

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.



Photo by Donna Rogers

Linda Coleman, left, a candidate for North Carolina lieutenant governor, and Earline Parmon, a surrogate for U.S. Rep. Alma Adams, listen during the African-American Caucus of the Forsyth County Democratic Party's candidates meet and greet on Jan. 30.

Who will pick up the Parmon mantle now?

An incredible woman was laid to rest this week. Earline Parmon died on March 15, Primary Election Day. That day represented part of Parmon's life; she had urged people to vote absentee for the primary.

Earline Parmon had many titles, but the most enduring of all will be public servant. Look through *The Chronicle's* archives and you will find her name going way back. It seems she has always been a visible part of the Winston-Salem community.

Parmon had been an educator and school principal. She founded the now-defunct LIFT Academy, a charter school that is credited with

"She was honest, courageous, straightforward and compassionate, committed to the people and concerned about their welfare."

graduating youth who had been written off by the public school system.

Parmon served for 12 years on the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners and 12 years in the N.C. House of Representatives. In 2012, she was elected to the N.C. Senate. She gave up her seat to go work as director of outreach for U.S. Rep. Alma Adams. She was first vice president of the Winston-Salem Branch of the NAACP, also.

"She was honest, courageous, straightforward and compassionate, committed to the people and concerned about their welfare," Adams said at Parmon's funeral service.

"She learned from women like Velma Hopkins and Maize Woodruff," Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joiner said. "She then in turn gave back to the young up-and-coming leaders in this community."

That's who we need to find: the young up-and-coming leaders in this community. Just as Earline Parmon learned from her mentors and took her work to the next level; those who Parmon mentored should do the same.

The community will miss Parmon. She left an inspiring legacy to follow. She was like a "Moses" to the community. Let us hope someone will pick up her mantle and become the "Joshua" she left behind.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Free Dontae Sharpe, Calvin Michael Smith, Attorney General Cooper

To the Editor:

On Thursday, March 24 (today), members of the N.C. NAACP will gather with representatives of the statewide and national "Free Dontae Sharpe" & "Free Calvin Smith" movement, to deliver a statement to the media and a letter to the Attorney General (Roy Cooper), demanding the release of two black men wrongfully imprisoned for almost half their lives.

The gathering will begin at St. Paul A.M.E. Church in Raleigh and takes place less than a week after the funeral of Darryl Hunt, another black man wrongfully imprisoned in North Carolina, for a crime he did not commit.

Darryl Hunt committed his life to bringing about justice in the names of those ensnared in an unjust Criminal System. The event is scheduled for Maundy Thursday, a day in the Christian Tradition associated with repentance and commemorating the Last Supper of Jesus before he was betrayed, unjustly arrested, and put to death.

On this day leading up to Easter Sunday, when many of our elected officials will celebrate the resurrection of a wrongfully convicted victim of prosecutorial misconduct, we call on them to do justice, in the cases of Dontae Sharpe and Calvin Smith.

The NAACP has long known that Black Lives Do Not Matter in the criminal "justice" system in the Old and New Jim Crow South. Prosecutors, police, and even our elected officials are humans. It is hard for any of us to admit "I messed up. I'm sorry. I repent." It seems almost impossible for a prosecutor to admit "I was a prisoner of my own racial stereotypes."

When principled young black men refuse to lie and prosecutors and police resort to procuring convictions

with unethical tactics, the court system breaks down. The innocent man's only hope is hard-working media; lawyers and investigators who believe in justice over fees; and the man's own family and network of friends. The NC NAACP stands with these men and we will not allow this injustice to continue unaddressed for a moment longer.

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II
President of the N.C. NAACP
"Forward Together Moral Movement"
Fusion Coalition
from Raleigh

The American People deserve better than GOP obstruction

To the Editor:

[Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Chairman G. K. Butterfield released a statement today in response to Sen. Mitch McConnell asserting the Senate Republicans plan to move on with other legislative business, continuing the obstructionist rhetoric that has characterized the Supreme Court nomination dialogue:]

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell restated his shortsighted and reckless plan to not hold hearings or even so much as meet with the U.S. Supreme Court candidate.



Rep. Butterfield

President Obama has fulfilled his duty by nominating Chief Judge Garland, who is a highly qualified candidate. We call on Senate Republicans to do their job and give Judge Garland full and fair consideration. For the sake of our nation, the Republican obstructionist agenda must stop. The American people

deserve better.

U.S. Rep. G. K. Butterfield (D-NC), Chairman Congressional Black Caucus Washington, DC

We stand shoulder to shoulder with Belgium after attacks

To the Editor:

My heart breaks for all those affected by the acts of terror in Brussels [on Tuesday, March 22]. We stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Belgium today during this horrific tragedy. Our thoughts and prayers are with all the victims and their families.

In the face of this deadly threat, we must stand as united and determined as ever to defeat terrorism. But we must not turn our backs on our democratic values.

We here in the U.S. and our international community must remain united and vigilant in combating extremism and terrorism wherever it occurs. We must continue to strengthen our intelligence gathering capabilities and increase intelligence sharing with our allies to destroy terror safe havens abroad and increase security and awareness here at home.

U.S. Rep. Alma S. Adams (NC-12) Washington, DC

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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