

A program to be presented at Mount Airy Museum of Regional History on Jan. 13 in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day will focus on Surry County and how the spirit of King's teaching, legacy and life can influence the journey of people in the local community to come together. The program, "In the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Surry Countians Continuing the Dream," is jointly sponsored by the National Association of University Women, Mount Airy/Surry County branch, and the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History.

"It has been an absolute joy to be involved with this program," said Cheryl Yellow Fawn Scott, co-director of the event, who has been involved from the beginning. "It is a way to come together, to highlight the positive and instill hope in our community," adding that the event has grown in its 14-year history. Scott added she was particularly pleased that the event has always been multi-racial, both in attendance and participation. "Last year we had about 100 people," said co-director LaDonna McCarther, who has also been involved from day one. "Poor Matt had to move some chairs," referring to Matt Edwards, executive director of the museum. Two people have been named as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. honorees for their life, and the way they have impacted others: Col. Donald Belle and James Dalton. The recipient of the 2018 Dreamer Award will be announced during the program.

The 50th anniversary of Dr. King's death will be recognized during a candle-lighting ceremony with one of the candles being lit to illuminate his last dream, the Poor People's Campaign, a campaign for social justice and economic equality. As part of the Surry County focus, recognition will be made of some Surry County families. "African-American families who have been here for generations," said Scott, adding that one of the families to be recognized is the Posey Reynolds family. Two storytellers will be on hand; Terri Ingalls will recite "Dream to Dream" and Rene Andrews, a storyteller from Winston-Salem, will tell a story for the children present. Youth will be recognized for their achievements, which can be academic, artistic, or the way they live their life as goodwill ambassadors, showing compassion, hope and excellence of any kind. The evening will include several musical performances, including duets by Emma Davis and Ariel Love, and by Teresa Martin and Maggie Lowe. Roxanne Beamer will return to sing again this year, Bob Chilton, will reprise "Mary, Did You Know?" and the Aaron McCarther family, parents and children, will sing. "We're excited to have them," said Scott of the scheduled performers. Marie Nicholson will close out the program with a recitation of the Maya Angelou poem, "Still I rise."

"In the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Surry Countians Continuing the Dream" will be presented at Mount Airy Museum of Regional History, 301 N. Main St., Mount Airy, on Saturday, Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. The event is open to the public, free of charge.

