

LETTERS/OPINIONS

Winston-Salem Chronicle

Singing of National Anthem Was a Disgrace

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Editorials

CIAA a Success!

The city of Winston-Salem, the mayor, volunteers, hotel operators, restaurant owners, bell hops, waiters, waitresses and local citizens are to be commended and congratulated for making the 49th CIAA basketball tournament held here last week a resounding success.

We have heard only positive remarks about our city and its people from out-of-town fans. Some of the fears that many of us had simply did not materialize and we are overjoyed that they didn't. We got specific reference to the city's policemen who, apparently, treated our visitors with dignity and respect. That's great!

We congratulate the Coca Cola company for providing the many signs along University Parkway, downtown and at the Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum. For it was those signs that many fans referred to when they described the city's commitment to making them feel welcome.

It seems that it was the small things that made the great impact on our visitors. Sales people at Hanes Mall smiled and asked many visitors, "Are you here for the CIAA Tournament? Welcome to Winston-Salem and may I help you?"

Our visitors were impressed with the longer restaurant hours, the attempt by our merchants to accommodate them. Winston-Salem came together and pulled together and it worked. We received a phone call from some fans who live in New York City advising us of the fact that Winston-Salem hosted the best CIAA Tournament they had ever attended and that they were looking forward to coming back next year. They spoke of our first-class facility at Joel Coliseum. They were impressed with the fact that it is named after an African American that we had the sensitivity to also include every veteran who had died in recent wars.

A lot of what Winston-Salem is and is striving to become was seen by our CIAA visitors. We all should be proud. We certainly are!

The disastrous rain-soaked vendor's tent, thank God, was viewed positively on Thursday and the rest of the week when the rains subsided. Business picked up and the vendors were happy. Fans did not even mind the fact that we really did not have hotel space here for everyone. One fan said, "Hey, the drive from Greensboro is no longer than some drives across towns of larger cities."

Now for our recommendations to make the 50th CIAA Tournament better than the 49th. We suggest the following: provide shuttle service from the parking lots at Grove Stadium and the RJR World Headquarters Building to the coliseum (many people did not like the long walk); provide table clothes, music and food in the area of the vendor tent where alcoholic beverages are served; minority-owned businesses should follow through on efforts made to get them to advertise their services along with where they are located. That is it!

It was a great affair, and again we are proud of the mayor and the many committees that worked so hard to make Winston-Salem the place to be in February.

To the Editor:

Who is responsible for the three young men who were selected to sing

"The Star-Spangled Banner" prior to the game on last Saturday night? The tournament was very special to our community and we deserved special music.

The Twin City Choir did a beautiful rendition of the National Negro Hymn, "Lift Every Voice and Sing." They sang the hymn as it is written. That is exactly what they should have done.

However, I feel that it was an embarrassment to our city to have our national anthem handled in such a manner.

The shaking, twisting and whining while the young men were singing was completely inappropriate.

With all of the musical groups in the schools of our city and county, surely the people in charge could have found someone who could sing our national anthem by the music.

I have heard soloists, who have beautiful voices, do the same type of rendition when singing our national anthem. There should be a law governing how we sing this important song.

After hearing the beautiful singing by the Twin City Choristers and the undesirable way that our national anthem was sung.

I hope that the NAACP will make sure that our National Negro Hymn is always sung with dignity.

Mildred Coleman Leak

Health-Care Plan

To the Editor:

As a member of the Seniors



Artist Jacob Lawrence stands among his paintings at New York's Payson Gallery. His series of paintings entitled "Migration" has been reunited into a traveling exhibit with stops in Milwaukee, Portland, Ore., Birmingham, Ala., St. Louis, New York, Atlanta and Denver.

Coalition. I want you to know that most Seniors do not favor the Clinton Health Care plan.

Under the Clinton plan, senior citizens will surely face drastic cuts in Medicare coverage, lose their right to choose their own doctors face long waiting lines, and possibly be denied life-saving medical treatment.

These matters are documented in a report, available at no charge, from the 2-million member Seniors Coalition.

I urge you to contact the Coalition today at (703) 273-5449, get a copy of their reports.

James M. Bailey

About letters . . .

The Chronicle welcomes letters as well as guest columns from its readers. Letters should be as concise as possible and should be typed or legibly printed. The letter must also include the name, address and telephone number of the writer to ensure the authenticity of the letter. Columns must follow the same guidelines and will be published if they are of interest to our general readership. The Chronicle will not publish any letters or columns that arrive without this information. We reserve the right to edit letters and columns for brevity and clarity. Submit letters and columns to

Chronicle Mailbag
 P.O. Box 1636
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CIAA Tournament: A Who's Who in Black America

The remarriage of the Winston-Salem community and the CIAA Basketball Tournament was a spectacular event. The coming together after 32 years was made possible through a great deal of courting by hundreds of city volunteers and officials. Of course, it was definitely a sure deal when coordinated and blessed by none other than Mr. CIAA Basketball himself, Clarence "Bighouse" Gaines, coach emeritus at Winston-Salem State University.

The tournament week was a virtual who's who of black America and the world. People and players traveled from places all over the world, including Africa, England, Maine, California and the Caribbean. They came from all walks of life with careers in every field imaginable. There were administrators, doctors, entertainers, sports figures, judges, lawyers, workers on the assembly line of General Motors, R.J. Reynolds employees and even a former governor.

Seen in the conveyor belt-like crowd at both the coliseum and the CIAA headquarters (Adam's Mark and the Marquee hotels) were many notables. Earl S. "Abdul" Davis, former director of Afro-American affairs at New York University, and his son Earl S. Davis Jr., were among the crowd, as was Ben Ruffin, head of corporate affairs at Reynolds. All three, by the way are alumni of North Carolina Central University.

Former Virginia Gov. Douglas Wilder (Virginia Union alumnus) and Judge Henry Frye (N.C. A&T alumnus) were spotted. Longtime tournament supporters such as former professor C.B. Hauser and his wife, Lois, the Roseboro family, Norm Joyner, the Joyner brothers, cousins,

proud parents, proud players, cheerleaders and "the whole family and the preacher, too," rounded out the enthusiastic crowds.

Some basketball fans were there that are chronically addicted to or have an "open or secret love affair" with the tournament. Even a few "Aggies Till I Die" fans came over from MEAC territory, saw and were conquered by the festival-like atmosphere.

Rumor has it that a national human-rights organization convened in the area this week just to get a piece of the action. Also, a large number of National Black Theatre Festival fans came back to town for another week fun, frolic and famous folk.

To the fans that were unable to attend or get tickets this year, take heart!! Remember that the better players win trophies by using their skills

and abilities to play the game well. You can play the CIAA game well, too. The best strategy is to



GUEST COLUMNIST

By: RACHEL BEATTY JACKSON

plan early to attend next year; keep in contact with conference officials; and support the schools. I personally found the process of obtaining tickets to be more political than polite for a number of fans, but that's the way the basketball bounces.

Having a good time can be hard work. However, with the continued involvement and support of the hundreds of local residents, city officials, businesses, Chamber of Commerce, WSSU and corporations in the Triad area, this union and reunion will prove to be in the years ahead an awesome and wonderfully successful marriage. See you next year.

(Rachel Betty Jackson, a WSSU alumnus, worked avidly as a volunteer in Richmond last year booking hotel rooms for this year's tournament.)

Jim Crow Laws Were Passed to Keep Blacks Unarmed

I am an African American man who lives in South Central Los Angeles — and I carry a Smith & Wesson .38 caliber Model 60 revolver. Why? Because the Second Amendment of the United States constitution says that I have every right to.

No, I am not a member of a street gang. For the sake of reference, I was a pilot in the elite Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. I am a brigadier general in the California State Military. I have operated a successful bail bond agency in South Central Los Angeles for over 40 years.

Most importantly, however, I am past president of the Los Angeles Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and for the past 10 years I have been the California state chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).

In December 1993, I became one of the first African-American civilians — and only one of 13 residents of any hue — in Los Angeles to be granted a license to carry a concealed firearm in over 15 years.

The awarding of these 13 gun permits, however, was not an act of charity by the city fathers. It only happened because CORE and a number of other organizations filed suit challenging the city's right to waive its obligation to uphold the Constitution. The other organizations may have

had other reasons for joining in the suit, but for CORE, the issue was very clear. We had learned from past history.

"The history of gun control in America," Malcolm X often said, "is the history of racial and class suppression."

Malcolm X was talking about the strict interpretation of the Second Amendment. People have the right to protect themselves.

During slavery, blacks were prohibited from owning firearms. And, U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Taney put an exclamation point on that practice when he wrote, in Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857), that "the Negro had no rights which the white man was bound to respect. . ."

Following the Civil War, it took the Freedman's Bureau Act of 1866, the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the first portion of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution to nullify Jim Crow laws passed to keep blacks from owning or carrying guns. Blacks had good reasons for wanting that right regained. The Ku Klux Klan and many red-neck sheriff's deputies were picking off unarmed blacks as if they were skeet.

Writer Dan Gifford tells the story of how blacks in Monroe, N.C., armed themselves to ward off the Klan on Oct. 5, 1957. Eighty car-



GUEST COLUMNIST

By CELES KING III

loads of Klansmen were rode into town to harass Dr. Albert Perry, a local civil rights leader. What greeted them were several hundred rounds of ammunition the blacks acquired free of charge from the U.S. Army, through their National Rifle Association chapter.

Certainly the call for getting guns out of the hands of criminals is warranted. But I am not a criminal, however.

Now, I carry a gun — legally. The courts say it is my constitutional right due to certain reasonable conditions.

(Celes King III is the state chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality of California.)

Credo of the Black Press

The Black Press believes that America can best lead the world away from antagonisms when it accords to every person — regardless of race or creed — full human and legal rights. Hating no person, the Black Press strives to help every person, in the firm belief that all are hurt as long as anyone is held back.

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