



## WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM TO KICK-OFF BLACK HISTORY MONTH WITH LITERARY TEA

*Four African American authors to headline the popular event on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

**Tarrytown, NY (December 7, 2007)** – The Westchester Library System (WLS) will hold its 10<sup>th</sup> annual African American Writers & Readers Literary Tea on **Monday, January 21, 2008** (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day) from **3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.** at Abigail Kirsch's Tappan Hill in Tarrytown, New York. The Literary Tea, which kicks off a month-long celebration of African American history, literature, and culture throughout the County's 38 public libraries, is co-sponsored by the Westchester County Chapter of The Links, Inc. Authors were announced at a recent kick-off breakfast held at WLS headquarters.

"Our Literary Tea is a wonderful tradition now in its tenth year," said Siobhan A. Reardon, WLS Director. "We feel that it's important to recognize the significant literary contributions made in the African American community. The enthusiasm of the authors, sponsors, and committee members, coupled with the importance of the topic, makes this a truly special event in Westchester."

This year's event will be hosted by Elise Finch, Meteorologist for WCBS-TV and chaired by Barbara Edwards, Chair of the Westchester County African American Advisory Board. Ticket prices for the 10<sup>th</sup> annual African American Writers & Readers Literary Tea are \$75 for general admission and \$100 for Tea Friend, which includes an author reception and a contribution for African American library materials and programs. To purchase tickets, please call (914) 231-3226 or visit [www.westchesterlibraries.org](http://www.westchesterlibraries.org).

Authors to be honored at the 10<sup>th</sup> annual WLS African American Writers & Readers Literary Tea include:

Veteran newsman **Dominic Carter** has been described as the best political reporter working in New York television today. A fixture at NY1 since the news channel launched in 1992, Carter has released a book on his life, titled *No Momma's Boy* in which he chronicles his triumphant struggle to overcome his mother's mental illness while growing up in a Bronx Housing Project. As the host of NY1's nightly political show, "Inside City Hall," Carter has handled some of the station's most challenging assignments and has interviewed every major political player in the state, as well as many national and international leaders. Carter received a B.A. in journalism from the State University of New York at Cortland, and then attended graduate school at Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications before starting his career in radio.

Somewhere between her first and second kids, and coming to grips with her imperfections, media personality **Rene Syler** realized her first novel, *Good Enough*, was perfect enough for her. During her distinguished media career, including as an anchor for 4 years on CBS' *The Early Show*, Syler has always shown the courage to stand behind her convictions. It was there she spoke to some well-known mothers and fathers including First Lady Laura Bush, Senator John Mc Cain as well as a host of celebrities. As a current ambassador for the Susan G. Komen for the Cure and frequent guest on NBC's *Today Show*, Syler, now the entrepreneur, is focused on creating a leading community for moms who understand the challenges of motherhood, and want to share information, stories, and resources with one another. Through her first book *Good Enough Mother*, and soon, her second book, Syler is building a platform in which mothers will find other women just like themselves. Syler is a lifetime member of the National Association of Black Journalists and a Gracie Allen award winner in the category of National Best anchor for her series on breast cancer. She lives in upstate New York with her husband and children.

In *Black Pain*, top African-American publicist and former clinical social worker **Terrie Williams** uses her therapeutic training and unparalleled access to take us into the heart of African American suffering — the heart of Black Pain. Forty years after the book *Black Rage* explained to all of America what was boiling beneath the surface of brown skins, many African-Americans have turned that rage inward. Black America is suffering from depression, and Williams is the first person to name that pain in a way that lets us see its on-the-ground face. A social worker by training, Williams launched the public relations firm, The Terrie Williams Agency, in 1988. The company quickly became one of the most successful PR firms in America, representing top names in entertainment, sports, business

and politics such as Miles Davis, Johnnie Cochran, Stephen King, Eddie Murphy, HBO, and Time Warner. After surviving a profound depression, Williams chronicled her struggle to regain her health in *Essence* magazine and the feedback was staggering. She continues her work with the agency and she also created the Stay Strong Foundation, which reaches out to anyone of any age suffering from mental illness. Williams has a BA from Brandeis University and a master's degree in social work from Columbia University. She has one grown son and lives in New York City.

**Beverly Jenkins** is an African-American historical romance writer. She has written sixteen books to date and has received numerous awards for her works, including: the Detroit Free Press Book of the Year, three Waldenbooks Best Sellers Awards; two Career Achievement Awards from *Romantic Times Magazine*; a Golden Pen Award from the Black Writer's Guild, and in 1999, Jenkins was voted one of the Top Fifty Favorite African-American writers of the 20th Century by AABLC, the nation's largest online African-American book club. Jenkins and her family live in southeastern Michigan. Born in Detroit, she graduated from Cass Technical High School and attended Michigan State University where she majored in Journalism and English Literature.

The Westchester Library System is located at 540 White Plains Road, Suite 200, Tarrytown, NY 10591. For a complete list of programs and events throughout the Westchester Library System, visit the WLS website at [www.westchesterlibraries.org](http://www.westchesterlibraries.org).

**Photo Caption:**



**Left to right:** Barbara L. Edwards, Chair, W.C. African American Advisory Board and Literary Tea Honorary Chair; JoAnn Dudley, Literary Tea Co-Chair; Siobhan A. Reardon, Director, Westchester Library System; and Elise Finch, Meteorologist, WCBS-TV

**Note:** *Electronic author photos available upon request*

**About the Westchester Library System**

The Westchester Library System (WLS) includes 38 member public libraries located throughout the County and is one of New York State's 23 public library systems. WLS and its member libraries have a total collection of 5.6 million items, including 4 million books, as well as audio recordings, videocassettes, DVDs, print serials, and other materials. Support from WLS helps expand and enhance the services and resources of local member libraries, enabling them to better serve the public. WLS also ensures that all county residents have excellent library service on-site and on-line. A sponsor of year-round events, WLS helps coordinate featured author events, the annual Book and Author Luncheon, and seasonal reading initiatives. The WLS Adult and Outreach Services Department offers improved access to library services for all residents, training and development of library personnel, services to disadvantaged youth, and the fee-based WEBS Career and Educational Counseling service. WLS celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2008.

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