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**LOCAL WOMAN FEATURED IN FILM ABOUT MARTIN
LUTHER KING JR.
TO SPEAK ON JAN. 14 AT OCEAN CITY CENTER FOR THE
ARTS**

OCEAN CITY, MD — *Jan. 10, 2023* — A 92-year-old Salisbury woman who in the 1950s dated a young Martin Luther King, Jr. and studied voice with Coretta Scott King — before the couple ever met — will be a featured guest at this Saturday's MLK festivities at the Ocean City Center for the Arts.

Their relationship is the subject of a new film, "The Boston Photograph," to be shown Saturday at the Arts Center at 3:30 p.m. "I look forward to sharing what I remember about them before they were a couple, entered the world stage, and became household names," La Verne Weston Briddell Eagleson said.

Directed by Clennon L. King, this film screening is part of a free open house reception on Jan. 14, 3-5 p.m. at the Ocean City Center for the Arts, 502 94th St. bayside, and the public is invited. The open house, hosted by the Art League of Ocean City, honors the birthday of the civil rights leader and also Berlin native Rev. Dr. Charles Tindley. In addition to "The Boston Photograph," three other films related to civil rights will be shown, including one that pays tribute to Tindley, the musical composer largely responsible for the anthem, "We Shall Overcome," which became the soundtrack of the movement Dr. King led.

La Verne Eagleson was a music student in Boston when she became friendly with and dated MLK. She also attended classes at the New England Conservatory with Coretta Scott, who would later marry Martin. The film was inspired by a photograph of Martin and Coretta taken with La Verne and her first husband, Rev. David Briddell, that had been packed away until La Verne's granddaughter, Syeeda, heard about it and asked to take it to show-and-tell at school. Rev. David Briddell passed away in Feb. 2022 in Berlin. Eagleson still has her health at 92.

Following the screening of "The Boston Photograph," Eagleson and her daughter, Dr. Jocelyn D. Briddell of Berlin, will comment and field questions from the audience about the relationship to Martin and Coretta.

"The Boston Photograph" film is eight minutes in length and produced and directed by Clennon L. King. A native of Albany, Ga., King hails from a prominent civil rights family, where his grandfather for whom he is named was a buggy driver for Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee, while his father was a lawyer for scores of civil rights demonstrators during the historic Albany Movement, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The film has been accepted into the 7th Annual 2023 Ocean City Film Festival, to be held in the resort March 2-5, 2023.

Clennon King filmed the story at the Berlin home of Jocelyn Briddell in Jan. 2021.

The film is "a time capsule of a story that is nothing short of amazing," Clennon King said. The director had previously interviewed Eagleson for an article for Boston Magazine, but said, "I wanted to make this journey to this lane and this house owned by her daughter [in Berlin] to hear her story again directly from her lips."

The film will be shown along with three other films curated from the Black History showcase of the upcoming Ocean City Film Festival to be held in the resort in March. The Saturday event will include a live

musical performance by Bryan Russo and the Tindley Family Gospel Choir, an “I Have a Dream” art show by students of Most Blessed Sacrament School in Ocean Pines, and complimentary refreshments. The Town of Ocean City is celebrating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during Dreamfest weekend, Jan. 13-15, 2023, with a three-day music event held at the Convention Center’s Performing Arts Center. Guests who attend the free open house at the Art League’s Arts Center will receive a 2-for-1 coupon good for ticket discounts to the R&B concerts at the Performing Arts Center.

The Ocean City Center for the Arts at 502 94th St. is open daily until 4 p.m., and admission is always free. More information is available at OCart.org or by calling 410-524-9433.

The Art League of Ocean City is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing the visual arts to the community through education, exhibits, scholarship, programs and community art projects.

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EDITORS: Photo attached of Eagleson with The Boston Photograph.

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