

OCC, OU events lead up to MLK Day

The official day of tribute to the late Dr. Martin Luther King is Monday, but the commemoration of the message and life of the slain civil rights leader begins this week.

Today, for example, the Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College will feature as guest speaker Dr. Reginald Wilson, author of "Civil Liberties in the United States," speaking on "MLK, Affirmative Action and the Million Man March."

Wilson's address, free and open to the public, begins at 7 p.m. in the Smith Theatre on campus at 27655 Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills.

Friday at the Highland Lakes Campus of OCC, Richard E. Williams, Oakland County's new director of community and minority affairs, will honor 14 high school students for essays written on the impact of Dr. Martin Luther King.

Tickets to the 8:30 a.m. breakfast sponsored by OCC and the Lakes Area council

for Diversity are \$6 and are available at (810) 360-3186.

On Monday, OCC will be closed in honor of Dr. King.

Oakland County offices will also be closed Monday in honor of King's birthday.

Oakland University on Monday begins a six week commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King and African-American Month. A march is scheduled to begin at noon at the Vandenberg side of Beer

Lake. There will be a reception at the OU Gold Room at 1 p.m.

A candlelight Vigil will be held at 7 p.m. Monday, also at the OU Gold Room.

Other events next week include a book forum — on "Rage of the Firelight Class" — at noon Tuesday at the Firelight Lounge; Student Organization Day, 11 a.m. Wednesday at the Oakland Center; Career Day for Minority Students, noon Thursday at the Crocker and a Gospel-fest at 7 p.m. Friday, also at the Crocker.

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had to call all the area departments near where the guy was registered."

As the rural area rapidly became an urban one, Hills police had to move quickly to keep up with advances in crime detection and communication. Godwin was a large part of that changing approach.

"Inspector Godwin helped develop the CLEMIS (Court and Law Enforcement Management Information System) and the enhanced 9-1-1 system," said Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer.

And Godwin, who also served for several years as a volunteer firefighter, said his duty as point man in developing the department's communication system was "a lot of fun."

As he moved up the ranks as a patrol officer, detective and administrator, Godwin could see

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that the nature of police work and the type of officers needed would also have to change.

"At one time there was very little training involved," he said. "You could get out of high school and become a police officer."

Godwin's wife of 35 years, Carolyn, says with pride that her husband was a pioneer in improving his education. Godwin earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Madonna University and completed his course work for a master's in criminal justice from Michigan State University, all on a part-time basis at his own expense.

"He was really a pioneer," Carolyn Godwin said. "It was hard with kids at home. But he could see the future."

Chief Dwyer agreed that Godwin started a move by officers to become better trained and educated, something officers in the department consider part of their professional development.

"Tom was, I think, the first to really pursue that," he said. "Now most of our command officers have bachelor's and master's degrees. They are always getting additional training."

Godwin credited the township's leaders, including former Supervisor Curt Hall and Trustee Earl Oppenheuser, for trying to modernize the department and train its officers.

"They wanted to give the people a good police department that was really qualified," he said.

The years have brought professional satisfactions and some unusual turns.

"The day I was hired there was a homicide," he said. "Then there wasn't one for seven years, I think."

The night after he took over investigations, Farmington Hills police were in the arrest of the Oakland County rapist, a case involving the FBI, the county and other agencies. It was one of the first cases where DNA evidence was a key in solving the case.

But for all the professional accomplishments, the private Tom Godwin has reveled in his family life, doing stints as a baseball coach and mentor to his now-grown children Tommy, 34, Susie, 31, Jeanie, 30 and Maribeth, 27.

"All my kids got to play," he says with pride. "And we won a lot."

Responding to many teen suicides and crib deaths are not events a parent soon forgets, he said.

"Those (suicides) always bothered me," he said. "It was so hard to see a young person in that way. You'd wonder how had something could be for them to take their own life."

Although the profession has suffered its share of criticism, Godwin says the community support in Farmington Hills has made doing his job easier.

"I think the community support for the (public safety) millage and for the golf classic to benefit surviving families of Hills officers" was like a thank you."

Godwin plans to do some traveling and do a lot of relaxing in the coming years of retirement. He'll enjoy spending more time with his two grand children, Shannon, 9, and Kylie, 10 months, and his pet collie Bull, cocker spaniel Max, calico cat Katie and blue point Kitty Cat.

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