

OPINION/ FORUM

THE CHRONICLE Celebrating 88 Years

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All Acts of Violence Deserve Our Indignation

Sandy Hook Elementary has now joined the infamous ranks of Columbine, Aurora and Virginia Tech – all scenes of horrific acts of gun violence that left many dead and families shattered.

Understandably, the nation's collective interest is piqued and heartstrings pulled when such senseless acts of violence are committed – especially against the young and innocent. But let's spread the outrage around a little.

Gun violence is a reality in American cities and towns each and every day, though it may not garner international headlines. The Windy City, for example, has become the Bloody City. The murder rate in

Chicago is staggering. This year alone, nearly 500 murders have been committed. Many of the victims have been kids like 15-year-old Porshe Foster, who was fatally shot earlier this month as she stood in a friend's backyard during a sleepover.

During the weekend before the Sandy Hook tragedy, eight people were killed and more than 30 were injured in Chicago as a result of gun violence. Are their deaths less newsworthy because they did not occur in the same place as a result of the same gunmen, or because these victims lived in the inner-city and not the suburbs?

While last week's school shooting in Connecticut was jarring to all of us, we are not immune to senseless violence here in our own city. Police still have made no arrest in the nearly seven year old murder of 13-year-old Isaiah Brooks. The local honors student was found shot to death on a drive-



Isaiah Brooks



Porshe Foster

way on Machine Street.

During remarks he made over the weekend at an interfaith prayer vigil in Newtown, Conn., President Obama said of the Sandy Hook massacre, "We can't accept events like this as routine." Sadly, though, we have become immune to violence in this nation – the gun capital of the world. Acts like the one that occurred at Sandy Hook still rattle us – at least temporarily – but the everyday gun-related deaths barely register with most of us and hardly ever create a national uproar, especially if the victims are black or brown.

There should be indignation over Isaiah's death and others whose lives have been senselessly claimed. When we accept violence of any sort as the norm, we not only surrender a piece of our humanity, but belittle victims and disrespect the families that love them.

If there is one very narrow silver lining in the Sandy Hook tragedy, it is the very real possibility that lawmakers may finally act on an assault weapons ban. Pushing through such legislation won't be a walk in the park. The National Rifle Association (NRA) has most conservative members of Congress wrapped around their AK-47-bearing fingers. A ban on assault weapons also won't solve the problem of everyday violence in the innercity, where handguns are often the weapon of choice. But a ban on such weapons – which were not what those who drafted the Constitution had in mind – is a start.

THE PROBLEM:
 FIGHTING THE IMAGE OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AS THE PARTY OF OLD, WHITE GUYS...

THE SOLUTION:

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thanks for Coverage

To the Editor:

Hello – hope you're having a pleasant day. Season's Greetings to you and your quality newspaper!

I am Ronnie "Dale" Goins writing to you from the Cherry Street prison. Your paper did an article on Forsyth Jail & Prison Ministry's recent fundraiser art show at Forsyth Country Club.

I'm the winner of the Prison Entry "Brother's Keeper." Thank you for the media exposure of my work and thank you most importantly for coverage of the ministry that goes on here and in this wonderful city. Great city – greatest people!

I'm from Mt. Airy, N.C. I've lived in Winston in the past (and probably will in the future, as well. Hope to be newsworthy (for) my art someday when I'm out. Again – Thank you!

Sincerely,
 Ronnie Dale Goins



Goins' winning piece

A Giant of a Man

Mae Rodney
 Guest Columnist

On Nov. 20, 2012, Winston-Salem lost a loyal friend and champion for all.

Although Rev. Cedric S. Rodney was brought to the city by the Southern Province of the Moravian Church, he served the entire city with distinction. His lifetime commitment to being a pastor to all of God's children allowed him to provide a service to all; he shared kind words and a warm smile with everyone that he met. He did not concentrate his attention on any one type of agency or cause. He willingly contributed his expertise to counseling individuals in personal crisis and planning extended living facilities for senior citizens. In later years, he served on the Senior Services Board, as well as with Hospice. He also offered his expertise to educating young people through his tenure on the Winston-Salem Forsyth Board of Education, the Salem Academy and College Boards of Trustees for two terms, and working full-time at Winston-Salem State University.

His appreciation of history was demonstrated by his extended work with area historical societies including Old Salem Museums and Gardens, and most significantly assisting with the planning and restoration of the original St. Philip's Moravian Church, which led to the inclusion of the African American experience at Old Salem. He also participated on the Wachovia Historical Society and the Bethabara Historical Society boards. He even transformed



Dr. Mae Rodney with her late husband, Dr. Cedric Rodney.

his fascination with amateur radios into a service for the community. He performed telephone patches for many missionaries who wanted to remain connected with their local family members. He welcomed the area TV station to his home based station when there was a hurricane in the West Indies. He served multiple roles with the Forsyth Amateur Radio Club for many years. He was also a member of the Downtown Rotary, where he often gave the noon time prayer.

As a minister, he was very proud of the fact they he had preached at many churches in Winston-Salem, not just to Moravian congregations. His ability to construct and masterfully deliver a prayer that did not offend, but instead lifted everyone up, put him on the top of the list to pray at groundbreaking, ribbon cuttings and other public and private events.

Cedric was just as involved at Winston-Salem State University, where he served on many committees and had a multiplicity of positions from teacher, advisor to the James A. Gray

Distinguished Professor of Religion and Ethics. At the university, he fulfilled his life dream to be a chaplain. He enjoyed teaching and shaping the lives of the many young people that he taught and counseled.

His second career at the university was serving as the James A. Gray Distinguished Professor of Religion and Ethics. It was the pinnacle of his career. He was able to travel throughout the United States listening to and recruiting and then sharing the best ethicists and preachers with his adopted hometown. He personally enjoyed listening to the speakers, often for the second time. He was frequently in awe of their knowledge and skills. He was proud of the quality of speakers that he brought to the university.

The number of cards, calls, prayers, well-wishes that the Rodney family received after his passing truly validated the impact that Cedric Sydney Rodney had on Winston-Salem and the Winston-Salem State University community. Our hearts and spirits were lifted especially by the carefully thought out words that confirmed he accom-

plished his mission on Earth. He did the work that his Heavenly Father commissioned him to perform. He was a mentor, friend and comforter to so many people.

The family has his earthly possessions – radios, clocks, cameras etc. and wonderful memories of life with a loving father and husband. These items will provide us with some comfort; we also have friends who offer comfort. We pray that the residents of the greater community will find the comfort they need and the courage to emulate his values and ethics as you work with each other to make Winston-Salem the best place to live in the United States.

A heartfelt thank-you is shared for spreading the word about his death through print and electronic media. Thank you to the staff and congregation at Home Moravian Church for hosting his requested Moravian Life Celebration. A special thanks is shared with Mark Wright for streaming his service live so many people who could not attend the celebration could "indeed attend" the service. To the entire Winston-Salem community: your prayers, cards and memorials to St. Philip's Moravian Church and the WSSU Friends of the Library have indeed allowed the Rodney Family to take two more steps forward in this new journey without him. The many memories or reflections that you shared with us indeed helped us. Again, thank you for your kindness.

You are invited to enjoy and contribute to the Rev. Dr. Cedric S. Rodney blog at <http://drrevrodney.wordpress.com/>

Dr. Mae L. Rodney, the widow of Dr. Cedric S. Rodney, is the director of Library Services at