

Emancipation Association to hold meeting with new officers



Submitted Photo

The Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Emancipation Association will hold its next board meeting on March 17 at noon at the Hanes Community Center with its 2015 officers. The 2015 Board of Directors is shown in the photo above. Officers are seated: (right to left) Josephine H. Jones, president; the Rev. Miller Allen, vice president; Alice Allen, secretary; Larn Dillard, financial secretary; Jannette Piggott, corresponding secretary; Jean Moses-Petree, treasurer. Standing (left to right): Martha G. Jones, Daniel Piggott, Betty Watson Meadows, Sandra Armstrong, Levitha Mack, Wilhelmina Long, Barbara Hayes, and Joycelyn Johnson.

Robinson to speak at Community Service Awards Gala

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Dr. Elwood L. Robinson, the new chancellor of Winston-Salem State University, will be the keynote speaker at The Chronicle's 30th Annual Community Service Awards Gala on Saturday, March 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the M.C. Benton Convention Center.

The awards were created "to simply recognize people in this community who are making a difference," said Chronicle Publisher Ernie Pitt.

The awards that will be presented will be:

- *Rev. Dr. Nathan Scovens, Man of the Year
- *Randon Pender, Woman of the Year
- *Camel City Caravans (Reid & Kirsten Hinsley), Minority Business of the Year Award
- *Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem & Vicinity (Bishop Todd Fulton),

- Organization of the Year Award
- *Big Brothers Big Sisters of Forsyth County (Shawan Gabriel), Human Relations Award
- *Lenwood Davis, Nancy Young, Evelyn Terry and Harry Davis, all Lifetime Achievement Awards
- *Chadwick "Chad" Cheek, Curator of Art Award
- *Children's Law Center (Iris Sunshine) and Positive Image Performing Arts (PIPA) Courtney Taylor-Porter, both Special Recognition
- *Claudia Schaefer, Linda Sutton and Patricia Sadler, all Community Service Awards.

Tickets are \$30, and include a six-month subscription to The Chronicle. Tickets are available by calling 336-722-8624, ext. 100, or by picking them up at The Chronicle, 617 N. Liberty St.

Speech

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closed fists. He too was a "normal" young man indistinguishable in so many ways from his peers. Not completely satisfied with the punishment to which he subjected James Anderson, he "deliberately used his vehicle to run over James Anderson — killing him." Dedmon now acknowledges he was filled with anger.

I asked the question earlier, but what could transform these young adults into the violent creatures their victims saw? It was nothing the victims did ... they were not championing any cause ... political ... social ... economic ... nothing they did ... not a wolf whistle ... not a supposed crime ... nothing they did. There is absolutely no doubt that in the view of the court the victims were targeted because of their race.

The simple fact is that what turned these children into criminal defendants was their joint decision to act on racial hatred. In the eyes of these defendants (and their co-conspirators), the victims were doomed at birth. ... Their genetic makeup made them targets.

In the name of White Power, these young folk went to "Jafrica" to "fuck with some niggers!" — echoes of Mississippi's past. White Power! Nigger! According to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, that word, nigger, is the "universally recognized opprobrium, stigmatizing African-Americans because of their race." It's the nuclear bomb of racial epithets — as Farai Chideya has described the term. With their words, with their actions — "I just ran that nigger over" — there is no doubt that these crimes were motivated by the race of the victims. And from his own pen, Dedmon, sadly and regretfully wrote that he did it out of "hatred and bigotry."

The court must respond to one letter it received from one identified as a youth leader in Dylan Butler's church — a mentor, he says — and who describes Dylan as "a good person." The point is that "[t]here are plenty of criminals that deserve to be incarcerated," is well taken. Your point that Dylan is not one of them — not a criminal ... is belied by the facts and the law. Dylan was an active participant in this activity, and he deserves to

be incarcerated under the law. What these defendants did was ugly ... it was painful ... it is sad ... and it is indeed criminal.

In the state of Mississippi we have tried to bury, when there was a jury verdict for those who perpetrated crimes and committed lynchings in the name of White Power ... that verdict typically said that the victim died at the hands of persons unknown. The legal and criminal justice system operated with ruthless efficiency in upholding what these defendants would call White Power.

Today, though, the criminal justice system (state and federal) has proceeded methodically, patiently and deliberately seeking justice. Today we learned the identities of the persons unknown ... they stand here publicly today. The sadness of this day also has an element of irony to it: Each defendant was escorted into court by agents of an African-American United States Marshal, having been prosecuted by a team of lawyers which includes an African-American AUSA from an office headed by an African-American U.S. attorney — all under the

direction of an African-American attorney general, for sentencing before a judge who is African-American, whose final act will be to turn over the care and custody of these individuals to the BOP [Federal Bureau of Prisons] — an agency headed by an African-American.

Today we take another step away from Mississippi's tortured past ... we move farther away from the abyss. Indeed, Mississippi is a place and a state of mind. And those who think they know about her people and her past will also understand that her story has not been completely written. Mississippi has a present and a future. That present and future has promise. As demonstrated by the work of the officers within these state and federal agencies — black and white, male and female, in this Mississippi they work together to advance the rule of law. Having learned from Mississippi's inglorious past, these officials know that in advancing the rule of law, the criminal justice system must operate without regard to race, creed or color. This is the strongest way Mississippi can reject those notions — those ideas which brought

us here today.

At their guilty plea hearings, Deryl Paul Dedmon, Dylan Wade Butler and John Aaron Rice told the world exactly what their roles were ... it is ugly ... it is painful ... it is sad ... it is criminal.

The court now sentences the defendants as follows: [The specific sentences are not part of the judge's prepared remarks.]

The court has considered the advisory guidelines computations and the sentencing factors under 18 U.S.C. 3553(a). The court has considered the defendants' history and characteristics. The court has also considered unusual circumstances — the extraordinary circumstances — and the peculiar seriousness and gravity of those offenses. I have paid special attention to the plea agreements and the recommendations of the United States. I have read the letters received on behalf of the defendants. I believe these sentences provide just punishment to each of these defendants and equally important, I believe they serve as adequate deterrence to others and I hope that these sentences will discourage others from heading down a similar

life-altering path. I have considered the sentencing guidelines and the policy statements and the law. These sentences are the result of much thought and deliberation.

These sentences will not bring back James Craig Anderson nor will they restore the lives they enjoyed prior to 2011. The court knows that James Anderson's mother, who is now 89 years old, lived through the horrors of the Old Mississippi, and the court hopes that she and her family can find peace in knowing that with these sentences, in the New Mississippi, justice is truly blind. Justice, however, will not be complete unless these defendants use the remainder of their lives to learn from this experience and fully commit to making a positive difference in the New Mississippi. And, finally, the Court wishes that the defendants also can find peace.

Reeves is a U.S. District Court judge for the Southern District of Mississippi. He made waves last November when he ruled Mississippi's same-sex marriage ban unconstitutional. That case is currently under appeal in the Fifth Circuit Court.



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