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North Sarasota Library hosts character education series for children

The North Sarasota Library, 2801 Newtown Blvd., Sarasota is offering a series of workshops in July designed to help elementary school children develop good character traits.

The workshop will be led by Dr. Lonnetta Marie Taylor-Gaines, educator, dancer, storyteller, motivational speaker and author of “Fia and the Butterfly: Seven Stories for Character Education. As storyteller, Taylor-Gaines delights and captivates audiences of all ages as she tells African and African-American folktales and stories that stress the power and importance of respecting self and others, being mentally sharp, getting an education, and being of service to the world. Taylor-Gaines’ storytelling performances provide lively opportunities for audience involvement and interaction.

“Fia and the Butterfly” tells the story of eleven-year-old Fredericka Inez Anderson, an African-American girl who likes to be called Fia. It is the height of the Civil Rights Movement, and Fia is very upset because of the murder — on Sept. 15, 1963 — of four little girls in a church in Birmingham, Alabama. Fia is also worried because her parents have moved to a new city and she has to adjust to a new school and meet new friends.

“Teaching a child to be proud of who they are and helping them to understand that they can reach any goal in life is one of the most valuable lessons we can instill,” said Yvette Robison, manager, North Sarasota Library. “We are honored that Dr. Gaines will present the first session of this valuable series of workshops to the children of Sarasota County.”

Dr. Gaines began her career as an English teacher in New Haven, Connecticut and continued to work in the field of education by co-founding and directing the Learning House, a community pre-school in Atlanta, Georgia, directing the New Approach Method Child Development Center in Trenton, New Jersey, serving as Director of Curriculum of the Patterson School, a private elementary school in Harlem.

Dr. Gaines was a member of the Graduate School faculty at the renowned Bank Street College of Education in New York City where she chaired the Educational Leadership Department, directed the Early Childhood Leadership Program, taught courses in Educational Administration, Curriculum Development, Child Study, and Creative Movement in the Curriculum, and served as Curriculum Coordinator of the Center for Folk Arts in Education, a Bank Street City Lore collaboration.

For more information, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask about the Good Character Traits Workshops at North Sarasota Library.

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