

MLK inspired man to work for unity

George Furniss, of Dallas, heard King's 'I Have A Dream' speech in person

By **Jolene Guzman**
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Rev. George Furniss was 24 when he heard words that would inspire him to spend decades fighting for civil rights and social justice.

It was August of 1963, and Furniss was one of 200,000 people who had gathered on the Washington Mall during the March on Washington.

"It was a milestone experience to be at the March on Washington. Two hundred thousand people gathered there on that August day on the Washington Mall, in front of the Lincoln Memorial, hearing a series of excellent white and black civil rights leaders," he recalled.

The crowd had been standing for a little more than three hours when the last speaker, Martin Luther King Jr., took the stage.

"Everyone was pretty tired. I think everybody was thinking it would good to have this over. It would be good to go home," Furniss said. "And then was his speech.

"He electrified the crowd." Furniss knew they were listening to history in King's "I Have A Dream ..." speech.

He forgot about the long hours of standing and listened to the words. Furniss was particularly struck when King spoke of transforming "the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood."

"That is based on more than just tolerance between groups, but it is based on acceptance and friendship and



GEORGE FURNISS for /Itemizer-Observer
Rev. George Furniss gave a speech "Beyond Tolerance" inspired by the work of Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 16 at Dallas First Presbyterian Church.

love among people," Furniss said, adding that journey is incomplete. "It's a continuing struggle. It really is."

Furniss spoke on that theme on Martin Luther King Jr. Day last week at Dallas First Presbyterian Church in his talk, "Beyond Tolerance."

Now a resident of Dallas with his wife Sandra Larson, the pastor at the church, Furniss believes more people need to seek understanding of views different from their own, particularly in the politically polarized times we live in.

"Talk to each other and learn, have significant dialogue about their world views," he said. "It needs to

be intentional. So much our lives are just kind of parallel lives. We are in situations together, but we don't engage."

It's a belief he practices in his life, even having weekly coffee dates with a friend on the opposite end of the political spectrum.

He said the key isn't necessarily to persuade or be persuaded, but simply encourage listening — and understanding.

"It's been extremely helpful for me to understand his point of view," Furniss said.

Furniss is active in the Polk County Taskforce for Human Equality, which has hosted speakers addressing stereotypes about race relations, Islam and transgender

individuals. Once again, the purpose is to foster understanding, he said.

"We feel that is a way to make a contribution in Polk County," he said.

He's active with the national civil rights organization, Sojourners, and Bread for the World, an organization fighting hunger and food insecurity.

Furniss, 78, hasn't lost faith in the movement.

"King said that the arch of history goes toward justice and I believe in that. People of all faiths who believe in the brotherhood of man must not grow discouraged," he said. "They must realize it's a long struggle, but it will be successful."

POLICE REPORT

Information for the police report comes from law enforcement agencies. Not all calls for service are included. The status of incidents reported may change after further investigation. Individuals arrested or suspected of crimes are considered innocent until proven guilty.

DALLAS

Arrests/Citations
Luann K. Hayford, 55, of Dallas, in the 100 block of Rainbow Ave. on Jan. 8 on second-degree criminal mischief — crime damage, and second-degree disorderly conduct.

Patrick A. Swearingen, 51, of Dallas, in the 600 block of Main St. on Jan. 11 on second-degree criminal mischief — vandalism.

Kenneth R. Short, 29, of Salem, in the 100 block of W. Ellendale Ave. on Jan. 13 on misdemeanor driving under the influence of intoxicants, failure to perform the duties of the driver — property damage, and reckless endangering.

Loren S. Teter, 55, of Dallas in the 500 block of E. Ellendale Ave. on Jan. 19 on second-degree theft, second-degree criminal mischief and unlawful controlled substance — prohibited acts.

Daymn P. Reynolds, 21, of

Dallas in the 100 block of SW Court St. on Jan. 21 on prohibited exposure.

INDEPENDENCE

Arrests/Citations
Melisa June Marie Collinsworth, 31, of Dallas, in the 1600 block of Monmouth St. on Jan. 2 for possession of methamphetamine. On Jan. 9 in the 800 block of N. Main St., Collinsworth was arrested for second-degree theft — receiving stolen property.

Anthony Wesley Good, 31, of Salem, in the 900 block of S. Main St. on Jan. 2 for probation violation, failure to report as a sex offender, and possession of methamphetamine.

Ramon Garcia Fabela, 28, of Independence, in the 3300 block of Independence Hwy. on Jan. 2 for driving under the influence of intoxicants and reckless driving.

Andrea Elena Quiroz, 21, of Independence, at S. Seventh and C sts. on Jan. 7 for possession of methamphetamine and a warrant for probation violation.

MONMOUTH

Arrests/Citations
Sonya Janet Rae Wright-house, 27, a transient in Monmouth, in the 100 block of Edwards Rd. S. on Jan. 12 for probation violation and second-degree criminal mistreatment — family or other.

NEWS IN BRIEF

State lawmakers to host students

SALEM — The Oregon House of Representatives and the Oregon Senate will once again host students from around the state as part of the honorary page program.

The program allows students to witness the legislative process in an up-close and personal way in a space of about six hours.

For more information or to apply: oregonlegislature.gov, "citizen engagement."

Safety coalition video contest open to high school students

Itemizer-Observer staff report

SALEM — A Oregon Young Employee Safety Coalition contest for high-school students encourages them to increase awareness about safety on the job. Students may submit a 90-

second video that inspires young workers to do at least one thing differently to stay safe on the job. The video must include the theme: Speak up. Work safe.

The video must educate

young workers about the importance of speaking up in the workplace. Participants are encouraged to develop a key message or slogan, use humor, and get creative while emphasizing ways to protect them-

selves and their co-workers. The top three entries will take home cash prizes ranging from \$300 to \$500. Schools will offer matching amounts. For more information: youngemployeesafety.org.

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GRIEF SHARE

Help and encouragement after the death of a spouse, child, family member or friend.

Please join us for a 13 week seminar and support group that meets weekly to help you face the challenges of grief. Each session focuses on a specific topic and offers a DVD presentation and small group discussion time. A personal workbook is included for taking notes on the presented material and On Your Own sections.

\$35 registration includes workbook. *Scholarships available.*

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For more information or to register please call Kate or visit our website.

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GRAND OPENING!

Dallas Retirement Village celebrates the grand opening of Lodge Residences and the Clubhouse!

Wednesday, January 25th at 11:00 am

Ribbon-cutting ceremony at 11:30 am. Tours to follow. Wine tasting and coffee sampling in the Clubhouse lounge, movie and snacks in the theatre and a performance by our resident drum collaboration. Appetizers and refreshments will be served.

For more details, call 503-623-9211.

503-623-9211

225 NW Jasper St, Dallas, OR 97338
www.dallasretirementvillage.com

Dallas Retirement Village is a faith-based, non-profit organization open to all.

MONEY TALKS

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