

Collins wants Kingsport to name street after slain civil rights leader. Garren Shipley. Kingsport Times-News. January 21, 2003.

KINGSFORT TIMES NEWS

TUESDAY

Good morning from:
Krista Linkous of Surgoinsville.

Tomorrow:
Chinese food, which is long on preparation and short on cooking time, isn't difficult to prepare, says Kingsport resident Lydia Haseltine. In Family.

Today
Today: High: 37 — Low: 24
• Colder with a chance of light rain or light snow.
Wednesday: High: 35 — Low: 22
• Partly cloudy and chilly with good chance of snow showers later at night.
Extended: Highs: 26-35 — Lows: 8-23
• Breezy and cold Thursday with a good chance of snow showers/flurries.

Wednesday

Thursday

FAST ACTS

Smoking, drinking and drug use among eighth-graders has fallen sharply in recent years, with marijuana use at its lowest level since 1994 and half as many youngsters reporting they use cigarettes, according to a national survey.

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Collins wants street named for MLK

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"Dr. King wasn't just a great black American. He was a great American," said Elder Ron Collins, one of the event's organizers.

"If you look at everything he did — the things he tried to put forward — they helped all people," he said.

Changes that took place after the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s — including affirmative action programs — helped more citizens than just African-Americans to achieve equal rights, Collins said.

"More white women have benefited from it than we have," Collins said. "For black men, it's still difficult. We need things like that in place. We need civil rights."

Even though segregated schools and separate water fountains are things of the past, there's still an undercurrent of racial hostility to be found in some places — especially in some of the upper corridors of power, Collins said.

The recent remarks by then-Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott praising former Sen. Strom Thurmond's 1948 presidential run are evidence, Collins said.

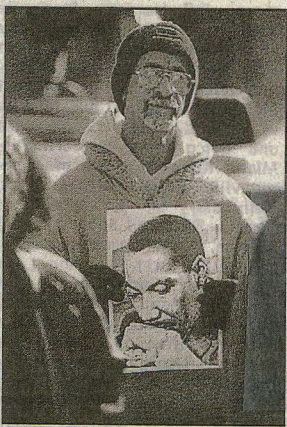
"(Lott is) not the only one who feels that way," he said.

Minorities have made progress since King's assassination, but much work remains, said Collins.

"We are better off in some ways," he said. "We still have glass ceilings as far as how far we can go. When you go to stores, people still think it's us that's going to do the stealing, when most stealing is not done by us."

The Tri-Cities also needs to make a greater effort to recognize the King holiday, he said.

Kingsport needs a street named in honor of the slain civil rights leader, said Collins — one that everyone can see, not



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Richard Hicks holds a photo of Martin Luther King Jr. as he joins in Monday's parade in downtown Kingsport.

tucked away in an African-American community.

"Schools need to be out like the whole region," Collins said. "We are still 20 to 30 years behind the major cities. We've got some work to do. We have a long way to go."

The parade was just the first half of the day's events. Afterward, service to the community was the emphasis.

The not-for-profit group My Brother's Keeper and Food City distributed turkeys, canned goods, and other food items to some 50 needy families, while Joshua Generation and Office Depot visited disadvantaged children in Kingsport, Johnson City, Bristol and Elizabethton as part of their "Tools For School" program.

Putting Babies First and the Upper East Tennessee Human Development Agency took diapers and baby supplies to others in need of help.

The Tennessee/Virginia Fellowship Against Racism is also planning visits to area schools to teach children about King's legacy.



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Ronald Carpenter holds a banner with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s image during Monday's parade in downtown Kingsport.

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■ **'Dr. King wasn't** just a great black American. He was a great American.'

— Ron Collins

By **GARREN SHIPLEY**
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KINGSFORT — People from all over Kingsport gathered to

"Live the Dream" and commemorate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Monday.

The Tennessee/Virginia Fellowship Against Racism, East Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship and several local businesses sponsored a parade and day of service in downtown.

Please see **COLLINS**, page 5A