

Panelists discuss future of King's dream in the Twin City

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

Fresh on the heels of last Monday's Martin Luther King observances, a panel of local leaders met to discuss whether King's hopes were being realized in the Twin City. The group determined, among other things, that the basis of King's dream, though shaken and struggling in Winston-Salem, has potential. One panel member even suggested that something as simple as a pot-luck dinner could go a long way towards making King's dream a reality.

The discussion, held last Thursday at the Glade Street YWCA, brought up the issue of segregation of the races in the local community. Ruth Norman, of Leadership Winston-Salem, suggested that King's dream cannot be fulfilled while the city remains racially and economically polarized.

"I see a community here that is fractured along the lines of black and white, rich and poor, upper-middle class and lower class and religious affiliations," she said. "To feel a sense of community, people have to feel a sense of inclusion."

Jeff Coppage said that the key to salvaging the principles outlined in King's "I Have A Dream" speech must begin with a willingness on the part of the majority population to overcome fears and suspicions about minorities. Coppage, who spent two years in Togo, West Africa, said that he was able to overcome some of own preconceptions by spending time with the African people. That same type of understanding is possible in Winston-Salem, he said, if both whites and Afro-Americans are willing to reach out to one another.

"We, the white majority, have never come close to the black minority in this country. When I was in Togo, I was often the only white person. But they were able to minister to me out of their own pain and suffering. The model for integration doesn't come from America, it comes from Africa," said Coppage, director of the Prodigals house for ex-offenders. "The dream is not celebrated in the white community. It is seen as a black dream."

Coppage said that King's hopes were for the welfare of both black Americans and whites but that, over the years, white America has viewed his message as "for blacks only."

Current national trends toward

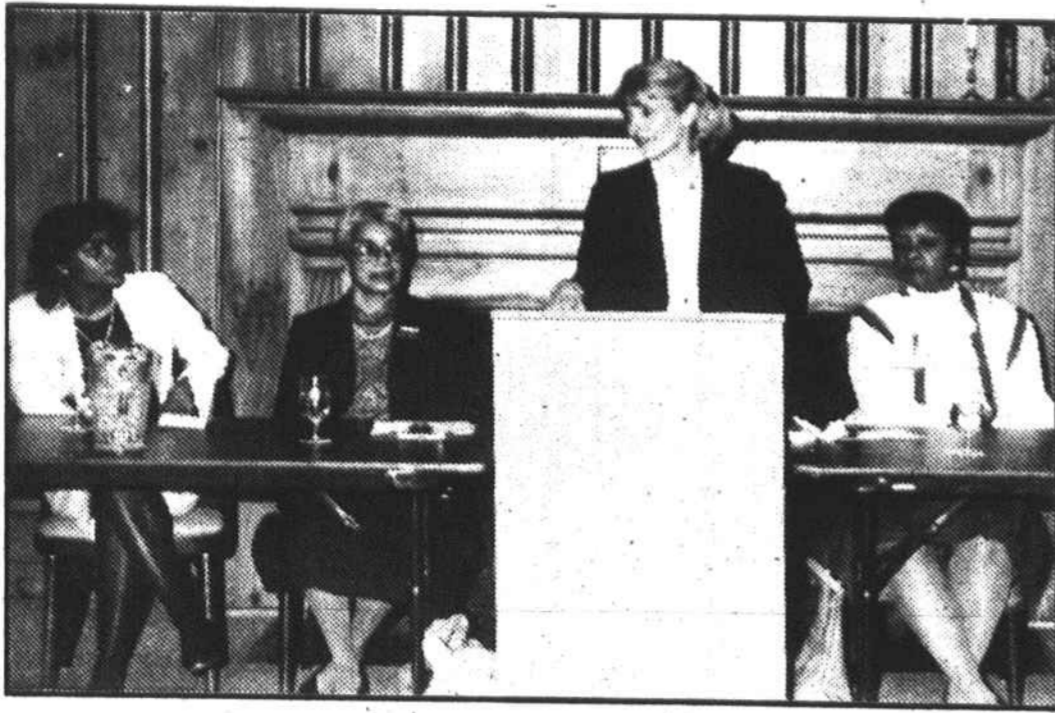


photo by Charmane Delaverson

Ann Hensel of the Samaritan Soup Kitchen Ministries discusses the strength of MLK's dream in the Twin City

greed and selfishness, Norman said, have hindered the maturity of King's dream. Human ideals have been lost in the shuffle for material gain, she said, and government cut-backs have further limited the spread of King's dream of equality. While Afro-Americans have made progress, Norman said a closer look at the flip side of that progress is not encouraging.

"We can travel in comfort on trains, planes and buses that previously were not available to us, but many of us can't afford the tickets. We now can vote but many of us are not registered and too many of those who are registered don't exercise their right to vote. We can enter colleges that were once closed to us but many of us are not prepared to enter those colleges. We can apply for jobs in business and industry, but too many of us don't have the necessary qualifications," she said. "There has been an acceptance of greed as the motivation for government policy without regard to the trickle down effect. We have been emphasizing material acquisitions to the neglect of the intangibles such as pride in doing a good job and feeling good about our successes."

Angela Wright, managing editor of the *Winston-Salem Chronicle*, also was not convinced that King's dream is thriving in Winston-Salem. She said that although it is important to remember King's eloquence, it is essential that the message behind his eloquence not be lost.

"Martin Luther King was more than an eloquent black activist simply reciting quotes," Wright said. "He managed to prick the moral consciousness of this nation. I believe that if he were here today,

he would not be happy. He may be satisfied, but not happy."

Ann Hensel, of the Samaritan Ministries Soup Kitchen and Inn, admitted that her view of whether King's dream was alive and well today may be "skewed" because she deals with people that are far removed from the mainstream of society.

"I think we've made progress," she said, "but if I had black skin I may not feel the same way."

But Hensel said she also believed that "there is no way for Martin Luther King's dream to come true as long as we have drug abuse."

Addie Hymes, director of the Upward Bound after-school tutorial program, said that education is also a key in realizing King's dream.

"We feel in Upward Bound that King's dream is being realized. We see it everyday," she said. "We help our students get a larger view of themselves. If they get a larger view of themselves, they certainly will get a larger view of the world."

Coppage said that the key to realizing King's dream may very well rest in pot luck dinners.

"We've experimented with having members from a black church and a white church get together once a month for pot luck dinners. They were very helpful and we each learned a lot about one another's churches," said Coppage. "There's no law that says churches have to be segregated. They're that way because we let them be that way. The dream included peaceful co-existence but it went much further. There are no neutral relationships. Is there more love between blacks and whites in this community, or are we just co-existing?"

Zion Memorial to present FAMU Choir in concert

The Zion Memorial Baptist Church Gospel Choir will present the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Choir in concert Sunday, Jan. 29, at 5 p.m. at the church, 101 N. Dunleith Ave.

The 32-member choir is under the direction of Dr. Vernon L. Smith and will be accompanied by Dr. Mary Roberts, who also teaches on the FAMU music faculty.

The choir will sing a varied program ranging from the classics to spirituals and gospel music.

It will render selections by such composers as Scarlatti, Dett, Ran-

dall Thompson, Bach, Cheatham and Schubert.

While not as well known as the famous FAMU, whose half-time shows of quick-step precision drills and choreographed performances of Top 40 popular hits not only thrust it into the national limelight, but also became the model for virtually all black college half-time shows and greatly influenced the concept of half-time entertainment at large, white universities.

Dr. Smith is a native of Jacksonville, Fla., and has directed the

FAMU choir and taught voice at A&M since 1978. He holds degrees from Hampton University, the University of Florida and Florida State University. Prior to assuming his current position, Smith taught music in the public schools of Jacksonville and at Hampton University.

The current tour includes performances of Orangeburg, S.C., Charlotte and Hampton, Va.

For more information call Dr. James Kinchen at 750-2525 or the Rev. Joseph Jones, host pastor, at 725-7390.

No admission will be charged at the concert.

COMMUNITY NEWS DEADLINES ...

The *Chronicle* welcomes community news and calendar items.

Announcements should be concise and typed or neatly printed. They should include the day, time, place and sponsors of the event, plus a number to call for additional information.

Announcements should be addressed to the *Winston-Salem Chronicle* Community News, P.O. Box 3154, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102. The deadline for announcements is Monday at 5:30 p.m.

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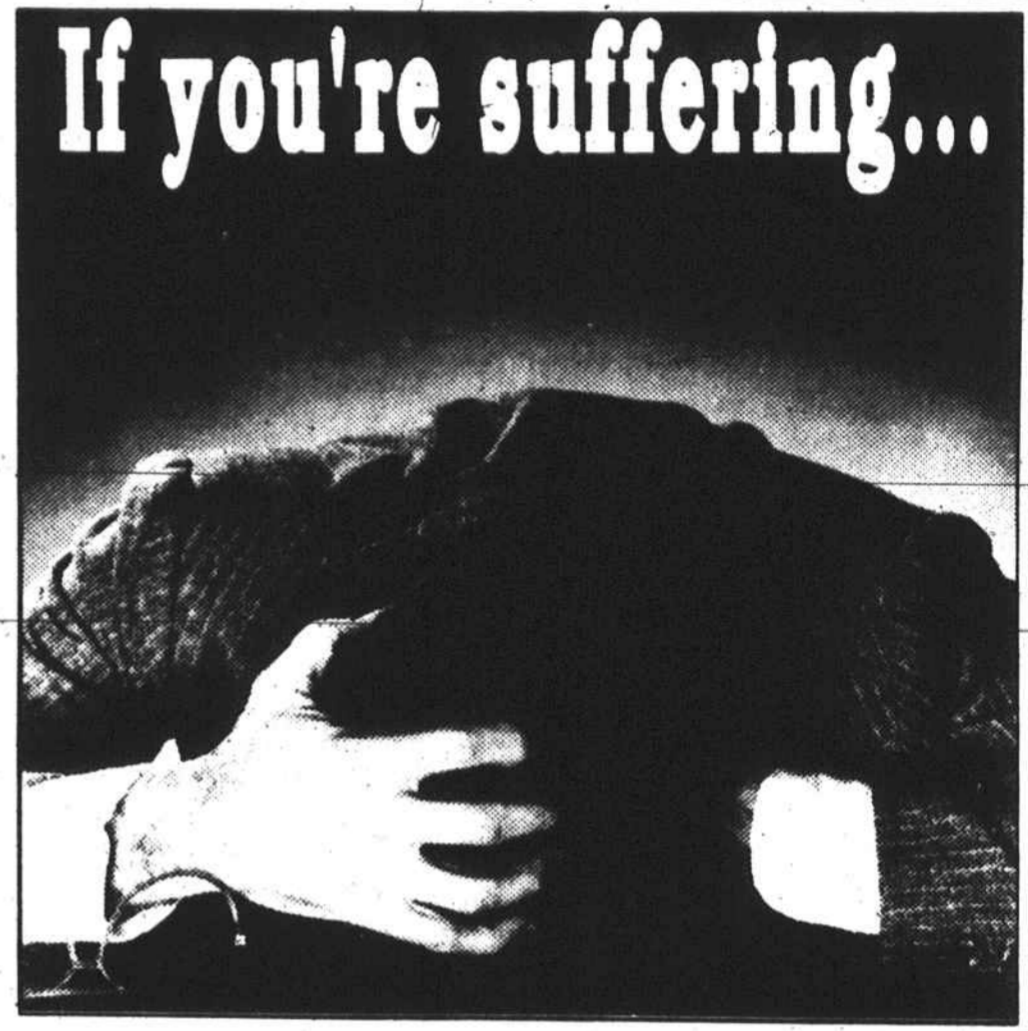
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If you're suffering...

I'd like to take a moment to tell you what not to do if you do suffer from serious neck, shoulder, or back pain.

First of all, don't assume it will go away. Never self-diagnose or follow the advice of a nonprofessional. Don't spend a fortune on dime store remedies and don't increase your exercise regimen arbitrarily.

In fact, don't do anything that might aggravate your problem until a qualified professional can evaluate your situation; someone who can give you positive answers and results, a Chiropractor. Call us immediately.

For a common sense approach to pain relief and improved health, find out for yourself that CHIROPRACTIC WORKS. To help you find out, we will do a complete chiropractic consultation and examination, including X-rays (procedures that normally cost \$130.00 or more) for \$25.00.

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