

# OPINION

## THE CHRONICLE

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Celebrating  
**41**  
Years  
of Community Journalism

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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.

## City appears cockeyed when helping the homeless

The homeless is coming to the minds of many now that the weather is getting colder. Several non-profits provide for the homeless year-round in shelters but they do not serve many homeless people. Those people are on the streets of Winston-Salem without basic necessities such as blankets, gloves and knit caps to keep them warm.

The Winston-Salem Police Department has launched its second campaign to gather gently used or new blankets, gloves and knit caps to help the homeless this winter. During last year's inaugural blanket drive, almost 1,500 blankets were donated and distributed, said Cpl. Joshua Henry in a statement. "Last year's drive was so successful that this year we are requesting knit caps and gloves, too."

The Bike Patrol initiated the blanket drive last year to assist homeless people who, for various reasons, cannot stay at a shelter. "On cold nights they come by our office and ask for blankets," Henry



City of Winston-Salem Skyline.

Photo by Todd Lack

said. "Thanks to the generosity of our citizens, we were able to help them last year. We hope to be able to do so again this year."

This is a noble gesture by the Police Department. However, why didn't the department buy the blankets instead of ask residents to provide the blankets? It's not clear why the police department has joined the ranks of nonprofits that ask the public to help needy people. Is there not a section of the city budget to help needy people such as the homeless? Do the residents who donate get a write-off for their donations?

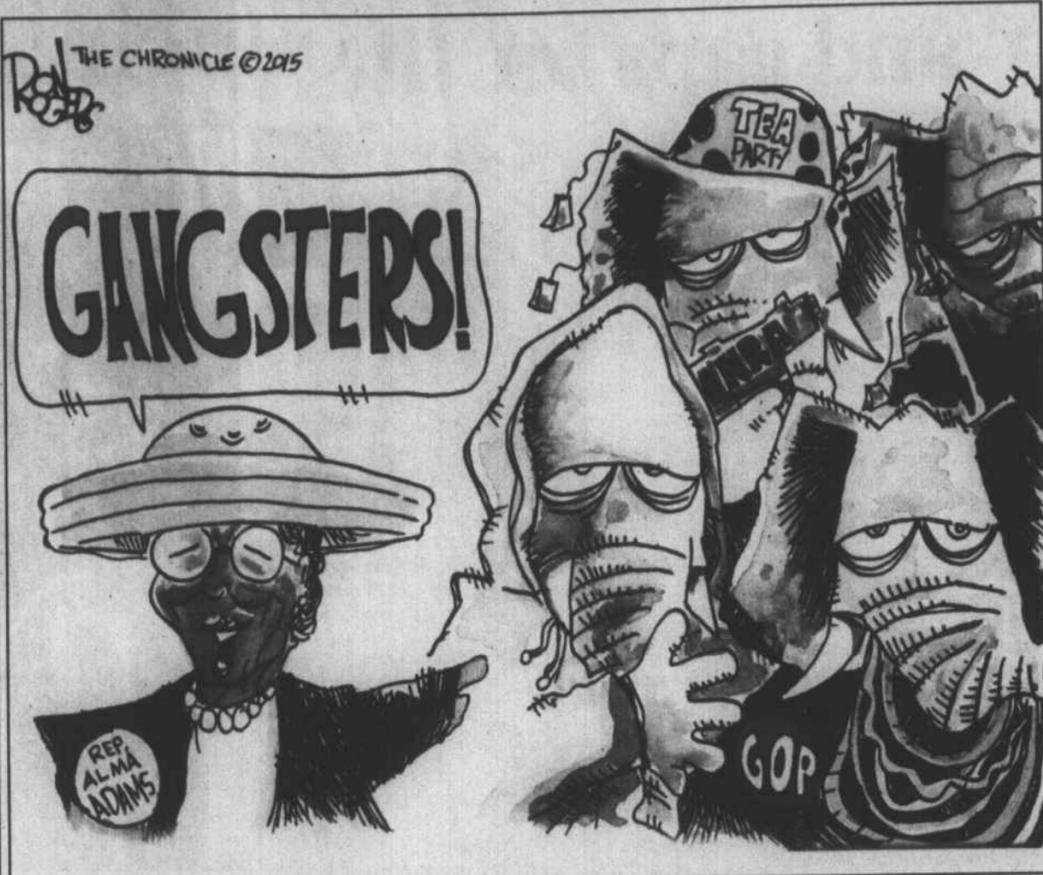
Police officers are helping the homeless find warm places to stay. But is anyone helping them find food, or better yet, jobs? Are other city departments helping the homeless in other ways?

The police who help the homeless are being paid by taxes paid by Winston-Salem residents. Then the residents are being asked to pay something to provide homeless people with blankets, gloves and knit caps, whether they are paying to have the gently used items they donate cleaned or are paying for new ones. Nonprofits also are asking residents to help needy people all over the city. What are city officials doing?

Some city officials were complaining about homeless people who live in The Salvation Army's shelter. The nonprofit wanted to move the shelter across town to a better facility. City officials were some of the NIMBYs (Not In My Back Yard) who yelled, "We don't want them around us!" Yet, where are the homeless who are getting the blankets living? Could be in their backyards, after all.

Where is the united front from the city with concern for the homeless and other needy people?

It appears some matters have been left to residents to handle. If that's the case, why do we need city officials? All Winston-Salem City Council members will be up for re-election next year. The primary elections will be in March. Voters need to start grading the officials now to determine whether they should get new terms or be left out in the cold next year.



Barber



Howard

File Photos AP, The Chronicle

## No time for foolishness, indeed



Tevin Stinson

Chronicle Columnist

On Saturday, Oct. 10, the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II delivered his annual state of the N.C. NAACP address during the 72nd NAACP State Convention. This year's convention was held in Winston-Salem, which has hosted a number of state-sponsored events this year.

Barber's speech was titled "This is No Time For Foolishness" and focused on the NAACP fight

against lawmakers in North Carolina who continue to pass laws that oppress minority voters and a country that turns a blind eye to the issues that plague the African-American community, such as police violence and racial profiling.

Barber also made strong statements that seemed to be directed at the Winston-Salem NAACP branch. During his hour-long speech, Barber said he should never have to send a state official to look over a local branch.

"I should never have to send a state official to referee any local branch," said Barber. "We don't have time to fight among ourselves, not when they are suppressing our voting

rights, not when North Carolina is the new Selma."

Although I will admit I do not follow what is going on with other branches of the NAACP, I do know that after hearing Barber's statements, only one branch came to mind.

Earlier this year, state officials had to be called in to oversee the executive board elections after a number of reported violations regarding the Winston-Salem branch.

Where the annual convention was held would also lead one to believe that Barber was directing his statements at the Winston-Salem branch.

During his hourlong speech, Barber also said he

wanted to see local branches become more involved in the community.

Local branch President Isaac "Ike" Howard and a number of other members of the local branch were in attendance during Barber's address, and I'm sure they heard his statement loud and clear.

I'm not sure what the plan of action is for the local branch, but after hearing Barber's speech, I hope the local branch finishes out this year strong and has a prosperous and productive 2016. But, only time will tell.

Barber said it best: "This Is No Time For Foolishness!"

## We Welcome Your Feedback

Submit letters and guest columns to [letters@wschronicle.com](mailto:letters@wschronicle.com) before 5 p.m. Friday for the next week's publication date.

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