

Louisville Metro
Human Relations
Commission
Newsletter

Special
Commemorative
Edition: 50th
Anniversary of the
March on
Washington

MARCH ON WASHINGTON FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM

AUGUST 28, 1963

LINCOLN MEMORIAL PROGRAM

1. The National Anthem *Led by Marian Anderson.*
2. Invocation *The Very Rev. Patrick O'Boyle, Archbishop of Washington.*
3. Opening Remarks *A. Philip Randolph, Director March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.*
4. Remarks *Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk, United Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A.; Vice Chairman, Commission on Race Relations of the National Council of Churches of Christ in America.*
5. Tribute to Negro Women Fighters for Freedom
Daisy Bates
Diane Nash Bevel
Mrs. Medgar Evers
Mrs. Herbert Lee
Rosa Parks
Gloria Richardson
Mrs. Medgar Evers
6. Remarks *John Lewis, National Chairman, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.*
7. Remarks *Walter Reuther, President, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, AFL-CIO; Chairman, Industrial Union Department, AFL-CIO.*
8. Remarks *James Farmer, National Director, Congress of Racial Equality.*
9. Selection *Eva Jessye Choir*
10. Prayer *Rabbi Uri Miller, President Synagogue Council of America.*
11. Remarks *Whitney M. Young, Jr., Executive Director, National Urban League.*
12. Remarks *Mathew Ahmann, Executive Director, National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice.*
13. Remarks *Roy Wilkins, Executive Secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.*
14. Selection *Miss Mahalia Jackson*
15. Remarks *Rabbi Joachim Prinz, President American Jewish Congress.*
16. Remarks *The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., President, Southern Christian Leadership Conference.*
17. The Pledge *A Philip Randolph*
18. Benediction *Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, President, Morehouse College.*

"WE SHALL OVERCOME"

This is the actual program of events from August 28, 1963. This year, there is a full week of events led by the King children, several of the original planning organizations, and the last living organizer, Congressman John Lewis. *Source: www.ourdocuments.gov*

50th Anniversary of the March on Washington

August 28 Marks 50 years

August 28 marks the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington, a pivotal and memorable part of the civil rights movement. On that day in 1963, over 200,000 Americans of all races gathered in Washington D.C. for a political rally, where the nation first heard the famous “I Have a Dream” speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This year, hundreds of thousands of Americans will gather again at our nation’s capital for a week-long celebration of this incredible event hosted by the King children, four of the six remaining original organizations, and the last living remaining organizer, Congressman John Lewis, and many others. The Louisville Metro Human Relations Commission would like to say safe travels to all attending this event from our area, and hope that we all keep the points and values of the Civil Rights Movement in our minds as we journey on through the next fifty years. Source: www.ourdocuments.gov



On Saturday, August 24, 2013 thousands marched over the Kutz Bridge during the event. Source: *Washington Post* (washingtonpost.com)

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The early 1960s were important times in civil rights, both in Louisville and nationwide. Fifty years ago this year, the Louisville Board of Aldermen passed an ordinance making it illegal for places of public accommodations to discriminate on the basis of race. The passage of the ordinance was in response to sit-ins held locally to protest the refusal of service to African Americans by stores, restaurants and other businesses that offered their services to the community. It became law when it was signed by Mayor William O. Cowger on May 15, 1963.

Later in 1963, on August 28, thousands of Americans staged the March on Washington, officially billed as being for jobs and freedom. Of course, we all now know the famous "I have a dream" speech delivered by the Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., that has served as inspiration for many for the decades since. The words of that speech still resound today, fifty years later.

410 West Chestnut Street
Louisville, KY 40202

We have come far, but still have a way to go, to realize Dr. King's dream. We should be proud of the passage of our Public Accommodations Ordinance, but it was merely one of the first steps to equality and integration in our community and our country. There are other steps to come before we all are equal.

It is inspiring to look back at how far we've come and daunting to look how far we still need to go. Let's continue to follow that dream so that we are indeed all "free at last."

Carolyn Miller-Cooper

Executive Director,
Louisville Metro Human
Relations Commission



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Participants of HRC's 2013 Student
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HRC... A Commission with a Charitable Mission

Our local charities need help to provide service to our communities in Louisville and the HRC answered the call. With a staff of approximately 13, the HRC got involved to give back to the community. For the 2013 Charitable Campaign, through personal generosity and fundraisers the HRC raised a total of \$1645.44. Awesome job HRC!

2013 ESSAY CONTEST CEREMONY



And the Winner Is....

Andrew Houghton won the 2013 Essay Contest honoring the passage of Louisville's Public Accommodation Ordinance. (Seen here with Councilwoman Cheri Bryant-Hamilton)



Certificates of Appreciation

Commissioner Reginald Glass, Chair of HRC's Enforcement Board is shown here presenting a certificate to one of the participants in the contest.

FAST FACTS

1960

African Americans in Louisville organize a voter registration campaign to replace city officials, capped by a rally where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference speaks to thousands.

1962

General Assembly empowers cities to create local commissions on human rights in order to prohibit discrimination in public accommodations and teacher employment.

1963

Public Accommodation Ordinance was signed

410 West Chestnut Street
 Louisville, KY 40202



Honoring participating the students, their parents and sponsors at the 2013 Student Essay Awards Ceremony on May 22, 2013 in the Mayor's Gallery

2013 Student Essay Contest

Commemorating the 50th Anniversary since the Signing of the Public Accommodation Ordinance

by Pam Horne

To commemorate the 50th year anniversary of the Public Accommodations Ordinance, Mayor Greg Fischer, Louisville Metro Councilwoman Cheri Bryant-Hamilton and Councilwoman Attica Scott, along with the Louisville Metro Human Relations Commission sponsored an essay contest for students in grades K – 12. Students were asked to write an essay with a maximum of 250 words answering the question, "What do you know about the Louisville Civil Rights Ordinance?"

Students from schools across Jefferson County participated including Bowen Elementary, Dunn Elementary, Eisenhower Elementary, Assumption, Pleasure Ridge Park, and Western High School participated. It was a great success!

On May 22, 2013, a ceremony honoring the students for their participation was held in the Mayor's Gallery in Metro Hall. During this event, students from Louisville Collegiate School presented a documentary they created in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Public Accommodations Ordinance. In this documentary, students interviewed their relatives and listened to them speak of their experiences before and after the passing of the ordinance. Relatives spoke of importance of the ordinance to today's quality of life.

The winning essay belonged to Andrew Houghton of Pleasure Ridge Park High School. Andrew received a \$500 book award for his excellent work.

Awards of appreciation were also given to the following students:

- Persia Archie-Smith.....Eisenhower Elementary School
- Annika Benson.....Bowen Elementary School
- Mychelle Bray.....Pleasure Ridge Park High School
- Ethan Coy.....Bowen Elementary School
- Hana Crick.....Eisenhower Elementary School
- Avery Davidson.....Bowen Elementary School
- Elijah Hicks.....Bowen Elementary School
- Makena Hodge.....Eisenhower Elementary School
- Lillie P. Kang.....Dunn Elementary School
- Emily Kuprion.....Bowen Elementary School
- Leia Staples.....Bowen Elementary School
- Kiersten Michelle Walker...Eisenhower Elementary School
- Sydney Webb.....Bowen Elementary School

The Human Relations Commission would like to take this opportunity to say "Thank you!" to all of the students that participated. We would also like to give due accolades to the schools and their staff for their diligence in educating our future generations.

PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS CELEBRATION

By Martha Lawfer

On Monday, May 13, 2013, the Louisville branch of the NAACP, the Louisville Defender Newspaper, the Louisville Metro Human Relations Commission, Mayor Fischer's office and Radio Station WLOU sponsored a city wide celebration of the 50th anniversary of the passage of the ordinance that ended segregation in public accommodations in Louisville.

The Public Accommodations Ordinance, Number 66, Series 1963, was passed on May 14, 1963, by a vote of eight in favor, two opposed, one abstention and one absent. It was signed into law by Mayor William O. Cowger on May 15, 1963. The ordinance ended segregation in public accommodations on the basis

of race in the city of Louisville. Later, other protected classes would be added to the purview of the ordinance.

The Brown Theatre at 315 West Broadway was selected as the location for the event due to it being a place where segregation was enforced fifty years before. Its use symbolized what the ordinance had accomplished.

The celebration was a joyous event in remembrance of an important event in the history of this community which made it a better place for all citizens. Speakers included and recognized those who had been instrumental in bringing about the passage of the ordinance. Many of the participants had been high school students fifty years ago and through sit-ins had brought the community's attention and recognition that the ordinance was necessary.

The keynote speaker was Barbara Arnwine, the President and CEO of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. Her fiery speech encouraged attendees to continue the fight for equal rights.



Barbara Arnwine, Executive Director of The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

Source: lawyerscommittee.org



50th Anniversary of the Public Accommodation Ordinance

by Pam Horne

On May 14, 2013, Louisville commemorated its 50th year anniversary of the civil rights sit-in demonstrations by installing a marker at the 4th and Guthrie Street location.

The epithet on the marker depicts local demonstrations held by black students and adults as they marched and participated in sit-ins at downtown businesses that refused to serve African Americans. Civil rights activists organized a voter registration campaign that led to election of officials responsive to their cause and, after more demonstrations, passage of the 1963 ordinance to end the practice of discrimination.

This resulting Public Accommodations Ordinance led to Louisville being the first "Southern City" to receive national recognition for peaceful desegregation at a time when violence permeated the South.

The marker project began two years ago when then – dean Blaine Hudson convened a meeting of university and community leaders to consider ways to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the ordinance's passage; Hudson, also a historian and civil rights activist, died earlier this year. This is the first of 12 markers planned to note downtown Louisville civil rights demonstration locations.

Get On The Bus Tour

by Prafula P. Sheth, Ed.D.

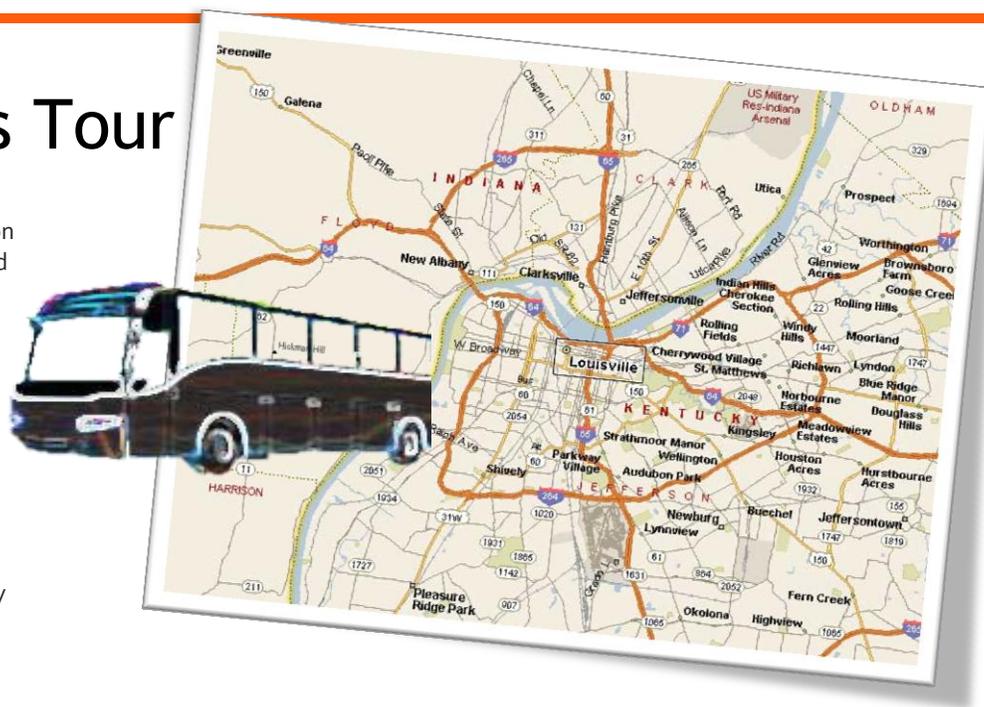
April 23, 2013 was a day spent reflecting on Louisville's historical housing patterns and events and imagining a future of zero segregation in Metro Louisville neighborhoods. "Get on the Bus" event celebrated the progress Louisville has made in providing fair housing opportunities to all races.

My familiarity with Louisville neighborhoods was limited although I have lived in this area (Louisville & Southern Indiana) for decades. Like many in this city, I had not ventured beyond downtown limits and had limited knowledge of historical neighborhoods. I had never viewed the elegant, Victorian homes; the blighted and boarded-up houses or the lush park systems, and did not comprehend the significance of these homes - then and now.

Mr. Raoul Cunningham, our Bus Tour guide, the very talented and eloquent historian, a Louisville native, and NAACP member, narrated the neighborhood histories as our bus drove through the west end neighborhoods. Mr. Cunningham, not only knew the facts, he had lived through those times of sit-ins, squat-ins, and non-violence movement which demanded the end of segregation in housing, education, neighborhood and businesses in Louisville.

Before the Civil War, many blacks lived closed to whites in patterns that persisted after slavery ended. Wealthy Irish and Germans, business owners, lived in large, elegant homes along Chestnut, Walnut (now Muhammad Ali Blvd.) and Liberty Streets. Blacks, majority labor force, lived a few streets over in much smaller homes. Such housing pattern continued to separate black and white neighborhoods, thus effectively, continuing housing segregation.

In 1928, the City began changing street names to separate white neighborhoods from predominantly black streets thus effectively continuing the segregated



housing patterns. 30th Street became the new dividing line between black and white neighborhoods. The Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 abolished housing segregation; however, housing patterns in Louisville remained the same. Even today in 2013, most neighborhoods of Smoketown, Shawnee, Little Africa, Newburg, Limerick, Berrytown and Griffytown remain predominantly black.

The Great Flood of 1937 displaced thousands of blacks and whites living in these neighborhoods. The public housing boom followed however these continued to remain segregated – College Court for blacks, LaSalle for whites. Urban Renewal brought forth changes in the 1950-60s where neighborhoods were bulldozed to build downtown businesses, hospitals, and the I-64 highway. These changes moved the ousted blacks into the city's west side thus continuing the housing segregation. The 9th Street dividing line still remains.

The 'white flight' followed as the civil rights movement gained momentum in Louisville and activists demanded fair housing for blacks. During the four years of 1960-1964, almost 16,000 whites left the west end homes for the eastern Jefferson County thus creating today's eastern Jefferson County sprawling suburbs.

I got off the bus after an almost 90+ minutes tour with a deeper understanding of the impact of blighted neighborhoods, boarded up houses; poverty and lack of industry or businesses which support neighborhood workforce. I also saw the most elegant and beautifully maintained historic homes, clean sidewalks and parks with rich histories and beautiful neighborhoods. My day ended with an improved understanding of the need for neighborhood grocery stores for affordable, healthy food choices for residents; shopping centers and industry that provide decent wage jobs; and to provide an assurance that those who live in the West End do matter to the community at-large. The need for affordable housing, decent paying jobs, education and technical training, and gang violence in the West End neighborhoods provides the Metro Louisville government entities both challenges and opportunity where one must address these issues as not only "the West-end issues."

The above narrative contains passages and details from a booklet provided by the organizers of this day-long event.

