

KINARD

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Pictured above: Executive Producer, The Lincoln Awards, Cappy McGarr, Chairman, The Lincoln Awards Tommy Sowers, award recipient Dick Young, Chairman, Friars Foundation Gift of Laughter for Wounded Warriors Program Leonard Wilf, award recipients Jackie Garrick, Kayla Williams, Gary Profit, Comedian Jerry Lewis, recipients Justin Constantine, Ken Fisher, Jake Wood, Dean Kamen, Britnee Kinard, Executive Director, Friars Club Michael Gyure and William McNulty attend The Lincoln Awards.

-- Photo courtesy of Friars Club/David Alan Kogut

name was announced as the recipient of the Caregiver Award, there was polite applause from the audience.

However, when she concluded, she did so to a standing ovation – the only one of the evening that came as a recipient left the stage.

Kinard accepted her award with humility and gratitude and spoke from the heart in her down-home, southern way. She spoke of her shock at receiving news of the award. “(Tommy Sowers) told me he was calling from Washington, and I thought to myself, ‘oh goodness, I have done ticked somebody off!’,” she said as the audience laughed. “But, he went on to explain and I was very excited and kind of dumbfounded at the process. I really and truly almost hung up on him because I thought it was a prank,” Kinard continued.

“I had been in about an 18-month battle with the VA regarding the approval of mobility service animals,” Kinard explained. “I’m glad to say that I guess I won that argument or they got tired of me -- I’m not sure. But, Gunner is officially the first mobility animal approved in the Southeast Coastal

region for South Carolina and Georgia,” she concluded with more applause.

Kinard talked about the difficulties caregivers face. “What we do is a 24/7 job. I do have a disabled husband and we also have an autistic four-year-old son. We have a two-year-old son, and a furry son (referring to service dog, Gunner), so I have my hands full,” she explained.

“It’s not every day that someone pats us (caregivers) on the back and says, ‘thank you!’ So, I’m going to try not to get emotional,” she said while fighting back tears. “But, taking care of my husband and training others to do the same is a fulltime job. It is exhausting but so worth the payoff. I hope this recognition lets other caregivers know that they are not alone.”

Vice President Joe Biden’s wife, Dr. Jill Biden, welcomed everyone to the concert following the award dinner. There were approximately 1,900 people in attendance, filling nearly every seat at the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts - most seats were donated to military personnel and their families. The concert portion of the event was filmed

for broadcast, and will be televised on PBS around Memorial Day.

Performers included singers Nick Jonas and Gavin DeGraw. The concert also included comedy performances by Whitney Cummings and Rob Riggle. J.R. Martinez, Harvey Keitel, Miss America Kira Kazantsev, Brian Williams and Jerry Lewis were also among those who participated in the recognition concert.

Actor Jon Bernthal introduced Kinard as the recipient of the Caregiver Award. In his opening remarks he quoted former First Lady Rosalynn Carter: “There are only four kinds of people in this world. Those who have been caregivers, those who are caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers.”

Actor Alec Baldwin, recorded the narration for the video clips that introduced each of the Lincoln Award recipients.

Kinard’s biographical video concluded with the following statement: “from caregiver for one to caregiver to many.”

Ever working to further veterans’ interests, Kinard took advantage of her time in D.C. to meet with the offices of Representative Rick Allen and Senator Johnny Isakson, recently named Chair of the VA Oversight Committee, to discuss ongoing issues with the VA.

Kinard will continue her fight for quality care for all veterans who rely on services from the VA.

MLK events scheduled for Saturday, parade will be Monday, January 19

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The Evans County Community Center will be buzzing with activity this Saturday, January 17, from 10 a.m. until midnight. A full day of MLK events has been organized by the MLK Observance Committee leading up to the annual breakfast and parade on Monday, January 19.

The annual college fair will kick off Saturday’s activities at 10 a.m. Several HBCUs (historically black colleges and universities) are represented at the college fair, says Maurice Burney, observance committee co-chair. Students come from surrounding counties to participate in the event - school counselors receive notification of the fair.

A FAFSA representative will also be on site during the college fair. “We are asking parents to come to the fair so they can get that information,” said Doris Tomblin, a founding member of the MLK Observance Committee.

The youth olympic games with field events organized by Coach Ronald Michael will also begin at 10 a.m. and coincide with the college fair. Just after lunch, at 1 p.m., the youth explosion event will commence.

Every year students participate in a contest centered around the current MLK celebration theme. The local theme for 2015 is: “Capturing King’s Dream of Non-Violence: Unify and Stop the Violence.”

Students in first and second grade enter a coloring contest while third and fourth graders create posters. Middle school and high school students give oratoricals centered on the theme - middle school essays must be 500

words while high school submissions have a 600 word limit.

Soul Train Night, a new dance and social event this year for young adults, will be held from 7 p.m. until midnight, closing out the day’s activities at ECCC. Admission for the social is \$8 and attendees may wear ‘70s attire. Refreshments will be served.

The annual gospel fest will again be held on Sunday, January 18, at 3 p.m. at Thomas Grove AME Church in Claxton.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebrations on Monday, January 19, will get underway once again with a breakfast and program held at the CHS cafeteria beginning at 9 a.m. NAACP chapter 5181 organizes the breakfast. Tickets are \$10.

Following the breakfast, the MLK festival will begin setting up at the ECCC at 10 a.m. It will be open through the day and after the parade as well. “We have food and crafts, merchandise. Different vendors come,” said Ramanda Brown, observance committee chair. This year’s festival will also include live entertainment.

The MLK parade will again commence from Bacon Ford Park, turn on Hwy 301 to James St., then to Church St. and end at the ECCC. Lineup will begin at 1:30 p.m. with the parade heading out at 3 p.m. Organizers are projecting for 120 parade units.

Ryan Tomblin has been selected as this year’s parade grand marshal and Ruby Dell Baker will serve as parade marshal.

Tomblin was born, raised and educated in Evans County. He is the son of retired teacher and founding member of the MLK observance committee, Doris Tomblin, and Ron Tomblin, a

history teacher in Gwinnett County. Tomblin graduated from CHS in 1995 and received a Bachelor of Science degree in history from Savannah State University in 2001. He has taught and coached in three counties - Evans, Candler, and Dougherty - and currently teaches U.S. Government at Monroe High School in Albany, Ga.

Tomblin has been involved with local MLK celebrations since they began 30 years ago, even before it was observed as a holiday by the school system. “I became involved by creating posters for the contest, participating in oral readings and youth choirs that was a part of a memorial program held after school in the evening at the Veterans Center,” he said.

Baker, parade marshal, is a lifetime member of the NAACP Branch in Claxton and was recognized in 2012 as an honorary member. She served as secretary of the Charlton Grove Missionary Baptist Church for 35 years, on the finance committee for Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Association for 20 years and has been a dedicated member of the Jolly Twelve Social Club for 57 years.

Baker has worked tirelessly in community service for Evans County. She served as a poll worker for over 28 years, under the Evans County Election Board of the state of Georgia and as a team leader for over 15 years with the cancer society. She has volunteered many hours with American Red Cross and the Mobile Blood drive unit.

More information about the coming MLK events can also be found on the observance committee’s Facebook page: RamandaMauriceMLK or via email to EvansCountyMLK2015@hotmail.com.

BANQUET

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opportunity to come between 5:45 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. and meet Reeves. “They will have the opportunity to meet Coach Reeves one-on-one and have their picture made with him,” Hall said.

A photographer will develop the photos on site and Reeves will autograph the photos as well as other autographable items.

The annual awards presentation includes: Industry of the Year, Business of the Year, Business Leader of the Year, Distinguished Service Award, Citizen of the Year, Chamber Director of the Year, Outstanding J. Board Member, Outgoing Director Awards and Past Presidents Award.

A new category for nomination has been added this

year for outstanding community service. The award is intended to recognize and honor an individual, organization or committee for making meaningful and significant contributions to the citizens of Evans County through time, talents, and dedication.

“In the past we have had several nominations for groups/clubs that didn’t really fit one of our categories - they’re not a business,” Hall said. “Those groups, clubs and organizations do deserve recognition for what they’re doing in the community.”

The Chamber is seeking additional nominations for all awards categories. Nominations must include the award category, the name of

nominee and a brief explanation as to why the individual, business or organization should be recognized. Nominators may remain anonymous if they so choose. January 15 is the deadline for award nominations.

All nominations can be submitted to the Chamber of Commerce via email to thall@claxtonevanschamber.com, by fax to 739-3827, or delivered to the Chamber of Commerce office. For more information, call 739-1391.



Trivia Answer

President Ronald Reagan signed the bill creating a federal holiday to honor Martin Luther King, Jr. for his instrumental role in civil rights while in office, November 2, 1983.

Trivia answer obtained from: <http://www.triviachamp.com/Martin-Luther-King-Jr-Trivia-Quiz.php>

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January 16th & 17th, 2015

Hosted by the Evans County J.O.A.D. Team

@ Evans County Wildlife Club - 501 Cedar Ave. Hagan, GA 30429

Friday, January 16 - 6:30pm shooting line

Saturday, January 17 - 9:00am & 1:30pm shooting lines

Shooting 60 arrows for score - shoot only 1 day

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