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## South Florida honors MLK through parades, community service



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NORTHWEST MIAMI-DADE, FLA. (WSVN) - South Florida and the rest of the country are honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on what would have been his 89th birthday.

Be it through parades or community service, South Floridians of all ages remembered Dr. King's message and honored his legacy.

7News cameras captured dozens of people taking part in the festivities down Northwest 32nd Avenue in Liberty City, right next to the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park, Monday afternoon.

Hours earlier, high school marching bands, cheerleaders and floats all came out for the annual MLK Day parade.

Among those spectating were Wanda Wright. "I wanted to be the first one, right up front, where I cannot miss anything," Wright said.

Wright woke up early and braved the chilly weather in order to get her frontrow seat.

"It's just real sentimental because he gave so much for so many of us," she said. "There's so many of us that don't realize the sacrifice that he did, and there's no way that I can repay him other than being out here, letting him know that I really appreciate him for that."

"How he paved the way for us, for everyone to come together as one," said Jaliah Dorsey.

In Deerfield Beach, another parade honored Dr. King with bands, music and even police horses. 7News anchor Robbin Simmons served as grand marshal.

A sign on a float sums up the message: "Let freedom ring."

"We can't let Dr. King, his dream die," said Zachary Garmon. "He had a dream, and it's up to us to keep that dream going."

"His life and legacy still lives on," said Tisha Jones. "We're still trying to live the dream. The dream still lives on."

Back in Miami, parents and grandparents who attended with their children hope to teach their young ones of the importance of Dr. King's message. "I want to support my grandson and let the children see that this is a special day," said one woman. "They haven't been to the parade in years, and just to bring them out so they can see the legacy of Martin Luther King."

Part of King's legacy is helping others and giving back. That lived on through service projects throughout South Florida on Monday.

At Phyllis Wheatley Elementary School in Miami, volunteers repainted the basketball courts and a mural.

"The fact that we are about to be out here is his work," said volunteer Gari Frazois, "and so it's really great to be able to finish his legacy."

"I don't live directly here. I didn't go to schools here, but that doesn't mean I can't partake in helping," said volunteer Jessica Noel.

At the Village of Allapattah YMCA Family Center, volunteers built a garden for pre-schoolers and painted a parking garage as a way to remember Dr. King's spirit of giving back.

"I think this is an amazing opportunity," said Michelle Moyer with YMCA of South Florida. "We're honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy. He gave a lot to the communities he served, and that's what these individuals are doing today."

And in Fort Lauderdale, the volunteer work continued with a mural on a Mockingbird Trail stop. It was all part of a two-mile urban art walk.

"People are coming here with a positive spirit, excitement to contribute to the neighborhood and that spirit lives on here," said volunteer Jordan Magid.

The parade in Liberty City ended with a festival at Martin Luther King Jr. Park that lasted until the late afternoon. 7News cameras captured crews cleaning up just after 6 p.m.

Miami-Dade Police said they doubled the number of officers in Liberty City, one year after a shooting took place during the festivities. Officials said this year's celebrations remained peaceful.

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