

Make your view Count



W-S Prep on a roll

March 19 • 7:30pm
Charlotte, N.C.

April 2 • 7:30pm
Winston-Salem

April 9 • 1pm
for the official Spring Football Game

The WSSU Football team is coming to you this spring.

There will be prizes, giveaways and games. Bring a canned good for entry and in support of the Second Harvest Food Bank.

• See Opinion/Forum pages on A6&7 • • See Sports on page B1 •

THE CHRONICLE

Volume 43, Number 27 — WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — THURSDAY, March 10, 2016

Cooper ignores Smith backers

BY CASH MICHAELS FOR THE CHRONICLE

Student organizers from Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem State University and Salem College went to the offices of N.C. Attorney General Roy Cooper on Monday to deliver a letter and a banner, imploring Cooper to help free Calvin Michael Smith.

Smith is a 44-year-old black man many say was falsely tried and convicted of the Dec. 1995 brutal beating of the manager at the Silk Plant Forest store. Smith was nowhere near the store at the time of the crime, his supporters and subsequent reviews have shown, and police, who did have a white male suspect, inexplicably arrested and charged Smith. He has served 19 of a 29-year sentence.

What they said

Read the letter the Concerned Students for Calvin Michael Smith wrote to Attorney General Roy Cooper on Page A7.

On Monday, student organizers unveiled a long banner in front of the N.C. Department of Justice that had the signatures of over 200 students from all three schools, several from the Winston-Salem community, plus the signature of Alicia Garza, a founder of the Black Lives Matter movement.

A letter accompanied the banner, asking Attorney General Cooper to join with Calvin Smith's defense team

in asking the court to vacate his previous conviction and petition for a new trial. The demonstrators also want Attorney General Cooper to personally meet with former FBI Assistant Director Chris Swecker, who looked into the case at the request of the Silk Plant Forest Committee, and wrote in his report that it was one of the "sloppiest" police investigations he'd ever seen in his experience.

Swecker told *The Chronicle* exclusively a few weeks ago that a member of Cooper's staff did briefly speak with him by phone about his report after it was released in 2012, but beyond that, no face-to-face meetings were had. "The report's so detailed, and it speaks for itself that ... if [the Attorney General's Office] read the report ...

See Smith on A10



Drama students from Parkland High School perform a skit during the dedication ceremony on Friday, March 5.

Photo by Tevin Stinson

Parkland auditorium renamed to honor Anderson

BY TEVIN STINSON THE CHRONICLE

Last weekend Flonnie Anderson, a retired English and drama teacher in the system, received a birthday present that she will never forget.

On Saturday March 8, Anderson's 86th birthday, the auditorium at Parkland High School was renamed to honor Anderson, who taught drama and English for 34 years before retiring in 1989.

"I can't think of a better way to celebrate my birthday," Anderson said.

During her tenure with the school system, Anderson taught at Atkins, Anderson and Parkland high schools. In 1970 Anderson broke down racial barriers within the WSFCS when she became the first teacher to direct a production that featured both white and black students following the integration of schools in the late 60s.



Anderson

When asked about desegregating a community, Anderson said she didn't have any fears before her group of high schools students took to the stage to perform "Take Me Higher," a piece written by one of her students.

"I knew there would be people who would object, but I didn't have any reservations," she continued. "During that time there were some people who would not support desegregation at all and that's what I told my students."

The production of "Take Me Higher" wasn't the first time Anderson used theatre arts to fight segregation in the city. She was also the first black actress to perform with the Little Theatre of Winston-Salem, now the Twin City Stage, located on Coliseum Drive.

During the ceremony, a number of Anderson's for-

See Anderson on A10

Thousands vote early, smoothly in county

BY TEVIN STINSON THE CHRONICLE

Thousands of Forsyth County residents have already cast their ballots in the March 15 primary.

The early voting period, which began on March 3 and ends Friday, March 12, is the first time voters across the state will be asked to show a photo ID at the polls.

As of Tuesday, 8,213 people in Forsyth County have cast their ballots in early voting, according to election officials.

Ahead of the start of early voting, Forsyth County's newly appointed elections director Tim Tsujii confirmed that poll workers received additional training to implement the new voter ID process. A number of poll workers told *The Chronicle* that the training they received helped them prepare for the changes and issues that may arise at the polls.

Sylvia Jones said although not everyone was aware of

See Vote on A2



People on the street

BY TEVIN STINSON THE CHRONICLE

Question: Have you voted yet?

Robyn Spearman
Winston-Salem
"Yes. I participate in early voting because it's less hassle and the lines aren't as long"



See People on A2

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WSSU HOMECOMING 2016

SAVE THE DATE 10.15.16