

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.

Society pays attention to hurt women in October

Mention October, and some nice things come to mind, such as Gospel Fest. Halloween is in October, too.

But October is also known as Breast Cancer Awareness Month and Domestic Violence Awareness Month to bring two things that mostly hurt women to the forefront.

Breast cancer awareness advocates have done a good job of making people aware in October of how breast cancer affects women. We hear about the women who die and the women who live, the families affected and how to try to prevent the disease.

Many races are held to raise money to find a cure. All kinds of breast cancer awareness paraphernalia are available to remind us about breast cancer, too.

Now, domestic violence awareness advocates are becoming more vocal.

There is a growing number of events that are popping up to remind us of women who have died and women who have lived through domestic violence. Entertainment such as movies and plays have been made about domestic violence. For years the entertainment industry has produced entertainment on the subject.

The question is: With all the attention in October, what's happening during the other 11 months of the year?

President Obama talked about how gun violence in America is becoming too routine. Domestic violence appears to be that way, too. People live with it and around it. It has become a way of life for many people.

A beloved TV anchorwoman in Richmond, Virginia, died from breast cancer. She was a person who had advocated breast self-exams. Her breast cancer was a fast-moving type that was not caught in time. She had breast cancer in her family.

A death brought the issue of breast cancer to the forefront outside of October. Deaths bring domestic violence to the forefront outside of October.

The Rev. Dr. William Barber II, N.C. NAACP president, talks about how deaths prompted South Carolina to take the Confederate flag down.

When will successes prompt action? When will love conquer all?

Enjoy October but remember that women face hurt 12 months of the year.

Women in Forsyth County need help

The Women's Fund of Winston-Salem examined the lives of women in Forsyth County in a just-released follow-up study to its 2010 study, "Through a Gender Lens: The Economic Security of Women and Girls in Forsyth County."

It found that economic insecurity for the women has increased in the last five years.

It also found that graduation rate for girls increased and teen pregnancy rates decreased but poverty rates did not. (See story on page A1.)

Mayor Allen Joines said as he announced his bid for re-election that he will tackle poverty if he regains his post. The Women's Fund plans to fight it, too, but can't do it alone. More organizations and community leaders need to join the fight against poverty, which has hunger as a component.

A consortium of groups gathered in September to bring hunger to the forefront. Poverty and its components don't end in a month. The effort to bring parity to women in Forsyth County should be ongoing. The War on Poverty should not be in the past.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Respect your ancestors, Dr. Ben Carson

To the Editor:

"Knowledge is my friend, ignorance my enemy." That statement has been important to me and hundreds of my former students (1974-2014) who have entered my classroom before I retired.

As a private citizen, your right to freedom of religion or freedom from government sanctioned religion is your constitutional right protected by the First Amendment.

The Constitution also has no litmus religious test for citizens seeking public office. Both of these facts are taught in any Civics class or can be

understood from a casual reading of our U.S. Constitution.

When any citizen seeking to represent my interest fails to express a simple understanding of these principles in our Constitution, my intelligence is insulted.

Dr. Ben Carson's recent statement regarding the faith of over a billion people, specifically the religion of Al-Islam, who are commonly referred to as Muslims, vividly demonstrates his lack of knowledge or simple ignorance of the five basic pillars of Al-Islam.

His advisors would benefit substantially by researching the first Constitution called the Medina Constitution, which provided the first tenets of freedom of religion. That early community in Yathrib, now called Medina, recognized the faith of the Jewish citizens, Christians and non-believers in 638 A.D.

They were free to worship as they had been doing historically under the governor of that city, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, the last Prophet of the

Abrahamic faiths. Dr. Ben, an outstanding neurosurgeon, should resist being portrayed as Uncle Ben for the benefit of a

political party. Dr. Carson, respect the struggle of your ancestors who were maligned and limited to roles such as an Uncle Ben, against their inherent God-given talents of human dignity and honor.

Fleming El-Amin

Alabama targets minority voters in closing driver's license offices

To the Editor:

We continue to see challenges to voting rights across the country, and Alabama's decision to close more than 30 driver's license offices around the state disproportionately impacts African-American voters. The decision is particularly troubling considering that many of the shuttered offices are located in rural areas and counties where more than 75 percent of the registered voters are African-American. The closure of these offices in eight out of the 10 counties with the highest numbers of African-Americans blocks residents' ability to obtain a driver's license, which is required in order to vote in the state.

Alabama's harsh voter ID law further restricts the ability of residents to obtain the requisite identification needed not only to vote, but also to drive, get a job or apply for a passport.

Alabama's decision to close ID offices reminds us that 50 years after the passage of the Voting Rights Act, the fight for equal access to the polls still continues today. Having a say in our country's Democratic process still does not exist for all.

U.S. Rep. G. K. Butterfield
District 1, N.C.
Chairman, Congressional Black Caucus
Washington, D.C.

Planned Parenthood helps the poor, minorities

To the Editor:

On Monday [Sept. 28], my colleague Congresswoman Alma Adams [12th District of N.C.] and I had the privilege of hosting three brave patient advocates for a special press event on Planned Parenthood and their important work in communities of color.

These advocates traveled from Texas, Illinois, and New York to share their own personal and powerful stories about the role Planned Parenthood played in helping them lead happy, healthy lives.

We heard touching accounts of incredible strength in the face of insurmountable hardship, and were

reminded that overcoming adversity cannot always be done alone.

The stories shared by Courtney Everette, Natarsha McQueen and Cazembe Jackson illustrated the undeniable value of Planned Parenthood's impact in underserved communities across the country. Despite our nation's strides to expand health care access, African-American communities continue to face substantial disparities in their health care outcomes.

This fact - albeit hard for many of my conservative colleagues to acknowledge - underscores the critical need and significance of Planned Parenthood, whose health centers provide birth control, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and lifesaving cancer screenings to millions of people every year.

U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore
4th District of Wisconsin
Washington, D.C.

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.

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