

# King's Legacy Lives on in E. Winston Hearts and Minds

By MARKER MOSS  
Staff Writer

The arrival of the birthday celebration of the man who made great strides to lead America out of the grasp of racial injustice often challenges one to think about the impact he has had on one's life.

It's safe to say that the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who would have been 64 on Jan. 15, affected the laws and the hearts and minds of all Americans. But just how did the life of the civil rights leader impact on your life?

attended the March on Washington. It was an experience that will last me a lifetime," he said.

Jones, 19 at the time, said he boarded a bus in Raleigh that summer for the long ride to Washington. We could hear about other cities who were having problems," he said. "I wanted to be a part of change."

Jones said flies and gnats and stuffed toilets and the thick throng spread out before the Washington Monument made for some "unbearable conditions," but when King



Ronald Davis

**"If he (King) hadn't started the movement nobody would have."**  
— Clarence Gaines



Clarence "Bighouse" Gaines

That was the question recently put to several randomly selected African Americans. Their comments often centered around the Jim Crow past or the disturbing present. Generally, however, they put King's life and work on that pedestal reserved for few other African Americans.

Clarence "Bighouse" Gaines, the retired Winston-Salem State basketball coach, was recently caught shooting the breeze at the Golden Egg restaurant on New Walkertown Road. Gulping a soft drink and surrounded by a half-dozen locals, Gaines recalled the time when it was difficult to buy insurance.

"I remember the time a black teacher couldn't buy an insurance policy over \$10,000," he said, as others nodded in agreement.

Gaines reeled off a number of black businesses whose main clientele were African Americans. They were businesses involved in insurance and banking, and the only ones African Americans could turn to.

Blacks were forced to use each other," he said.

Gaines said he never met King, but he happened to be passing Washington, D. C., during the weekend of the March on Washington in 1963. He was in summer school in New York City and was on his way to North Carolina when he decided to stop and attend the march.

"I never saw so many black folks in trucks and buses," he said, evoking laughter.

"If he (King) hadn't started the movement, nobody would have," he said. He talked, admiringly, of the bravery of King and those in the movement's leadership.

"We made a lot of progress during his era," he said. But, "so few of



Al Jones

us have actually overcome."

The leadership vacuum created by King's assassination has never been filled, he said.

Al Jones, an assistant supervisor at the Carl H. Russell Recreation Center on Carver School Road, also

spoke nobody moved an inch." He said there have been changes and opportunities have opened up. Jones said he remains, however, extremely distrustful of the "white man" who is only going to let you go so high.

He said he was recently talking to his teen-age son about King, whose own interest has been aroused because of what he has



Willie Jones

learned in school.

Willie Jones, owner of Piedmont Triad Automotive at the intersection of Carver School and New Walkertown Road, could not help but tie together King's legacy and Jones' recent troubles with vandalism. Teen-agers stole and damaged several of his cars two weeks ago, causing his business over \$10,000 in property damage.

"King would turn over in his grave if he saw what was going on out here today," he said.

He said that if King were alive today, he would be out preaching about crime and AIDS and other societal ills, and maybe things would be better. He said that if King had not been such an effective civil-rights leader, equality may have been "delayed by 20 years."

He attributes his success as the owner of an automobile dealership to the legislation that King's leadership helped enact.

"Back in the 60s, it was unheard of for a black man to own a (car) lot," he said.

Ronald Davis, a barber at Professional Barber & Styling Salon next to the Golden Egg, said that King's death came on his birthday —

April 4 — and it is that paradox that has served as an inspiration for him.

"It inspired me to become the man I am today," he said.

Davis, 41, said that he has been in and out of prison — "I was trouble," he admits — and it was looking to such leaders as King that helped to turn his life around.

"I still see prejudice," he said. He recounted the story of the city police recently coming to his job and arresting him and taking him to jail. He said he was a "victim of mistaken identity."

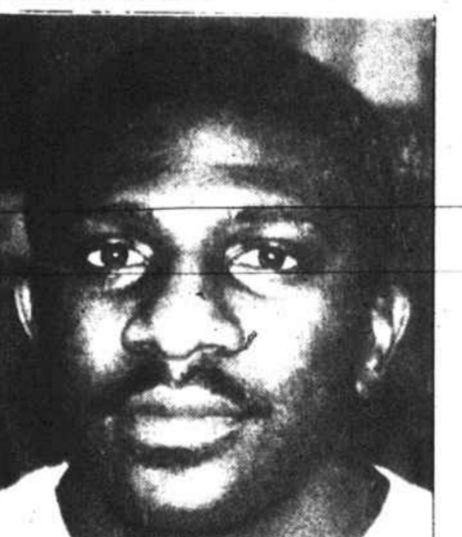
No matter how professional you get, you're not excluded from being discriminated against, he said.

To Louis Lowery, supervisor of the Russell Center, King's powerful voice and his message have not been diluted by time.

"I still listen to him," he said, about the occasional broadcasts of King's sermons. "Every time I hear his voice it automatically grabs my attention."

Lowery said that King preached a lot about "principles" and they are ones that he tries to live by. Among the things Lowery said has learned from King is that "justice is not automatically given to you — you have to fight for it. And, that you have to treat people the way you want to be treated," he said.

"King did a lot for black self-esteem," he said.



Louis Lowery

Lowery said he and his daughter discuss King and what she has learned in black history at school.

"I want her to be aware of who she is and proud of what he (King) was all about," he said.

## Summit School Salutes the Accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for All Americans.



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-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.-

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### WSTA Notice



The Winston-Salem Transit Authority will be closed, January 17th in commemoration of Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

Regular service will resume on Tuesday January 18th.

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