

OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

ERNEST H. PITT
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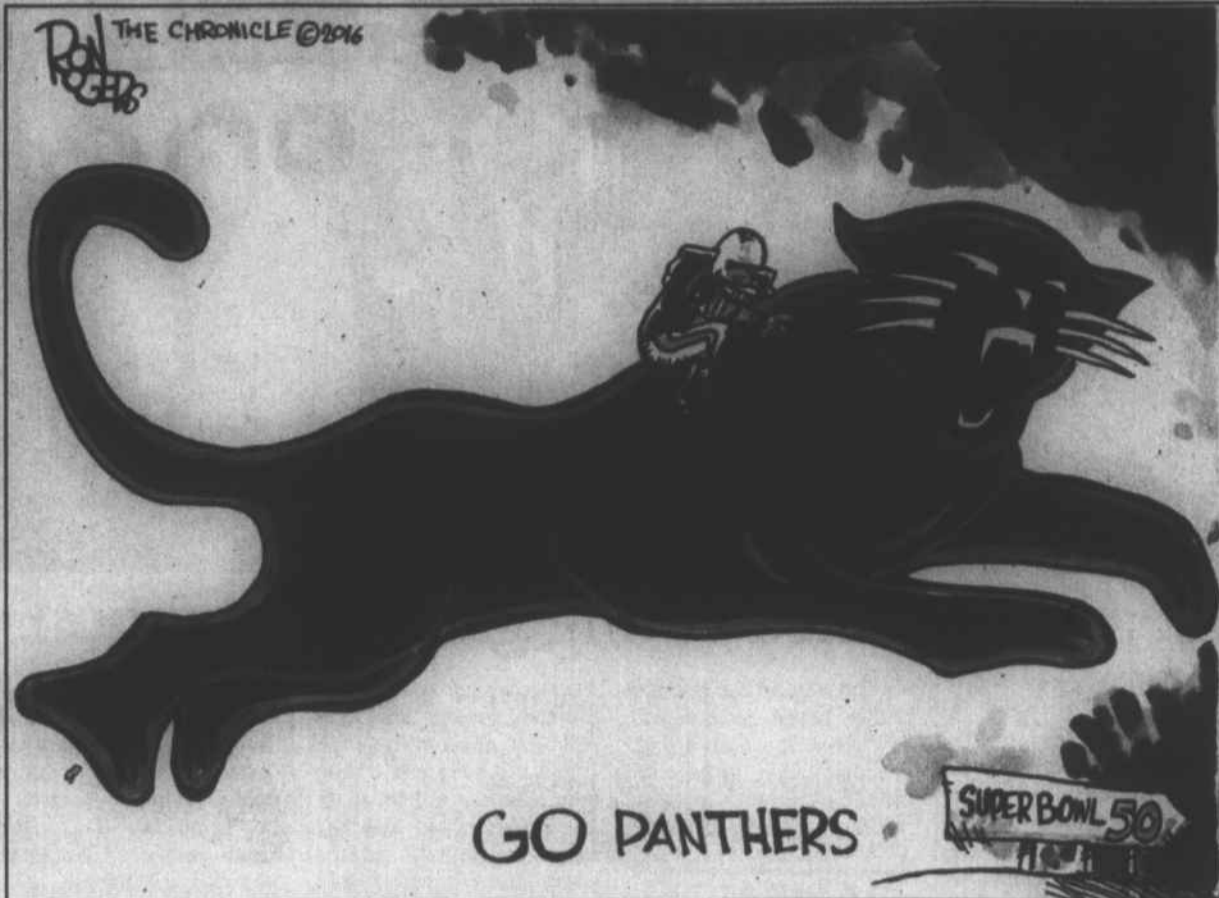
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Our Mission

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.



Voting issues need attention from voters

While national attention was focused on the Iowa caucuses late last week, groups in Winston-Salem worked to let the public know about candidates that voters will have a chance to vote for.

The East/Northeast Winston Neighborhood Association and the African-American Caucus of the Forsyth County Democratic Party, Jacquelyne Barber Branch, provided opportunities for voters to meet and greet people running for office. Few people attended the sessions.

The one candidate at both events was Keith King, a businessman running in the Democratic Primary for the Northeast Ward seat on the Winston-Salem City Council. This seat is currently held by Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke, who also is a Democrat.

While King told the audiences about himself and what he would do if elected, he stressed at the neighborhood meeting that it's important for people to vote on Primary Day, March 15.

"Our people need to get out and vote," he said.

Marva Reid, president of the neighborhood association, agreed.

"We need to put people in place to keep us on track," Reid said, adding that Republicans don't appear interested in helping black people.

The African-American caucus also stressed voting: absentee voting.

Earline Parmon, vice president of the Winston-Salem Branch of the NAACP, asked the audience to encourage people to get absentee ballots to vote "so they will not have to face the embarrassment of being turned away in this era of voter disenfranchisement."

People at both meetings mentioned how the voting rules are confusing because not all parts of the 2013 N.C. voting law will be implemented on March 15. That means voters need to start planning how they will vote physically, whether in person or absentee. We all need to know the rules of voting for the March 15 elections.

The caucus has information on a Voter Check Up flier that will help inform people about voting. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/africanamericancaucus-forsythncdp> or contact President Chenita Johnson at chenitajohn@hotmail.com to reach the organization.

The Voter ID hearing of the N.C. NAACP vs. McCrory trial ended Monday. We must wait for the judge's ruling. Start determining a plan of action for March 15 to make sure your vote is counted no matter what the ruling is.

Let's keep race issues out of Super Bowl

The Panthers are headed to the Super Bowl! This is exciting for North Carolina. But among the enthusiasm is an undertone of a race issue concerning quarterback Cam Newton.

Newton felt the need to address comments about him being a black quarterback and showing actions that reflect his blackness. Newton did not apologize for it. He embraced being black.

He suggested for the first time last week that race may play a factor in why he's become a lightning rod for public criticism, The Associated Press reported.

"I'm an African-American quarterback that scares people because they haven't seen nothing that they can compare me to," said the 6-foot-5, 245-pound Newton.

"People are going to judge, and have opinions on things I don't have control over," Newton said.

What difference does it make whether Cam Newton does a special dance or handles himself in other ways as long as he is doing his job without breaking rules? His dancing is so popular, a news report says, that people in a senior living home have been duplicating it. The home most likely has white residents.

Comments about Newton are frivolous. The public needs to let Cam be Cam and the Panthers be the Panthers and let them do their job on Feb. 7 and win the Super Bowl against the Broncos.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Chronicle staff deserves kudos for work with MLK Day event

To The Editor,

For the past 16 years, the Winston-Salem Chronicle and its publisher, Mr. Ernie Pitt, has provided the Triad community with the annual MLK Prayer Breakfast.

While an event of this magnitude (as it pertains to serving the public) isn't without some minor flaws, everyone who came to the Benton Convention Center was seated, regardless if they didn't have a ticket.

Let's not be so quick to criticize our community leaders with rumors and "liquor house lies" that shine a negative light on those who work so hard to make the MLK Prayer Breakfast accessible to all who wish to attend.

Thanks to Mr. Pitt and the entire staff of the Winston-Salem Chronicle.

Michael L. James

Community needs to learn more about stalking crimes

To The Editor,

Governor Pat McCrory proclaimed January to be Stalking Awareness Month in North Carolina. He is the first governor to do so. Stalking can be defined as the willful and repeated following, watching and/or harassing of another person. Unlike other crimes, which usually involve one act, stalking is a series of actions that occur over a period of time. It creates fear in the individual being stalked.

Approximately 7.5 million people are stalked in this country annual-

ly, most often by someone they know. Three out of every four victims of intimate partner violence were stalked by their partners. Stalking can include watching or tracking a victim and showing up in unwanted places, such as the victim's home, school, or workplace. Most stalkers pursue their victims at least once per week, but many do so daily, resorting to a variety of tactics including unwanted phone calls, text messages, emails, cards, or gifts. Victims of stalking experience elevated levels of anxiety and emotional distress, particularly if it involves the destruction of personal property and being followed. Unfortunately, stalking is difficult to investigate and prosecute and current laws do not adequately promote victim safety and protection.

Stalking is strongly correlated with domestic violence and sexual assault. As a community we must learn more about stalking and take action to promote the safety and protection of victims of this crime. We need to bring stalking out of the shadows.

If you would like to become more aware about stalking, or if you are a victim of stalking, domestic violence, or sexual assault, please contact one of Family Services' 24-hour crisis lines, 336-723-8125 or 336-722-4457.

Bob Feikema, President and CEO
 Family Services of Forsyth County

Adams remembers sacrifices made by Greensboro Four

To the Editor,

[The 56th anniversary of the Greensboro Four sit-ins was Monday, Feb. 1.]

Today marks the start of Black History Month – a time to celebrate the historical and cultural contributions African-Americans have made to this great nation. In honoring those contributions, we must remember the sacrifices and bravery

of those who shaped the civil rights movement.

On this day, 56 years ago, four North Carolina A&T freshmen – Joseph McNeil, Jibreel Khazan (formerly Ezell Blair Jr.), Franklin McCain and David Richmond – put

their lives on the line and took bold action by sitting at a whites-only Woolworth's lunch counter on Elm Street in Greensboro.

In the days following their peaceful defiance, students from across the state of North Carolina joined in, and this led to a national movement to end racial segregation in America. We must never forget the courage and selflessness of the Greensboro Four, which helped create a better America for all people.

U.S. Rep. Alma S. Adams
 12th District of North Carolina

Note: Adams has introduced H. Res. 128, a bipartisan resolution to honor the Greensboro Four. There are currently 62 members of Congress who support the legislation.



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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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