

# OP/ED



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## Beat the Deadline, Know the Rules

BY DEMOCRACY NORTH CAROLINA

There's an important deadline coming up that too many North Carolinians don't know about. Friday, Oct. 10 is the deadline to register to vote in the Nov. 4 midterm election. The Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled last week that Same Day Voter Registration will be reinstated for this election but that decision has been appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. With all the changes, many advocates are urging people to meet the Oct. 10 registration deadline.

Same Day Registration allows citizens who miss the October 10 deadline to register and vote on the same day during the Early Voting period. The state legislature eliminated that policy in an elections overhaul bill in 2013, but voting rights groups challenged the new law in the courts.

"Despite the recent court ruling, we encourage citizens to register or update their voter registration by October 10," said Bob Hall, director of the non-partisan voting rights group Democracy North Carolina. "It is possible that the Supreme Court will quere the Circuit Court's decision, so the safest path is for people to act now to verify that their registration is current." Updates to voter registration include notifying the county board of elections of any name changes and address changes that voters have experienced since the last election.

There are plenty of reasons to vote in 2014. This year, voters share responsibility for choosing a U.S. Senator, state legislators, a majority of the state Supreme Court judges, and numerous county officials. "These people make and enforce laws that affect your life every day," said Hall. "North Carolina has seen cuts to funding for schools, cuts to health-care and in other vital services. Voting is a way to hold politicians accountable for the decisions they make."

Hall added, "Politicians pay attention to who votes and who doesn't. Don't let them make a decision without consulting you. Don't give up your power."

Voters can cast a ballot in 2014 one of three ways: (1) Vote early between Thursday, Oct. 23 and Saturday, Nov. 1; (2) vote by mail by requesting an absentee ballot by Oct. 28; or (3) vote on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 4.

No photo ID is required to vote in 2014. A poll official may ask voters if they have a photo ID, but they do not need to show an ID to vote until 2016.

Learn more about all the new voting rules at [www.NCvoter.org](http://www.NCvoter.org). And keep this hotline number for questions about voting or if you experience problems at the polls: 888-OUR-VOTE.

*Democracy North Carolina is a nonpartisan organization that uses research, organizing, and advocacy to increase voter participation, reduce the influence of big money in politics and achieve a government that is truly of the people, for the people and by the people.*



### Bowl

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"The MACHE Bowl is designed to provide a venue for students from various disciplines and backgrounds to come together to share their expertise to address a specific health disparity issue," according to Dr. Ronny Bell, Professor of Epidemiology and Prevention at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center and Director of the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity, the event's organizing sponsor. "We know that health disparities and the underlying contributors to these disparities are long-standing and will require a collective strategy to achieve health equity. So, the MACHE Bowl gives students and the audience the opportunity to see



Bell

how these collaborative approaches could be applied in the real world."

A tribute will be paid to Dr. Maya Angelou during the evening. The event is free and open to the public.

"The MACHE Bowl provides an engaging, interactive opportunity for members of the community to see how a multi-disciplinary approach can be used to have an impact on the health issues they see in the community on a daily basis. It also gives members of our community the chance to meet with some of our best and brightest students from our area institutions," said Dr. Bell. A reception will follow the competition.

Learn more at [www.wakehealth.edu/mache](http://www.wakehealth.edu/mache) or by calling 336-713-7600.

### Contest

from page A4

Business Loan Committee, which comprises seven members from such occupations as banking, real-estate, law and small business. Doug Atkinson, the committee chair, said the Hinsleys' proposal was among a very competitive group of submissions.

"We were particularly impressed with the Camel City Caravans plan," Atkinson said, "because it is creative, it complements existing downtown businesses, it serves those who live and work downtown, and it gives downtown visitors easier access to all dining and entertainment options that downtown offers."

The Small Business Plan Competition was designed to help entrepreneurs develop sound business plans. Entries had to be for micro-businesses (five employees or less) located within the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area. This area includes downtown and portions of the northern, southern and eastern quadrants of the city. Business plans must

also create low- to moderate-income jobs or benefit low- to moderate-income residents.

In February, the city received 35 business proposals. Of these, 20 were invited to write and submit complete business plans, and 14 followed through. Although the Small Business Loan Committee chose only one winner,

everyone who submitted a business plan is eligible to apply for a small business loan, and can receive guidance on how to improve their business plan.

For more information on the city's programs to assist small businesses, go to [Development.CityofWS.org](http://Development.CityofWS.org) or call CityLink 311.

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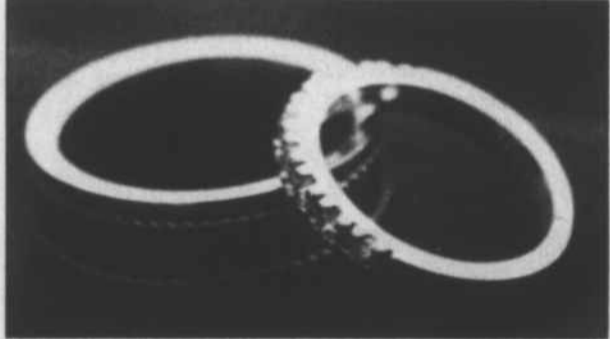
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## Promote Marriage Rather Than Fight 'Equality'



**Sharon Brooks Hodge**  
 Guest Columnist



Two interesting events regarding black marriage and family occurred during September.

On Sept. 24, the Pew Research Center released a new report revealing that more young adults are opting not to marry, noting that "the rate of increase has been most dramatic among blacks." This news came one day after the Thomas More Law Center in Ann Arbor, Mich., announced that it would be filing friend-of-the-court briefs (amicus briefs) on behalf of a Coalition of African-American pastors and Christian leaders opposed to same-sex marriage.

Richard Thompson, president and chief counsel of the Thomas More Law Center, explained that the briefs will represent "the voice of a majority of African Americans that discrimination because of one's sexual preference is not the same thing as racial discrimination and that tradition and morality should not be discarded as a basis of the law; as the pro-homosexual judges have done in their opinions."

Several pastors representing the African-American community spoke at the press conference, including Bishop Samuel Smith, Pastors Danny Holliday and Emery Moss and Evangelist Janet Boynes, a former lesbian and member of the group. Each defended the definition of marriage as the union of a man and a woman.

To date, the Thomas More Law Center has filed two amicus briefs on behalf of this coalition involving petitions for review in the U.S. Supreme Court: *Herbert v. Kitchen*, an appeal of the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals decision overturning Utah's law defining traditional marriage and *Rainey v. Bostic*, an appeal of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals decision overturning Virginia's law defining traditional marriage.

On the surface, advocates of traditional marriage might find this encouraging. As the executive director of Black Family Preservation Group, Inc. — an organization that promotes marriage as a vehicle to strengthen African-American families — I applaud the coalition's effort to defend traditional, biblical marriage. However, the fallacy of this coalition's initiative becomes evident when considering the Pew research.

After decades of declining marriage rates and changes in family structure, the percentage of American adults who have never been married is at an historic high. According to Wendy Wang and Kim Parker, who authored the research report, the move away from marriage is attributed to a variety of factors. Not only are people marrying later in life, but more significant is

the fact that increasingly young adults are cohabiting and raising children outside of marriage.

That is a critical observation. Currently, 72 percent of black children are being born into single-parent homes, which means that most black churches are filled with baby-mommies and baby-daddys, not husbands and wives raising children under the covenant of marriage as scripture prescribes. Is it realistic to expect pastors have more influence in court persuading judges to deny marriage to gay couples than they have in their own pulpits?

I challenge these pastors to change the mindset about marriage within the black community. If they are truly concerned about preserving traditional marriage, instead of protesting against gays because they should not be getting married, black pastors should be using their voices to convince our Christian youth that they should be getting married. And they should do so before having children.

*Sharon Brooks Hodge, a former editor of The Chronicle, is executive director of Black Family Preservation Group, Inc., ([www.BLACKfamilies.org](http://www.BLACKfamilies.org)) a national organization that promotes marriage and two-parent homes as the best environment for raising children.*

# GRAND OPENING!

**SATURDAY, OCT. 11**  
 Ribbon Cutting at 10 A.M.

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- Nov. 1: Busta Brown Fall Music Festival
- Nov. 2: Liberty Street Market Citywide Community Yard Sale, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Nov. 15/16: Rib Fest on Liberty

Located at 1591 N. Liberty St. next to Gilmore's Funeral Home. Easy access from U.S. 52

The Liberty Street Market is owned by the City of Winston-Salem and managed by Mercedes Miller LLC.

For information about renting market stalls, call Terrance McNeil at (336) 793-3441 or send an email to [lsvm@earthlink.net](mailto:lsvm@earthlink.net).

**Winston-Salem**