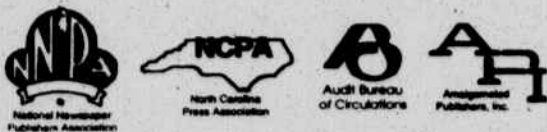


OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

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The Home Town Lost

More people attended the Wake Forest-North Carolina State football game at Grove Stadium than voted in the last primary elections. More attend the drag races at Bowman Gray Stadium than cast votes in that area. It occurs to me, why don't we have elections at sporting events? That way people could plunk their votes at the turnstiles and no one would be inconvenienced.

The city spent \$120,000 for 12,000 votes — \$10 a vote, which is less than the price of admission to a sporting event. This bolsters my argument for the two events to be combined.

ESPN could broadcast the election/game, and we could all be entertained by a half-time show of candidates "strutting their stuff."

The mayoral candidates could talk about a glowing future for the city, and the two new African-American candidates who won their primary races for alderman could talk about diversity, economic development, school vouchers, and nudity.

We would, of course, have instant replay for when a candidate got a foul for illegal procedure or unsportsmanlike conduct.

During the last election, sadly, the home town lost. The stadium was less than half full. Some spectators were heard saying, "That election doesn't count, it was just the primary (preseason). Nobody votes in the primary but rookies, diehards and vote-switchers."

Taking a look at the scoreboard, we see that the two "free agent" African Americans will advance to the "playoffs." If they are successful, they will create a majority — an African-American majority! This will be the first time in the history of Winston-Salem that such a phenomenon has happened.

All of you non-voting fans and spectators had better pay close attention to the training camps of those rookies, diehards and vote-switchers for this post-season event. If not, you will find yourselves in your usual position, stunned and confused in the post-game interview."

With this in mind, it would be advisable for all tailgaters, churches, sororities, fraternities, and social boules to turn their "good-timing" and ego-boosting events into something special by getting people to the polls to vote Nov. 4.

Looking at the two candidates makes interesting commentary. One is a Democrat, Fred Terry, the other a Republican, Vernon Robinson. We will present a closer look at these two candidates in future articles; however, a preliminary introduction here is offered for brief comparison.

Terry is a soft-spoken, long-term resident, containing a goodly mixture of patience, animation, and persistency. In conversation he displays a willingness to give and take and is seasoned enough to avoid smugness. He would have been a good "night student" who toiled the fields during the day and became educated at night.

Robinson is also a long-term resident. He is well-dressed, aggressive, and often shoots from the hip. He would have been a good "day student," where virtue and books were the theme and humanity the background.

Terry can top anybody with his personnel acumen. Robinson carries the key to school vouchers, choice, and charter schools.

Both districts are majority Caucasian with large segments of minorities — including Hispanics. What do we give up just to win a simple numbers game? The dilemma in the local African-American community would be similar to the national one we now face since the Congressional Black Caucus has joined with the Republican majority to defeat national testing for public school children.

Would an African-American Republican vote be representative of the views of its constituency on crucial issues like education and government involvement?

Would it rather reflect a generic fiscal conservative ideology manifested in Republican politics? Would the city be better served if another view were presented, i.e. fiscal conservatism vs. social conservatism?

Robinson could certainly articulate this alternative view.

The coaching strategy here suggests that we call a time-out and decide whether we should go for the field goal instead of the "Hail Mary," because there isn't any time on the game clock.

— English Bradshaw



The Chronicle welcomes letters as well as guest columns from its readers. Letters should be as concise as possible and should be typed or legibly printed. To ensure the authenticity of the letter, you must include the name, address and telephone number of the writer. Columns must follow the same guidelines and will be published if they are of interest to our general readership. The Chronicle will not publish any letters or columns that arrive without this information. We reserve the right to edit letters and columns for brevity and clarity. Submit letters and columns to: Chronicle Mailbag, P.O. Box 1636, Winston-Salem, NC 27102.

Counselor has the right stuff

To the Editor:

Carolyn Gray is a guidance counselor at Carver High School in Winston-Salem.

All too frequently good guidance practices and techniques are lacking when seniors find themselves at the point of graduation. During their high school tenure, often they have been given very little help in course selection, managing time and study practices, discovering and remedying their weaknesses, selecting higher education institutions and courses of study — and the list goes on.

What are the chances that there is a guidance counselor out there somewhere who defies those odds? Well, visit Carver High School and meet Carolyn Gray. She exemplifies the best in her concern for the welfare of her students. Whether it's a monthly talk to a distraught senior girl or a strong no-frills admonishment to a rebellious senior boy, Mrs. Gray is up to and on the job. In her concern for par-



Gray



ents to know what is happening with their children, she calls them on or off their jobs with information that is timely and understandable. Whether she's dealing with the parent or the student, there is always in evidence a deep sense of caring. There is nothing better nor more profound than for a student to feel that his or her being is worthwhile. The ways and means for the gifted, the over-achievers, are usually open and apparent; for others, frequently the way is not so clear — and that is where good guidance comes into play.

Mrs. Gray is a noble asset to the field of guidance and a blessing to Carver High School and its surrounding community.

Gloria Love McIver

Thanks for Roundtable Support

To the Editor:

The members of the Black Leadership Roundtable Steering Committee would like to thank the many citizens who participated in the second community forum held Sept. 25 at the Anderson Center. Your participation in these meetings and your work on the various committees show your commitment to helping address the many problems facing our community today.

We invite everyone in the community to join with us as we continue the struggle for social, political and economic equality. As one of our early civil rights leaders once said, "At the ban-

quet table of nature there are no reserved seats; you get what you can take, and you keep what you can hold; if you can't take anything, you won't get anything; and if you can't hold anything, you won't keep anything; and you can't take anything without organization."

The Black Leadership Roundtable will hold its next community meeting Nov. 20. In the interim, we encourage you to get involved by contacting Joycelyn Johnson, Khalid Griggs, Larry Womble or Linda Sutton. You may write to P.O. Box 1354, Winston-Salem, NC 27102 or call 767-6355 for more information.

Black Leadership Roundtable Steering Committee

For the Children's Sake

The well-being of the children in the Winston-Salem area is in jeopardy. According to an extensive study recently released by the nonprofit organization Zero Population Growth (ZPG), children of Winston-Salem and the surrounding area are suffering.

The study is unique in that it focuses on children in urban areas. ZPG's 1997 Children's Environmental Index evaluates more than 200 cities on 15 population-related indicators that specifically affect children. These indicators include air quality, toxic releases, toxic waste sites, education, crime, births to teens, percentage of low birth weights and the percentage of children living in poverty, among others.

In Winston-Salem our environmental score was elevated by our high amounts of toxic releases (EPA data), although on the positive side, we have had no major toxic waste sites identified. These scores combined to give us a score of 9.1 out of 10. That is good but could stand improvement.

In Winston-Salem, our infant mortality rate is a staggering 15.3 percent, low birth rates are 11.5 percent, and our births to teens are 16.1 percent. These combined with the number of physicians to give us a score of only 3.1 out of 10. This was the lowest score for the cities in North Carolina.

In Winston-Salem, 23 percent of our children live in poverty, while the unemployment rate is 4.3 percent. These figures combine with our median family income of \$34,007 to give us a score of 5.8 out of 10. Our score is lower than those for Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro and Raleigh, which were also included in the study.

As a teacher in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, I took special pride in seeing that our ranking in education was 8.5 out of

10, which did exceed the scores of the other North Carolina cities in the study!

However, cities with high poverty rates, like ours, also have a higher percentage of births to teens. In fact, almost one million American teens become pregnant each year, about 10 percent of all girls ages 15 to 19. U.S. teen pregnancy rates are the highest among all industrialized nations and rival

Charlotte ranked 105th with a score of 5.575.
 Durham ranked 87th with a score of 5.997.
 Greensboro ranked 72nd with a score of 6.240.
 Raleigh ranked 42nd with a score of 6.854.

Now more than ever, our children need your help! As a teacher, I am gravely concerned about the quality of life of my students, the future leaders of our community. It is time for us to look at

Guest Column

Luann Bridle

some developing nations. Many young mothers face few educational and job opportunities and a continuing cycle of poverty for themselves and their children.

Congressional cutbacks on public assistance programs, including welfare and food programs, jeopardize poor children's opportunities to develop into healthy, educated and productive adults. Lawmakers are also targeting programs such as the Clean Air and Clean Water acts, which protect the environmental quality and the health of America's children. The ZPG report points out the interrelated nature of children's well-being and the physical and social conditions they live in. ZPG cautions us to weigh carefully the costs of reducing programs that benefit children and protect the environment.

Winston-Salem was ranked number 155 among 219 cities, placing in the bottom half of the cities studied. Our overall score was 4.447 out of 10 points. All four of the other N.C. cities studied fared better.

Washington and the power they have over the public assistance programs and environmental management of our precious resources. It is time to look to Raleigh and the power they have over the same. It is also time to look to our city and county governments for the powers they have. It is time to look to our community leaders, churches and schools to use the powers that they have to enrich the lives of our young people. It is time to look to the families who can ensure children are doing their best in schools by closely monitoring homework and daily progress. The time is now! We have to start looking at the interrelated nature of urban problems and prioritizing areas of need. Citizens must begin to take actions today that will ensure a quality future for all. To request a copy of the Children's Environmental index, call ZPG at 1-800-767-1956.

(Luann Bridle teaches in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools and is the Governor's Conservation Educator of the Year.)

FAMOUS BLACK QUOTATIONS

I do not believe that the meaning of the Constitution was forever "fixed" at the Philadelphia Convention ... To the contrary, the government they devised was defective from the start, requiring several amendments, a civil war, and momentous social transformation to attain the system of constitutional government, and its respect for the individual freedoms and human rights we hold as fundamental today.

— Thurgood Marshall