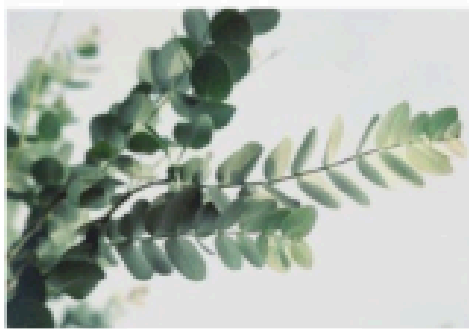
Mullein



Long Leaf Pine Needles



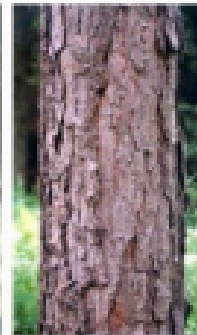
Sour Weed



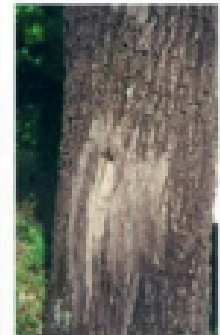
Eucalyptus



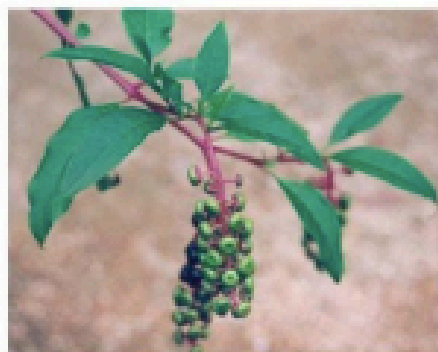
Clay



Pine Bark



Hickory Bark



Poke Salad



Catnip



Cherry Bark

SPOTLIGHT ON LADY OF PURPOSE

REV. MICHELLE ANNETTE LONG

WOMAN OF PURPOSE AND PASSION

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I am Rev. Michelle Annette Long, the joyful and proud wife of Rev. Vincent D. Long, Pastor of Bethel A.M.E. Zion Church in Spring Lake, NC. Together, we have journeyed through life as partners in faith and ministry for twenty-seven wonderful years. We are blessed with two amazing daughters, Natasha and Vinsetta, and delighted to be the grandparents of three lively grandsons—James, Elijah, and Dwight.

My life's mission is to honor and nurture the calling God has placed upon me. As an Ordained Deacon in the A.M.E. Zion Church, I am deeply committed to supporting my husband's ministry while cherishing the roles that come with being a wife, mother, and

homemaker. Whether it's joining my husband in administering Holy Communion to members who are sick or homebound, or tending to our household, I strive to serve with love and purpose. As an honorably discharged Army veteran, I've gained valuable insight into organization and the importance of understanding diverse perspectives. This experience has inspired me to reach beyond my immediate circle, organizing charity events and food drives to support families in need—a reflection of the values instilled in me by my mother, who taught me to prioritize community upliftment.

Mentoring young individuals brings me immense joy, as I guide them to thrive in their personal and spiritual lives. I firmly believe in celebrating their achievements through meaningful gestures, like offering financial gifts for academic excellence, to encourage their growth and success. My commitment to fostering connections extends to hosting workshops, prayer groups, book clubs, and outreach programs that strengthen fellowship and provide support not only to church members but to the broader community.

My endeavors also encompass visiting the sick and elderly, offering compassion to those who may feel isolated or vulnerable. One of my cherished initiatives includes the "Midnighters Book Club," a community-wide program I organized to support widows struggling with sleeplessness. These acts of kindness, inspired by the teachings of Christ, allow me to reflect God's love through service, emphasizing care for the disadvantaged and those in need.

Mentorship remains a cornerstone of my work, as I encourage both seniors and adults to discover their God-given potential, grow in their personal and spiritual journeys, and contribute meaningfully to our community. Whether cooking for the sick, leading women's ministry efforts, or providing financial support to struggling families, my goal is to bring comfort, hope, and connection to those who need it most.

Through workshops and initiatives tailored for senior citizens, I aim to foster a sense of belonging, helping them stay active, engaged, and social. These efforts build stronger bonds among community members, creating spaces where everyone feels valued and cared for. Ultimately, I pray that my witness inspires others to come together in building a compassionate, resilient community grounded in trust, growth, and spiritual strength.

REV MICHELLE LONG'S CONNECTION TO THE LAND

**BY DORIS LUCAS
SFHA HEALTH-WISE COORDINATOR / BETHEL HEALTH &
WELLNESS MINISTRY**

Rev. Michelle Long, First Lady of Bethel AME Zion Church in Spring Lake NC, is having a wonderful time gathering vegetables from the field of a local farmer who provided fresh produce for the SFHA farmers market on Chapel Hill Road in Spring Lake NC.

She loves preserving healthy, fresh produce by gathering during harvest season. She is a great leader with a positive attitude. Michelle loves people and always greet them with a loving, caring smile.

Michelle loves to cook and will serve you some great food. We are proud to have her as our First Lady at Bethel AME Church in Spring Lake.



SPOTLIGHT ON SANDHILLS YOUTH

KAMIRA LUCAS

Outstanding Youth of the Sandhills

Kamira Lucas is a budding artist, and the granddaughter of Sandhills member, Densie Lucas. She is a tenth grader in the Cumberland County School System and attends Bethel A.M.E. Zion Church where she is a member of the outstanding Erskin Lowe Youth Ensemble. Kamira participates in many other activities in her church and the community.

“The Braids”, which is the title of Kamira’s art work, is her colored pen drawing that was on display at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke’s art gallery. She was one of only three students from Cumberland County schools selected to have their art work displayed.

Congratulations to Kamira for her incredible achievements. We are so proud of you and hope you continue to work hard, and produce even more outstanding art.



DORIS LUCAS SFHA BOARD MEMBER / HEALTH EDUCATOR

Your efforts to save lives matter, and we thank you so much. For more information, please visit our website: (www.sandhillsfamilyheritage.org/) and be on the lookout for more updates from our recent American Red Cross Program Leader honorees, Ammie Jenkins and Doris Lucas. Doris is also a member of the Sandhills Sankofa Players who perform historical reenactments in churches and venues around the community for special events, festivals and during Black History month. She is passionate about reading books, consuming various forms of art and staying engaged with news and current events. Doris loves her family, friends, community, and serves as SFHA Health-Wise Program Coordinator. Her greatest joy is spending time with her beloved grandchildren.

COVID CHECK TEAM



RED CROSS PROGRAM LEADER



SANKOFA PLAYER



HEALTH EDUCATOR



SELF CARE WORKSHOP

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2025 @ 10AM

BREATH OF LIFE CLASS

AMMIE MCGRAE JENKINS, FACILITATOR

Thank you, Rev. Michelle Long & Bethel Women's
Health and Wellness Ministry

For Hosting

the **SFHA SELF-CARE CLASS**

I enjoyed the food, fellowship and beautiful gift basket.

THANK YOU!!!
Ammie Jenkins





Upcoming Events

Join us at one of our upcoming events

FARMERS & HERITAGE MARKET

230 Chapel Hill Rd.
Spring Lake, NC 28390
Each Saturday in June, July, August and September
9AM—1PM.
Vendor Spaces Available
Call 910-309-2198.

The Sandhills Farmer's & Heritage Market has become a cultural and economic institution which provides a venue for members of the community to share stories, fellowship, buy and sell fresh local produce, handmade crafts, support young entrepreneurs, meet neighbors and make new friends. SNAP/EBT Customers receive up to \$20 in free food when they make a food purchase.

JUNETEENTH OBSERVANCE

Spring Lake Library
101 Laketree Blvd.
Spring Lake, NC 28390
Saturday, June 28, 2025 @ 2PM

The guest presenters, will be Ms. Ammie McRae Jenkins, Executive Director and members of the Sandhills Family Heritage Association. They will share the rich history and cultural impact of the rural AfricanAmerican communities of Spring Lake/Manchester, Spout Springs/Johnsonville, Overhills, and surrounding areas.



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SFHA IS A SANDHILLS COMMUNITY EDUCATION RESOURCE



Building Communities of HOPE
History and Heritage
Outreach and Education
Preservation of Land
Economic Self-Sufficiency

You are invited to join SFHA to improve quality of life in the under-served Sandhills Communities.

Schedule tours for your group

Sponsor fundraising events

Support our local farmers market

Give donations to support our work

Volunteer to give back to community

Rent space for your special events

Become a member of SFHA

Share your knowledge, wisdom and experience

Sell hand-made home-grown products at our Farmers Market

Contact Information

SFHA

P. O. Box 754

Spring Lake, NC 28390

910-309-2198 or 919-888-0389

Email: sandhillfamily@yahoo.com

Sandhillfamilyheritage.org

<https://www.facebook.com/ncsfha>

THANK YOU FAMILY, FRIENDS, FUNDERS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS!



Arts Council of Fayetteville and Cumberland County
Duke Energy Foundation
The Hillsdale Fund
Marion Stedman Covington Foundation
NC General Assembly
Historic Fayetteville Foundation Fund
Cumberland Community Foundation
The Conservation Fund's Resourceful Communities
The Cannon Foundation
Preservation NC
NC Healing Communities Fund
NC Community Foundation
NC Humanities
BlueCross BlueShield
Mott Philanthropic
Joe & Marilyn Murchison
Carolyn Riddle Armstrong Foundation
PNC Bank
Fidelity Charitable Trust
Mitchell's Publishing

Food Distribution Partners
Local Churches in the Sandhills Area
Second Harvest Food Bank

**Thank You! Community Elders, Local Farmers & Vendors, SFHA Project Partners,
Servant Heart Volunteers, SFHA Sustaining Donors, SFHA Members & Sankofa Youth!**

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