

OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

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Our Mission

The Chronicle is dedicated to serving the residents of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County by giving voice to the voiceless, speaking truth to power, standing for integrity and encouraging open communication and lively debate throughout the community.

Will people follow the movement?

An N.C. NAACP official was in town last week for a program designed to rally supporters of the moral movement the organization is leading. The push for supporters is in advance of the hearing of N.C. NAACP v. McCrory, the voting rights lawsuit against North Carolina, at the federal courthouse in Winston-Salem on July 13.

The lawsuit covers several areas called repressive to voting rights, including:

It requires voters to show government-issued ID cards, shortens early voting by a week; ends same-day registration; increases the number of poll observers who can challenge a voter's eligibility; and eliminates preregistration for high school students.

The law also ends the practice of voting for every candidate of a single party with a simple stroke, called straight-ticket voting.

The Rev. Curtis Gatewood, an N.C. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People official who is working with the movement, said the movement will hold educational workshops on voting rights and other issues pertaining to injustice in the morning and a rally in the afternoon of July 13 as the case is being heard in Winston-Salem.

With such a momentous event coming, the N.C. NAACP is wise to start organizing. The question is, will the people follow?

Gatewood spoke to a small crowd of people on Thursday, May 21, the 150th anniversary to the day that the Emancipation Proclamation was read in the forerunner of St. Philips Moravian Church in Old Salem.

St. Philips celebrated the anniversary of the announcement of freedom for slaves with a program called "Ever Forward to Freedom." The organizers of the program contend that African-Americans and others are not yet free because of the laws that attack equal rights, such as regressive voting rights laws and laws against equal pay for women and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

"We're an inclusive movement because we believe every human being deserves justice," Gatewood said. He said the moral movement is a coalition of various races and interests who want justice.

The program at St. Philips featured several ministers and speakers who referred to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Jesus and the moral obligation people have to fight injustice. Most of the speakers were African-American, but most of those who attended the program were white. Local ministers, including one who works with youth, said they support the moral movement, which has been visible as Moral Mondays, the HKonJ Coalition and the Forward Together Moral Movement. They say they will start organizing for the July 13 rally.

The hope is that this program will start the momentum toward a large presence on July 13 as the moral movement comes to Winston-Salem.

Kudos to the Board of Elections for working to educate voters

At its monthly meeting on Thursday, May 21, the Forsyth County Board of Elections covered several topics. However, topics on voter registration and voter education brought out compassion and concern from the elections director and the board, which we applaud.

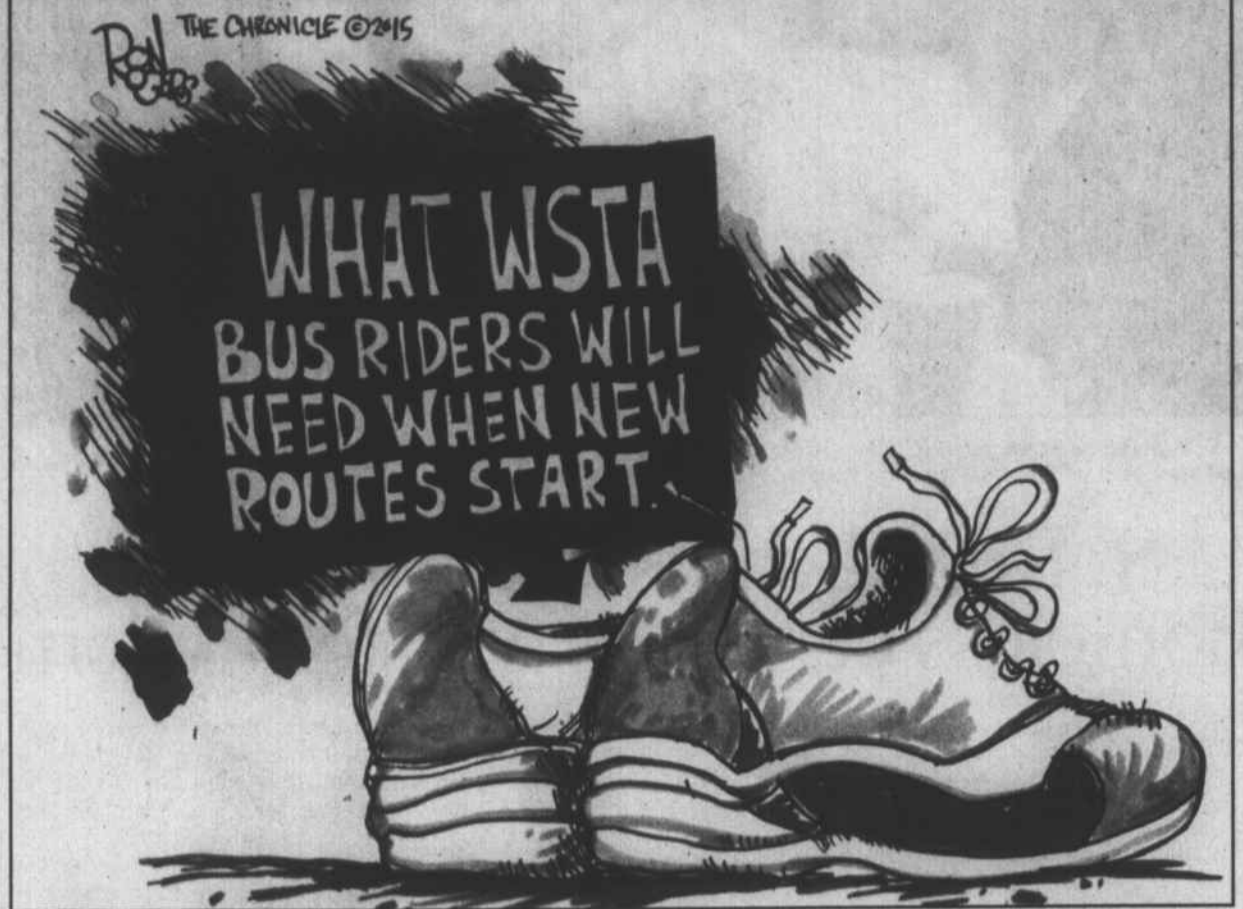
BOE Director Steve Hines expressed frustration with the fact that he has to turn down 16- and 17-year-olds who attempt to pre-register to vote because of the voting law passed in North Carolina – the law the N.C. NAACP is trying to have struck down. He mentioned the number of teens is 140. Hines called the new requirement "an election director's nightmare" because it could discourage young people from registering at all.

The board unanimously approved letting Hines draft and send the teens a letter explaining the change in the law and encouraging them to register.

We also applaud the board for making an effort to educate voters on the new voting law.

Hines encouraged groups to contact the BOE to schedule a speaking engagement.

"I think we can take care of our own in Forsyth County and we're going to try to do that," he said.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Republicans disappoint on measure

To the Editor:

Today [Tuesday, May 19] I voted for a short-term measure [H.R. 2353, the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2015] to provide critical highway and transit funding. I am disappointed that House Republicans refused to work across the aisle to put forth a long-term solution.

Our state and local governments rely on federal resources to fund infrastructure projects. This temporary legislation is not desirable, but there are five major transportation projects in the 12th District, worth more than \$147 million, that I want to make sure continue. These projects not only protect and repair critical infrastructure, but they provide much needed jobs that will help move our local economy forward.



Adams

I hope the Senate will act quickly to pass this temporary extension so we can focus on finding a long-term solution that brings certainty.

U.S. Rep. Alma S. Adams,
NC-12
Washington, D.C.

USO salutes Harris Teeter

To the Editor:

Each May, we celebrate Military Appreciation Month and work to Make Every Moment Count for our service men and women. This May, we want to salute Harris Teeter for its continuing efforts to help support this cause and recognize all that North Carolina's military families give to our state and our country.

Through the Harris Teeter "Support Our Troops" campaign, its patrons help both the USO and Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) – two organizations committed to supporting our troops and their families and, in many cases, saving lives. Funds raised in North Carolina will

stay in North Carolina.

The USO of NC salutes Harris Teeter's associates for asking and their customers for generously donating \$1, \$3, or \$5 to "Support our Troops" at their local store's checkout register. Last year alone, this community-based donation campaign hosted by Harris Teeter raised more than \$1,000,000 in a given month; with over \$376,000 raised for USO of NC and over \$587,000 over three years. This enabled us to expand critical resiliency programs around PTS and TBI, as well as essential transition assistance programs vitally needed for our troops and their families.

The USO of North Carolina offers a wide variety of impactful support programs across the state to help NC Active Duty troops, National Guard, Reserves, including our wounded warriors. For nearly 75 years, the USO has supported America's military and families not only during times of conflict, but also as they heal from both visible and invisible wounds of war and reintegrate into their communities and civilian workforce. The USO of North Carolina provided over 575,000 innovative, effective programs and services to troops and their families in North Carolina. We could not do this without the support of partners like Harris Teeter and its patrons.

We encourage Harris Teeter shoppers to join our efforts and ask their store manager, customer service representative and cashiers about the campaign and helping to take this year's campaign to even greater levels. We know our North Carolina neighbors and friends will continue to support for our troops and those that serve them during May's "Support our Troops" activation. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of our military members across the state – and serving around the world.

Thank you to Harris Teeter for its partnership on this critical campaign, and thank you to all the North Carolinians who help improve the lives of our military.

John W. Falkenbury
President,
USO of North Carolina

Salvation Army is welcome in my backyard

To the Editor:

I have read a bit about The Salvation Army's vision to better serve women and children by having a facility adjacent to their current offices on Cleveland Avenue just off of Martin Luther King Jr Drive. I hope we will support that vision.

I live in the East Ward where The Salvation Army wants to locate this facility. Much is being said about why the East Ward. When it comes to facilities to help people in need, why East Ward? Why not some other ward? My initial thought was that the current Salvation Army facility to care for women and children is already in the East Ward. This is not a new facility coming into the East Ward. This facility will not be in the same neighborhood or close to other facilities of its kind.

But I have a deeper concern about what our opposition says about how we care for people in critical times in their lives. My hope is that our support of this issue will be centered more on the need of families and children than anything else. What are we to do with women and children when they need help? Is it not a compliment to the East Ward that facilities exist to care for the homeless, women and children in the East Ward? I cannot think of any higher demonstration of our faith than how we care for the "least of these."

When I attended a recent community meeting, it was held in a church and around several churches that have food pantries and other ministries that care for people in their times of need. That's not only what we do but also who we are. We say yes to helping when others say "no room."

I hope all of us will open our hearts to the possibility of being our "brothers' and sisters'" keepers. These do not take away from our community but say something positive about our values and what we believe is important. If people are hungry, homeless, ex-offenders, or otherwise in need, they know that the East Ward puts its actions where its mouth is. We make room for all people. All are welcome in the East Ward.

Come on, city and community leaders, help turn down the rhetoric and turn up the compassion. Find the solution that reflects who we are and what we value as a ward and as a city.

I welcome "them" in my "backyard."

Donald Jenkins, Pastor
St. Paul United Methodist Church

We Welcome Your Feedback

Submit letters and guest columns to letters@wschronicle.com before 5 p.m. Friday for the next week's publication date.

Letters intended for publication should be addressed "Letters to the Editor" and include your name, address, phone number and email address. Please keep letters to 350 words or less.

If you are writing a guest column, please include a photo of yourself, your name, address, phone number and email address. Please keep guest columns to 550 words or less. Letters and columns can also be mailed or dropped off at W-S Chronicle, 617 N. Liberty St., W-S, NC, 27101; or sent via our

website www.wschronicle.com.

We reserve the right to edit any item submitted for clarity or brevity and determine when and whether material will be used.

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