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Grandberry to leave the Urban League



Keith Grandberry meets then Sen. Barack Obama at a 2008 National Urban League gathering.

BY LAYLA GARMS
THE CHRONICLE

The Winston-Salem Urban League and Keith Grandberry – its president and CEO – are parting ways.

The circumstances regarding his departure are unclear, as both Grandberry and members of the Urban League Board of Directors have been elusive and circumspect.

Grandberry told *The Chronicle* Saturday that he is resigning from the agency and that he would provide further details on Monday. Numerous efforts to reach him Monday were unsuccessful. After numerous more attempts on Tuesday, Grandberry did contact the paper, but abruptly postponed interviews, citing a medical emergency with a family member.

Urban League Board Chair Evelyn Acree, who also confirmed Saturday that

See Grandberry on A10



Chief Barry Rountree wants guns off the streets.

Spike in gun violence a concern

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

City leaders are making a push to reduce gun violence this year after last year's spike in gun-related homicides.

Winston-Salem experienced a stark increase in murders last year; there were 15 of them, compared to eight in 2012. Guns were used in all but one of the 2013 homicides.

"We all should be concerned that choices were made to use a firearm to settle certain disputes that they had with others," said Police Chief Barry Rountree.

The 2013 homicide rate didn't set a city record. According to Rountree, the '12 rate was an anomaly. There were also 15 homicides in 2011 and 11 homicides in 2010. There were 16 homicides in the city in 2009. Rountree, a 25-year department veteran who became chief in June, also pointed out that Winston-Salem continues to have far fewer homicides than other similar-size North Carolina cities like Greensboro, which had 28 murders last year, and Durham, which experienced 32 homicides in 2013.

Rountree is pushing for funds to implement a gun buyback program, which would pay residents up to \$150 to turn in weapons. Similar gun buyback programs across the country exchange weapons for cash with no questions asked. Rountree unsure if the local program will employ that policy.

He did say that after guns are purchased, they would be checked to see if they have been stolen or used in the commission of crime. Stolen weapons would be returned to their rightful owners. The other guns the department purchases can't be destroyed, per a state law that took effect last year, but may be stored, donated or sold to licensed gun dealers.

"That's not a cure all for everything. I know that as well as everyone else in the city. That's just one small piece of our overall strategy," Rountree said of the proposal, which was first pitched to members of the City Council late last year.

The chief also has an alternative proposal that would encourage residents to turn in weapons without being paid for them.

Council members are being asked to approve \$10,000 for the buyback program, with the Police Department contributing another \$10,000. Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke had the Council's decision on the program tabled until information about the city's previous gun payback



Mayor Pro Tempore Burke



Jennifer Manner owns Mozelle's Fresh Southern Bistro.

Photos by Layla Garms

Dig In!

Popular eateries to offer half-price menu faves

BY LAYLA GARMS
THE CHRONICLE

Foodies across the city will have the chance to sample some of the best of the Twin City has to offer this month.

More than two dozen downtown eateries are expected to offer some of their most popular dishes at half price during dinner hours on Tuesdays in January, as part of the Big Eat. The annual promotion has become a staple in many restaurants' calendar year, a way of kicking the new year off with an influx of sales, treating regulars to a great meal at a reduced price and, hopefully, attracting some new faces to the table.

"The original intent was to kind of showcase a variety of our menus and to reintroduce or introduce us to a wider audience of the Triad," Vivian Joiner, co-owner of the popular Sweet Potatoes, 529 N. Trade St., said of The Big Eat "...It has worked. We get to see a lot of folks who, for whatever reason, don't come out to dinner, and we get to highlight and showcase what we do. Most every year, we get new regulars."

At Sweet Potatoes, The Big Eat days coincide with Half Price Wine Night, drawing a large crowd to the restaurant on a night that is typi-



Vivian Joiner outside of Sweet Potatoes.

See Eat on A8

See Violence on A8

Magnet programs to use upcoming fair to shine

BY LAYLA GARMS
THE CHRONICLE



Parker

In her three years as principal of Mineral Springs Middle School, a magnet school with an arts and leadership theme, Danyelle Parker has worked hard to take the school and its students and staff to the next level.

Reducing discipline problems, embracing a kid-focused approach to learning and providing every possible opportunity for her 400-plus students to explore, learn and grow

See Magnets on A10



WS/FCS Photo

Angela Neal works with students at Mineral Springs Middle School.

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