

# NAACP offers musical history lesson in 'Changed My Name'

By Severo Avila  
Staff

Using music, the universal language, as an educational tool, the Rome Floyd County NAACP will present a very special black history lesson Sunday.

Using a cantata written by Linda Twine, members of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People are hoping that their musical will bring to light some of the pivotal points in black history. The musical is called "Changed My Name."

"It's a cantata turned into a verse-speaking and a cap-pella musical," said Director Mary Shropshire. "Linda Twine wrote the concept around Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman."

Shropshire said the musical consists of spirituals written between the 1700s and 1800s and has two crucial segments.

"There's a runaway slave segment as well as an auction," she said. "But there's a lot of rich history within the production."

With a local cast of about 50

## At a Glance:

**Who:** Rome Floyd County NAACP  
**What:** "Changed My Name"  
**When:** Sunday, 4 p.m.  
**Where:** Metropolitan United Methodist Church, 700 Broad St.  
**How much:** Admission is free

people, Shropshire said the musical, called "Changed My Name," is a timeline taking audiences back to the time of the

two famous abolitionists, all told through music. The show features a choir and talented soloists, Shropshire said.

Choirs include the Metropolitan United Methodist Church choir and the Summerhill senior choir. The verse-speaking choir consists of NAACP membership.

"Changed My Name" takes place Sunday at 4 p.m. at Metropolitan United Methodist Church, 700 Broad St. Admission is free.

For additional information, call Mary Shropshire at 706-802-1659.

# R.O.M.E. to host Strauss operetta

By Severo Avila  
Staff

Die Fledermaus. The bat. Mistaken identity, infidelity and lots of laughs come together at the Rome City Auditorium when Rome's Own Music Ensembles and Seven Hills Opera Theatre present Johann Strauss' "Die Fledermaus."

"It translates to 'the bat'," said Sam Baltzer who will be conducting the Chamber Players of the South orchestra during the production. "It's a comic operetta that will be sung in English. It's a special adaptation by Sherri Weiler."

Baltzer said the plot centers around a married couple. The husband has to spend a few days in jail for insulting a police officer so his wife sees her husband's incarceration as a chance to attend a costume party.

"But the husband delays going to jail so he can go to the party as well," Baltzer said. "The husband doesn't recognize his wife in costume and begins flirting with her. It's very funny when he realizes who she is and that it's all a big mix-up."

While Baltzer conducts the full orchestra, Josh Markham will direct the Seven Hills Opera Theatre chorus with featured soloists, Shorter voice faculty members Linda Lister, Regina Zona, Sherri Weiler, Brian Nedvin and Matthew Hoch.

The show also features local talents Ben Perkins, Bill Supon, Terrell Shaw, Wendell Barnes and Dagmar Schmitz-Carlton in supporting roles.

"Die Fledermaus" runs March 8 and 9 beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Rome City Auditorium, 601 Broad Street.

General admission tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students. Reserved seating tickets are \$25.

Tickets are available at Kroger, The Music Room, Rome Area Council for the Arts and at the door on the night of the show.

For additional information, call 706-233-7285.

# Farber brings president jokes back to Rome

By Severo Avila  
Staff

Jerry Farber can't wait to come back to Rome. And no, the comedian isn't just saying that to get more people to come to his show at MB's on Saturday. He'd certainly rather be here than in Danville, Va.

"I got in a fist fight in Danville," he said. "I did some jokes about deer hunting 'cause I cannot tolerate deer hunting, and apparently it's like a religion for some people there. So I don't look forward to going to Danville, Va. But I love coming to Rome."

The seasoned comedian said Rome reminds him of growing up in Greensboro, N.C. Everyone's nice and what you see is what you get. As a performer he said he enjoys interacting with the "authentic" audience he finds in Rome.

And when he comes to MB's Comedy and Event House Saturday he plans to let area residents know just how he feels about deer hunting, the president and a wide range of other potentially hilarious topics.

"It's not a church social, but it isn't dirty either," he said of his routine. "I'm not a fan of the president. I think he's a jerk and I talk about that. But I hope fair-minded people will see the humor in all of it."

But politics isn't the only topic he'll address. Farber said he'll bring back his most popular routines. His exaggerated imitation of a die-hard Georgia fan has earned him quite a reputation as has his impersonations of Elton John, Billy Joel and Van Morrison, complete with a piano performance.

"So those pretty much stay

## At a Glance:

**Who:** Jerry Farber and Ben Beall  
**When:** Saturday, 8 p.m.  
**Where:** MB's Comedy and Event House, Turner McCall Boulevard  
**How much:** \$10; \$2 off with college ID

in my act," said Farber, who credits Mel Brooks, Woody Allen and Richard Prior as his comedic influences. "But I'll improvise and interact with the crowds. That's what gives the show its vitality."

Also on the comedy agenda Saturday is Ben Beall, who has opened for Jeff Foxworthy and has appeared in the Dreamworks production of "Road Trip."

Jerry Farber and Ben Beall appear at MB's Comedy and Event House, located on



Jerry Farber

Turner McCall Boulevard, on Saturday beginning at 8 p.m. Both performances are rated PG.

Tickets are \$10 and are \$2 off with college ID.

For tickets or additional information, call Karen Lewis at 706-235-2200 ext. 203.

# RLT director 'sucker' for the big musicals

From staff reports

This time last year veteran Rome Little Theatre Director Don Rusaw was preparing to stage one of the most popular musical of all time, Andrew Lloyd Webber's, "CATS."

Many theatre goers thought he had absolutely lost his mind to attempt a production of its magnitude on the stage of an all-volunteer, community theater.

The word on the street and around town confirmed that he pulled it off

and he is at it again.

"I guess you could say that I'm a sucker for the big musicals," Rusaw said while preparing for RLT's next production, "Annie Get Your Gun." "The songs are so memorable. Who doesn't know, 'You Can't Get a Man with a Gun,' 'Anything You Can Do,' or 'There's No Business Like Show Business?' And the characters, Buffalo Bill and Annie Oakley, are part of our country's heritage. This show is pure Americana," Rusaw said.

"Annie Get Your Gun" will run for

two weekends at the historic DeSoto Theater, March 23-25 and March 30-April 1, with show times at 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and 2:30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Tickets are \$12 for reserved seating and \$10 for general admission seating. For reservations call 706-295-7171 or visit the RLT Web site at .

RLT President Paul Griffin said of Rusaw, "When he makes up his mind to do a show, we can always count on Don to step up to the plate and take on the big ones."