



The 53rd Anniversary
MARKS MULE TRAIN &
 Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign

Awards Program &
Quitman County School District Lackey Scholars Recognition

Thursday, May 13, 2021 | 3:45 pm

Quitman County Welcome Interpretive Center
 300 Cherry Street, Marks, MS

Outside Event | *Face Mask Required*

~ HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS ~
Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign



In early spring of 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., visited Marks, Mississippi, to rally support for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC) "Poor People's Campaign," a nationwide march to Washington, D.C., to raise awareness of economic disparity and persistent poverty. Dr. King was so moved by the desperate conditions in Marks that he promoted it as the starting point for the campaign's network of traveling groups.

In the weeks following King's assassination on April 4, 1968, news reporters descended on Marks to report on the "Mule Train" formation and preparation for the journey to Washington. Soon after, caravans of protestors began to slowly move their way toward the East Coast from several locations in mule drawn wagons.

SCLC leaders came to Marks to finish the work Dr. King started. Three marches were conducted in the streets, one of which was led by nearly 300 high school students and 13 teachers who left campus in protest of the arrest of one of the SCLC organizers, Willie Bolden, who had been visiting the high school recruiting volunteers for the Mule Train journey. The students and teachers marched through downtown to the jail located behind the county courthouse where the peaceful protest was met with gun butts pointed in their faces by a drove of state troopers wearing riot gear. Several students and teachers were injured and later taken to the nearby hospital.

On May 13, 1968, with weeks of preparation, 115 Quitman County residents, ranging in age from eight months to 70 years old, left Marks traveling in more than a dozen wagons. They crept almost 500 miles over the next month before reaching Atlanta, where people, mules, and wagons were loaded aboard a train bound for Alexandria, Virginia. On June 19, 1968, Quitman County's famous Mule Train rolled into the nation's capital and joined the large protest on the National Mall.

The world watched as residents from Marks, as well as a reported 50,000 U.S. citizens, participated and marched on Washington on June 19, 1968, addressing anti-poverty issues within the nation. There was a global outpouring of support for this movement that would later be deemed as a memorial to Dr. King.



~ **THE PROGRAM** ~
Dr. Hilliard L. Lackey, Presiding
President, Marks Mule Train Historical Society

Musical Selections

James "Super Chikan" Johnson
Clarksdale, MS

Welcome

Mayor Joe Shegog
City of Marks

Greetings

Manuel Killebrew, President
Quitman County Board of Supervisors

Invocation

Reverend Reginald Griffin
Pleasant Hope M.B. Church, Lambert, MS

Historical Reflections

Samuel McCray
Vice-President, Marks Mule Train Historical Society

**The Marks Mule Train
Interpretive Trail**

Leah Kemp
Director, Mississippi State University Carl Small Town Center

Presentations

Mule Train Historical Society Community Awards
Presenters: Dr. Hilliard L. Lackey
Dr. Leniece Smith, Assistant Professor, Jackson State University

2021 Award Honorees

MAN OF THE YEAR
Calvin Upshaw
American Idol Contestant

WOMAN OF THE YEAR
Velma J. Benson-Wilson
Quitman County's Economic & Tourism Director
Quitman County Administrator (2016-2020)

PERSON OF THE YEAR
Senator Robert L. Jackson
MS State Senator, 11 District

Humanitarian Award Honorees

Dr. Richard E. Waller, M.D.
Dr. James E. Warrington, M.D.

Special Recognition

OUTSTANDING DOCUMENTARAN AWARD
Katina Rankin
Emmy Nominee, News Anchor
WATN-TV Local 24 ABC News, Memphis, TN
"The Mule Train: Poor People's Campaign Continued"

2021 Lackey Scholars Awards

Judge Gina Higgins, Shelby County Circuit Court Judge
Alice Smith

Closing Remarks

Dr. Evelyn Jossell
Superintendent of Quitman County Schools

~ **Refreshments** ~

~ HISTORY AND MISSION ~

Mule Train Historical Society

The Mule Train Historical Society was founded in 1996 to coordinate events for the 30th Anniversary in 1998. The mission was developed for long-standing efforts.

The Mule Train Historical Society is dedicated to perpetuating the spirit, memory and purposes of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. inspired Poor People's Campaign especially recognizing and memorizing the men, women and children having journeyed from Marks to Washington, DC by mule-drawn wagons in efforts to assist themselves and the agrarian underclass to rise above circumstances. In pursuance thereof, the Mule Train Historical Society will observe anniversaries, coordinate activities and collaborate with national, state and local organizations in uplifting area residents in the area of education, healthcare, economic development and social integration.



***Photos courtesy of Roland Freeman and Dr. James Goldman.*

~ HISTORY & MISSION ~
Mule Train Lackey Scholars

The Mule Train Lackey Scholars are patterned after the 21 Honors English students mentored and supported by Palmer High School alumnus Dr. Hilliard L. Lackey from 9th through 12th grade from 2014 through 2018 who ranked 1 -21 in a senior class of 96 students and who held all school-wide elected positions while scoring 18-27 on the ACT and earning grade point averages of B and above.

The Mule Train Lackey Scholars are committed to being ideal students at school and in the community. They strive for academic excellence, participate in school activities in supportive or leadership roles, and are engaged in community service. Their quest is to be role models in scholarship, decorum and leadership. Their aim is to score a minimum of 20 on the ACT, carry minimum of a B average, and to earn college scholarship offers as graduation seniors.

2021 QUITMAN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT LACKEY SCHOLARS

9th Grade:	10th Grade:	11th Grade:	12th Grade:
Isaiah Amos	Kweddolyn Anderson	Tyrese Brown	Shakibriana Holt
Sylena Anderson	Jayda Brunt	Jamarius Davis	Darius Huddleston
Bayli Barnes	Sa'Nya Clay	Kameryn Davis	Ambryin Jones
Jaria Davis	Brandon Collins	Anastasia Ellis	Zykah Strickland
Jakeevian Jefferson	Jordyn Conley	Elisha Ellis	Desmond Washington
Jaleah Merrell	Reginald Golden	Raveyn Jackson	Alissa Williams
Jordan Pollard	Caleb Harris	Mercyeanna Jemerson	Taylor Williams
Madison Presley	Ceilayah Hilson	Matthew Laird	Zandaisha Crawford
Markaria Thompson	Makyla Jackson	Amaree Pryor	
Jaylen Watson	Travious Jamison	Ikene Smith	
Jon'lyn Whittker	Keisha Prymer	La'Faith Stevenson	
Zaria Windless	Lakyla Tennin		

2018 Quitman County School District Lackey Scholars, Staff & Martin Luther King, III



~ 2021 AWARD HONOREES ~

**Man of the Year*



**Woman of the Year*



VELMA J. BENSON-WILSON

Quitman County Economic & Tourism Director,
Quitman County Administrator (2016-2020)

**Person of the Year*



SENATOR ROBERT I. JACKSON

MS State Senator, 11 District

**Outstanding Documentarian Award*



KATINA RANKIN

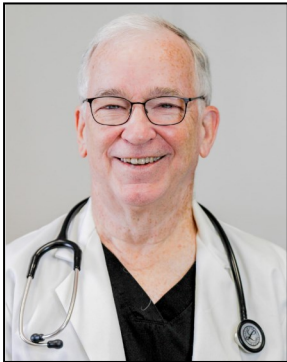
Emmy Nominee, News Anchor, WATN-TV, Local 24 ABC News, Memphis, TN
"The Mule Train: Poor People's Campaign Continued"



~ 2021 HUMANITARIAN AWARD HONOREES ~



DR. RICHARD E. WALLER, M.D.

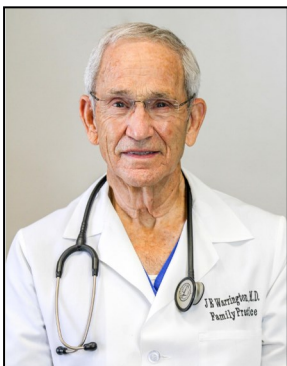


Dr. Richard E. Waller is a life-long resident of Quitman County and a practicing physician for over 47 years in this community. He is a Family Practice specialist in Marks, Mississippi. He attended and graduated from the University of Mississippi School of Medicine in 1974, having over 47 years of diverse experience, especially in Family Practice. He is affiliated with many hospitals including Baptist Memorial Hospital-Desoto, Northwest Mississippi Regional Medical Center and Tallahatchie Critical Access Hospital. Dr. Richard Waller also cooperates with other doctors and physicians in medical groups including Warrington Clinic Pa.

The Quitman County community is blessed to have Dr. Waller as a dedicated Family Practice Specialist who has given back to this community through his exceptional medical care to his patients. He has also provided philanthropic service to help improve the overall health benefits within this county.



DR. JAMES E. WARRINGTON, M.D.



Dr. James E. Warrington is a life-long resident of Quitman County and a Family Practice specialist in Marks, Mississippi. He attended and graduated from the University of Mississippi School of Medicine in 1959, having over 62 years of diverse experience, especially in Family Practice. He is affiliated with many hospitals including Bolivar Medical Center, Greenwood Leflore Hospital, North Sunflower Medical Center Cah, Northwest Mississippi Regional Medical Center and Quitman County Hospital Cah. Dr. James Warrington also cooperates with other doctors and physicians in medical groups including Warrington Clinic Pa.

Dr. Warrington is a blessing to Quitman County and surrounding counties for his exceptional medical services to his patients for over six decades. He loves his community and has played a philanthropy role for its betterment to achieve healthy lifestyles.

Thank You

~ SPONSORS ~



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"This project is supported in part by funding from the Mississippi Arts Commission, a state agency, and in part, from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency."



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~ PLANNING COMMITTEE ~

Dr. Hilliard L. Lackey, III, *Chairperson*
Velma Benson-Wilson, *Public Relations Liaison*
Helen Ingram & Alice Smith, *Program Coordinators*
Sallie Price & Cleotha Saddler, *Tour Coordinators*
The Marks Garden Club, *Decorations*

Samuel McCray, *Co-Chairperson*
Lisa Pryor, *Social Media*
Gabriel Boyd, *Videographer*
Bobby Wright, *Sound Production*
Patricia Pryor-White, *Catering*

Program Designed by Cynthia Goodloe Palmer