

## Moral Monday Group Rally Set for Boone

Written by Steve Frank

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It was 50 years ago today that Martin Luther King Jr. gave his “I have a dream” speech in the march on Washington, and with that as a backdrop, the “Forward Together/Moral Monday” movement is holding events—13 of them—across the state today, one of them in Boone. Event promoters say it will spotlight recent legislation in Raleigh that they say has attempted to turn the clocks backward on equal rights and social justice in the state. The rally, called “Taking the Dream Home,” will start at 5:30 p.m. at Harvest House on Boone Heights Drive. and will feature both local and state-wide speakers and musical entertainment. The 13 simultaneous rallies across North Carolina include one in every Congressional district in the state that follow four months of consecutive Monday protests and civil disobedience at the General Assembly in Raleigh. Marjorie McKinney, an organizer for the Boone event, said, “Concerned citizens are gathering to voice disagreement with government policies that disproportionately impact the poor, the unemployed, the young, and the elderly.” While there were nearly 1,000 arrested in Raleigh for peaceably occupying the rotunda in the General Assembly building, some 10 people from Watauga County were among those arrested, and they will be recognized as “Moral Witnesses” at the Watauga rally. Performers including Melissa Reaves, the choir of the Mennonite Brethren Church, and jazzman Todd Wright, providing musical entertainment at the rally. Local speakers will include Dr. Matthew Robinson of Appalachian State University; Rev. Tommy Brown, Presbyterian campus minister; Todd Carter of the Hospitality House; Rio Tazewell, Boone Community Network; Dr. Marye Hacker; among others.