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Complimentary

Chattanooga's 52nd Annual MLK March Parade Set for Jan. 17



File Photo from CNC Archives 2020

By Camm Ashford

Eric Atkins, co-chair of the Unity Group, has announced the 52nd Annual MLK March/Parade, which is set for Jan. 17, starting at 1 p.m.

Lineup begins on Peeples Street at 12:15 p.m. The parade will head down

East Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard towards Miller Park for the beloved Community Gathering, where groups, organizations and individuals will bring greetings in celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Groups and organizations are welcome to set up tents and tables at Miller Park, Atkins said.

“Dr. King was always concerned about the human question,” Atkins explained.

“We all have worth and value, and should be striving to build up and make the dream

of a beloved community a reality in our lifetimes.

To reach this, we must begin to see the bright day-break of peace Dr. King spoke of, one that is rooted in an unarmed and abounding truth and unconditional love.”

The Unity Group was first organized in the fall of 1969. Its purpose was to select Black candidates and help elect them to positions within the local government.

In 1970, the Unity Group initiated what is now known as the Dr. Martin L. King Celebration Event. This event currently consists of workshops, a prayer breakfast, mid-week cross culture worship services, a march, and more.

Additionally, the Unity Group was the driving force behind the renaming

of Chattanooga’s 9th Street to M.L. King Boulevard.

On Nov. 2, 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed a bill, proposed by Rep. Katie Hall of Indiana, to create a federal holiday honoring Dr. King.

The bill passed the House of Representatives, and the holiday was observed for the first time on Jan. 20, 1986. Initially, some states resisted; and only in 2000, was MLK Day officially observed in all 50 states for the first time.

The King federal holiday falls each year on the third Monday of January (around Dr. King’s birthday on Jan.15).

A Lifetime’s History: Musician Roland Carter donates his collection to UTC



Internationally acclaimed musician Roland Carter taught at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga for 23 years.

By Shawn Ryan

The issue is not that Roland Carter is donating more than 50 years of sheet music, newspaper clippings, event programs, recordings, and other items to the library at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

The issue is that the collection is stuffed into dozens of boxes in no particular order.

“I’m terribly unorganized, so I just throw things in boxes. The problem is organizing all the stuff to donate,” said Carter, who retired from UTC in 2013 after 23 years teaching music.

But organize he must to make sure the collection--an extensive history of his life and his “life-work” collecting and preserving the “Negro spiritual” and other African-American music--will be useful in its new home in the library’s Special Collections.

“My thinking in donating them to the library was to make sure that they are still accessible, that they will be placed where people can come and research or look up music or study the scores, so they don’t get lost,” he said.

“There are arrangements of spirituals and books of spirituals that I’ve collected over the years because that’s the focus of my work.”

An internationally renowned composer, arranger, conductor and pianist, Carter has spent his career celebrating African-American musical traditions. His arrangement of “Lift Every Voice and Sing--selected in 1919 by the NAACP as the Black National Anthem--is considered the standard for choral music.

Carter, who grew up in Chattanooga, conducted the first concert of the African-American Music Series at Carnegie Hall. He is the founder and CEO of Mar-Vel,



International Musician Roland Carter (in younger years) at the piano.

a publishing company specializing in African-American musical traditions. His papers are full of state, national and international awards and recognition.

Carolyn Runyon, director of the UTC Library’s Special Collections, said Carter’s legacy is nationally and internationally admired, but its roots are sunk deeply into Chattanooga.

“Throughout his career, Roland has been really focused on how he can not only advance efforts to engage people in communities with African-American music nationally, but also locally,” she said. “I think that’s part of his legacy and something that I hope we can highlight.”

Stuart Benkert, head of the UTC Department of Music and a longtime friend and colleague of Carter, said the collection is “valuable due to its scope and magnitude.”

“The African-American spir-

itual functions as a medium for both religious and cultural expression. Preserving these works in multiple iterations or arrangements, rather than rely on rearrangements and modern recordings, is important,” Benkert said.

Carter, who was originally hired as head of the music department when he came to UTC in 1989, said going through his papers has provided a stroll through the Memory Lane of his career. He has found items that he hasn’t seen in decades, he said, some of which were lost in the haze of memory.

“I’ve forgotten more than I remember, that’s for sure,” he said, laughing.

Chances are good that he will run across many more memories because organizing the collection is not something that will be done soon, Carter said.

“It’s an ongoing, never-ending project at this point.”

Gas Prices Drift Lower in the Face of Uncertainty

Fears of omicron-driven economic slowdown countered by news of a severe fire at major oil refinery

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Tennessee gas prices fell another 1.5 cents this week bringing the Tennessee Gas Price average to \$2.99. Prices are now one cent cheaper than last month, but still 95 cents more than this time last year.

Across the nation, gasoline prices fluctuated over the past few days as fears of an omicron-driven economic slowdown were countered by news of a severe fire at a major oil refinery. Last Thursday, four people were injured when a fire erupted at the Exxon Mobil

Corp refinery in Baytown, Texas. The plant is one of the largest refining and petrochemical facilities in the United States. If the damage forces the plant offline for long, the disruption could push gasoline prices higher. Before the fire, the national average had declined steadily. Now the decline has slowed, but the national average for a gallon of gas still fell two cents on the week to \$3.28.

“We should learn more in the coming days about the extent of the damage to the refinery,” said Stephanie Milani, Tennessee Public Affairs Director, AAA-- The Auto Club Group. “If it can be back up and running in a few weeks,

the effect could be minimal. But if repairs take months, consumers could begin seeing higher prices again at the pump.”

National Gas Prices

Today’s national average of \$3.28 is 11 cents less than a month ago and \$1.03 more than a year ago.

National Oil Market Dynamics

At the close of last week’s formal trading session, WTI increased by \$1.03 to settle at \$73.79. Despite demand concerns over the omicron variant of COVID-19, crude prices increased after the EIA reported that total domestic

crude stocks decreased by 4.7 million bbl last week to 423.6 million bbl. The current stock level is 15.2 percent lower than in December 2020, contributing to pressure on domestic crude prices. For this week, prices could continue to climb if EIA’s next weekly report shows another decrease in total stocks.

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