

MONDAY SPECIAL

# Remembering the dream

## Marcher thinks of past, looks to future

By Michael Wilson  
ADVERTISER STAFF WRITER

The white boy sat quietly in a tree, gaping down at the strong, steady river of black faces on the streets and lawns below.

Idessa Redden has a photograph of the boy tucked away somewhere, with the rest of her memorabilia from the civil rights march on Washington, D.C., held 30 years ago this weekend.

"He could see and hear, and he could be seen," she said last week, smiling when the boy unexpectedly tread across her memory.

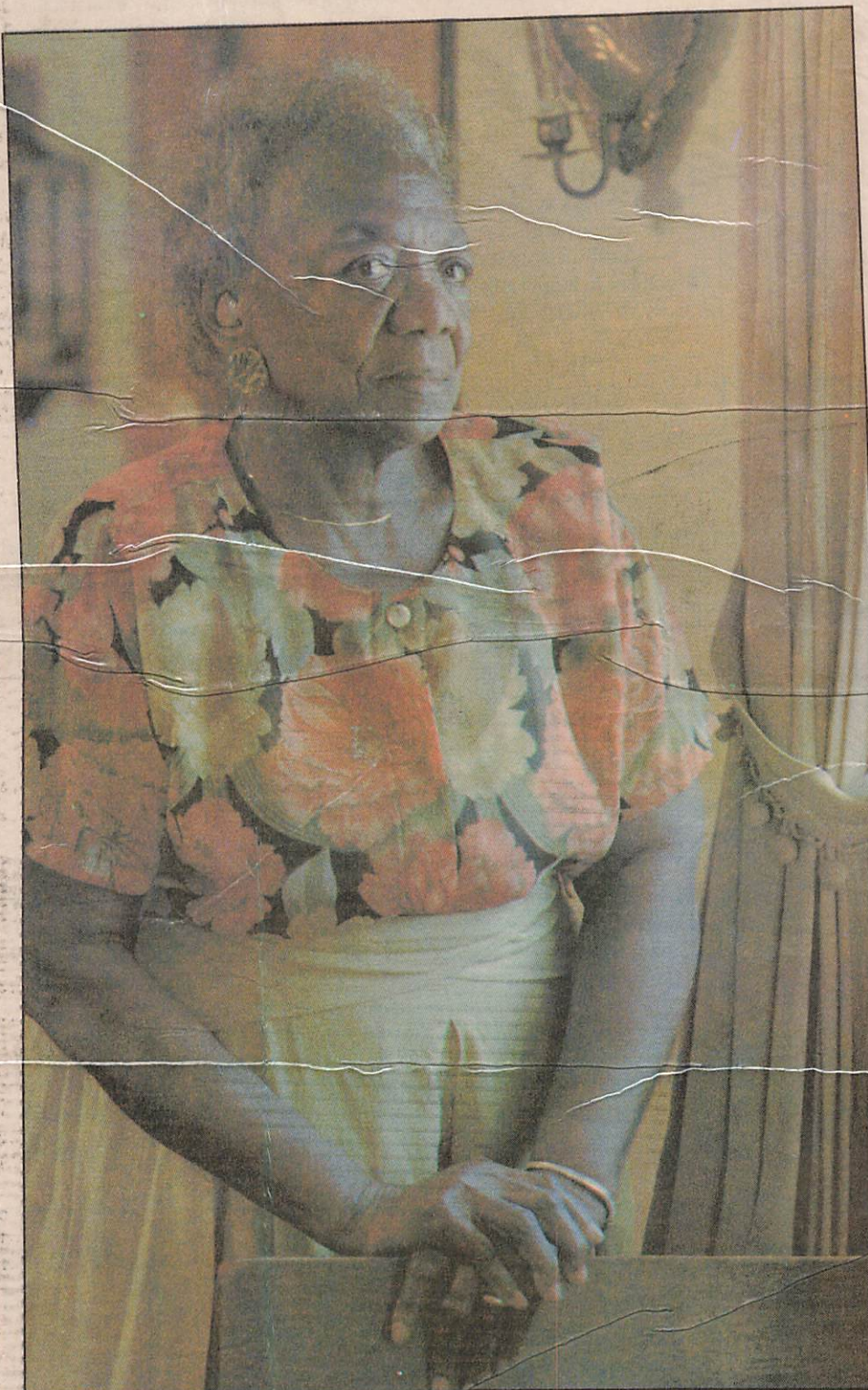
Mrs. Redden was one of about 200,000 marchers who descended upon the nation's capital in 1963 in support of pending civil rights legislation, 100 years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation took effect.

There, they heard firsthand what their children and grandchildren have

*Please turn to* **MARCHER, 4A**



**Martin Luther King Jr. speaks to thousands gathered in front of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963.**



PATRICIA MIKLIK STAFF

**Idessa Redden was one of about 200,000 marchers who descended upon the nation's capital in 1963 in support of pending civil rights legislation.**

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said Los Angeles  
Sgt. Ron Spear.  
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of the disabled championships  
while competing at the 1992  
games in Barcelona.

The princess spent about two  
hours Friday visiting with pedi-  
atric patients and those with spinal  
cord injuries.

## Pol names favorites

NEW YORK — Julia Roberts  
and Whitney Houston are among  
the favorites in a survey for En-  
ertainment Weekly.

The poll, conducted by the  
Gallup Organization, found that  
Ms. Roberts and Clint Eastwood  
were named most often as favor-  
ite actress and actor.

It found that 46 percent of  
those questioned preferred Ms.  
Houston's acting to Janet Jack-  
son's, at 17 percent.

*From Associated Press reports*

## THE FAR SIDE



"My dad can act deader than your dad."

# Retiring?

ards is sponsoring a free, special program for individuals  
ire soon. This seminar will also be helpful if you are  
red or you are preparing for retirement in the next

## State/Local

MORE NEWS 1B, 2B, 4B; GOVERNMENT NEWS 3B

**Nearly 50 years** after U.S. cities first began adding fluoride to wa-  
ter to fight tooth decay, almost 500,000 Alabamians still do not  
get the chemical in their community water system. **Page 1B**

**Summertime, when the** mowing is crazy, also is the prime season  
for the theft of lawn mowers, weed and hedge trimmers and other  
garden and lawn tools, police say. **Page 1B**

**A Roman Catholic priest** who espoused the killing of abortion doc-  
tors as "justifiable homicide," then recanted under pressure of  
church superiors, said his comment brought him death threats.  
**Page 1B**

**The Alabama Forestry** Commission is sending 150 staff members  
to Birmingham for two nights and three days this week for a  
combination of training and celebrating. **Page 3B**

**A school prayer** bill written by Alabama Attorney General Jimmy  
Evan's office may be substituted in the Senate because of possible  
constitutionality problems with a prayer bill passed by the Hou-  
se. **Page 3B**

## Life

MORE LIFE NEWS 1C, 2C

**My heart pounded.** The knots in my stomach tightened as I searched  
under the tightly packed racks of clothing. We had been in the  
clothing store only about 10 minutes when Michaela, my 2 1/2-  
year-old, disappeared. **Page 1C**

**While Scott Carmichael** believes he "got lucky" when he was able to  
capture the joyous faces of two sky divers during a rapid ascen-  
sion, his luck — or more likely skill — held strong as the overall  
winner of *The Montgomery Advertiser's* 1993 photography con-  
test was chosen. **Page 1C**

## Sports

MORE SPORTS NEWS 1D-6D

**Washington's Don** James, one of the nation's most successful col-  
lege football coaches, resigned Sunday after his team was severely  
penalized by the Pacific-10 Conference for violating NCAA rules.  
He quit hours after the football program was placed on proba-  
tion and banned from postseason play for two years and forced  
to give up scholarships and \$1.4 million in television reve-  
nue. **Page 1D**

**Kris Blanks** shot a 2-under-par 70 Sunday to post a five-shot vic-  
tory in the City Golf Championship at Lagoon Park. **Page 1D**

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# MARCHER

from page 1A

come to call the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s greatest speech.

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character," the Rev. Dr. King told his huge audience.

"I'd never seen that many people," Mrs. Redden said, seated in the front room of her Bragg Street residence last week.

A plaque from her family says she's 80 years old. She doesn't look 70.

She could, singlehandedly, fill a chapter of a civil rights textbook. Her stories are spiced with the winks, grins and cackles of a woman who's never stood for any hip.

Before, during and after the civil rights movement, Mrs. Redden had an attitude.

"It was a trying time, but I enjoyed every minute of it," she said. "I have never been a fearful person."

Her face gives away the ending of a story before she gets there. It grinned brightly before she finished this one:

A white man, years ago, pulled her out of the door of a streetcar on Dexter Avenue because, being white, he should have been allowed to board first.

She beat him up with her umbrella. "He didn't get on that streetcar."

## A Montgomery activist

It took her six trips to the voter registration office to be allowed access to a ballot box. In 1956, she began working to register other black voters. By 1961, she was the voter registration director for the Montgomery Improvement Association.

She remembers speeches that spurred her and others to get more blacks on the rolls, like one by the late James Thomas "Cotton Tom" Heflin, mayor, U.S. representative and senator. Mrs. Redden heard him say "no one need ever worry about niggers voting" because they couldn't come up with the \$3 poll tax.

Boy, that set her off. "That made me get out in the streets every afternoon. Weather like this didn't bother me," she said, nodding toward a window keeping out the muggy heat.

## 'No God-sent leaders'

She laughs easier than she cries and isn't one to get choked up and emotional. But after a string of speeches before the Lincoln Memorial that afternoon in 1963, she remembers falling to her knees when, pushed briskly across



FILE PHOTO

**The leaders of the march lock arms as they lead the way along Washington's Constitution Avenue in this photo from August 28, 1963. The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. is at the center, seventh from right. At extreme right is A. Philip Randolph, the march director. By Mr. Randolph is Roy Wilkins, executive secretary of the NAACP.**

the lawn with huge speakers, gospel singer Mahalia Jackson's voice carried the song "How I Got Over."

"I yelled 'Mahalia, sing it, 'cause only the black folks know what you're singing about,'" she recalls. Then a white man, his family nearby, tapped her on the shoulder and told her she was wrong.

She cried when the Rev. Dr. King died.

No one's filled the hole left by his murder, she said. "There's no God-sent leaders now."

She's heading back to the nation's capital Friday, flying this time. She wants to hear today's speeches and songs at the 30th anniversary ceremony Saturday.

## A friend's eyes and ears

A friend of Mrs. Redden heard the same speeches and songs in 1963.

Alma Hampton was 55 years old when she climbed aboard a bus with her cousin for the long, hot trip north.

"We got there just in time for the march," Mrs. Hampton recalled last week.

Marchers waited near their bus' parking spots for the growing crowd to reach them before melting into the moving, singing, chanting body.

"I couldn't get tired," Mrs. Hampton said of the long day under the summer sun.

Thirty years later, she does. Her arthritis acts up, and her sight and hearing aren't what they were then, but she can still see the man she calls "my leader" from her spot right before the podium that day.

She can still hear his words.

"From every mountaintop, let freedom ring," the Rev. Dr. King said in his speech.

Unlike her friend, Mrs. Hampton has no souvenirs. They were ruined when the room she kept them in flooded years ago.

"My memories are good," she said, and laughed. "I don't know for how long, though."

She'll depend on Mrs. Redden's eyes and ears to report on the anniversary Saturday. Mrs. Hampton's health will keep her from attending. She hopes this ceremony comes a little closer toward stopping hatred.

"How can I be happy with the world today? It makes me unhappy to see so much hate, and I want love."

"I have had people ask me what makes me happy in my condition. I tell them that I don't hate. That's what makes me happy," she said.

## All ages attending

Marisara Graham was born 18 years after the 1963 March on Washington. She's heard recordings of the "I Have A Dream" speech.

She can't help it that she missed the first march, but she's joining other friends from the Metro Montgomery Youth Council of the NAACP on a bus that will take them to the anniversary.

"I want to see a leader of today so I can be one tomorrow," she said. It'll be her first time in Washington.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Redden will be watching Saturday's crowd for a face from yesterday, a three-decade old gem she pulls out and polishes when she speaks of the 1963 trip.

A small girl, maybe 3 years old, was wearing a sash that said "I WAS THERE," Mrs. Redden regrets not taking a photograph of the girl.

"I hope she'll be there this time," Mrs. Redden said.

# Premium

