

# In Black History Month, One-Room School Opens to Offer Lessons

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Washington Post Staff Writer

A 19th-century school that served Prince William County's African American population opens for public tours today in honor of Black History Month.

The Lucasville School, at 10516 Godwin Dr. in the Manassas area, will be open every weekend this month from noon to 4 p.m. The one-room school was the only one in the county solely for African Americans, said Robert Orrison, a historic site manager for the county. A few one-room

schools that served whites remain, but most have been converted into homes. "We opened the school up last February," Orrison said. "It's a great place to learn about segregated schools and how education was done in the 19th and early 20th century."

Built in 1885, the Lucasville School served children in grades one through six until 1926, Orrison said. About 20 to 25 students of different ages would pack into the building each year to learn from a sin-

See TOUR, Page 6

# School Offers Weekend Tours This Month

TOUR, From Page 3

gle instructor. The school was filled with benches, not desks, Orrison said, and blackboards were made of pieces of plywood painted black, unlike at white schools, where students had blackboard slates.

Orrison said the school was named after the Lucasville village, which dissolved around the 1940s. The village sat at Lucasville Road and Godwin Drive and was home to several former slaves.

Although the school still stands on Godwin Drive, it is about a mile-and-a-half away from where it was built. The school was moved to make way for development and crumpled during the process, Orrison said. Pulte Homes and Prince William's Historic Preservation Division, however, saved some pieces and reconstructed it in 2007.

Orrison said that the weekend tours are free but that donations are welcome as the Historic Preservation Division works to maintain the school and nine other historic properties throughout the area. Although the school is not open year-round because of staffing issues, people can call to set up private tours throughout the year.

Also this month, the Historic Preservation Division is hosting the free lecture "The Newby Family and Harper's Ferry 1859." The lecture will begin at 7 p.m. Feb. 26 at the Old Manassas Courthouse, 9248 Lee Ave.

Historian Philip Schwarz will speak, touching on the effects slavery had on African American families, particularly the Newby family, which had connections in the Brentsville and Warrenton areas.

For information on either event, call 703-365-7895. Or to set up future schoolhouse tours, call or e-mail Orrison at [rorrison@pwgouv.org](mailto:rorrison@pwgouv.org).



PHOTOS BY JULIANA NAKASHIMA — THE WASHINGTON POST

The Lucasville School in the Manassas area was the only one-room school in Prince William County solely for African Americans.



The school is rebuilt but includes parts of the original, which fell apart in a move. Among other features, the school's blackboards were made of plywood painted black instead of slate, like those in white schools.

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