

# our OPINION LETTERS to the EDITOR

## Winston-Salem Chronicle

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### Vote on Nov. 7

Next week, Forsyth County voters will go to the polls to decide the \$94 school bond referendum. We encourage all residents to vote next Tuesday and make your voices heard on this critical public policy issue.

We support passage of the bond referendum. Some critics point out that schools in the black community will receive only nine percent of the funds generated by the bond issue.

But African American children attend every school in the district and will benefit from the repairs, renovations, and construction of new buildings.

The school board's Building and Grounds Committee that includes Walter Marshall will ensure that the money raised from the bond is properly spent. We have a responsibility to make sure that the promises outlined in the referendum are kept.

No matter your position on the bond, register your feelings at the polls. Our democracy only works when citizens participate in voting.

Too many people died in the Civil Rights Movement to gain this constitutional right for African Americans in Winston-Salem to stay at home next week.

Last November, many registered voters did stay home, and Republican candidates won many local and state races. Their conservative politics are now threatening many hard-fought gains that blacks have made.

Voting on Tuesday, Nov. 7, will send a message that our community cares about the future.

### Racism and Violence

A panel discussion was held last week concerning racism and violence in the media. We applaud the frank talk from the panelists, but we wonder if any meaningful changes will occur at local media outlets.

The media - television, radio, and newspapers - report good and bad news daily. Some say the media report too many sensational and negative stories and often ignore positive news accounts. That complaint has merit, but the public must remember that the media outlets are business enterprises and must remain profitable to stay in business.

In the aftermath of the O.J. Simpson verdict, there have been extensive news accounts and talk shows about the racial tensions between blacks and whites. This tension was there before the Simpson trial, but why is the media focusing on it now?

The answer is TV ratings and newspaper sales.

We must be responsible for what we print and broadcast. Most of us are, however, there is a disturbing trend toward tabloid television, which perpetuates racial stereotypes and violent images. There are televisions in 85 percent of American households. TV executives are exploiting this situation with a steady diet of trashy talk shows, tabloid news programs, and violent dramas. They pander to the worst instincts of viewers. The public must remember that conflict sells newspapers and increases television ratings. Network executives discovered this fact 40 years ago. Newspaper editors have known it since the 19th century.

We can expect to see more racism and violence in the media. The public just can't get enough of it.

### 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.*

## Brown, Marshall Support School Bond Referendum

### To the Editor:

With less than a week to go before the school bond election, we want to urge you to vote "Yes" on November 7. Both of us have been members of the School Board for the past three years and have attempted to represent not only African Americans' interests but also the interest of all children.

There is no question that we need new classrooms to house our growing student population - over 2,990 new students since 1990. While we both know that the African-American community has not trusted the School Board in the past, we believe that there are a number of reasons why you should trust this Board and superintendent.

\* Although the Atkins project started later than we wanted, funds are available to complete the \$9 million renovation, and the project is nearing the halfway point.

\* African-American parents told us repeatedly over the past three years that they wanted elementary schools in East Winston. Our new redistricting plan creates four elementary schools in North Carolina and East Winston - one new elementary school will be built and Ashley, Cook, and Kennedy will be converted into elementary schools.

\* Minority recruitment efforts are paying off, and the Board and superintendent are putting their money where their mouths are by creating scholarships with Winston-Salem State and Wake Forest Universities.

\* An Equity Committee was established by the Board. It is an advisory committee to oversee issues of equity related to programs, staffing, and finances.

\* A Building and Grounds Committee has been appointed to oversee the spending of the \$94 million, and they will report quarterly to the full Board. Walter Marshall is a member of this committee.

\* Our staff aggressively pursued and received a \$2.4 million National Science Foundation grant to improve minority achievement in math and science.

We want to encourage you to trust this school board and our superintendent. Please support our school bond referendum on November 7 - OUR KIDS ARE WORTH IT!

Geneva Brown  
Walter Marshall

### Turner's Column Praised

#### To the Editor:

What a beautiful article. Why can't everybody see the light? When we pray - we pray for the sins for the world and that includes Islam, you, and me.

I love reading your thoughts!  
Claudette

### Donate Funds

#### To the Editor:

Now that the so-called Million Man March to Washington that was called by Louis Farrakhan, the leader of the Nation of Islam is over, and everyone is back home, I'm wondering if anything will change. There was some concern that the march might divide the nation. Well, I don't know about the nation, but I do know about the black community. The only people that I can see who will benefit from all this is the white establishment and Louis Farrakhan.

I find it very disturbing that so many of our so called black leaders and churches could support this man in anything he does. Why these people don't even believe in Jesus Christ as their savior. Now if our black leaders really would like to do something for the black community, I have a proposal. Lets get one million people anybody to donate \$5 and give some of it to Jimmy Carter to build homes for the poor, the soup kitchens the senior services to feed the poor and homeless, the elderly to pay for medicine and buy heating oil so they won't freeze and air conditions for the elderly. Last year over 700 people in Chicago alone died of heat exhaustion. What about college degrees for our young people? Perhaps if they stayed in school and got an education they will stop using drugs and killing themselves. I'll make the first donation. I'm pledging \$50. Can I get a witness.

Peter Williams

### March Gives Hope

#### To the Editor:

Yes indeed! It brought tears of joy and pride to my eyes as I turned on my television set and saw a wondrous sight: an ocean of African American men gathering together on a serious mission in Washington, D.C. Many questioned and criticized the initiators, the purpose, and the mission of the historical gathering; but those many were too blindsighted or petty to see that this act of love and faith and hope transcended politics, transcended religion, transcended personalities, and transcended hateful attempts to squelch or trivialize the spirit of those men who chose to participate in the spirit of us who chose to support the mission wholeheartedly.

At Sunday church service the morning before the march, my pastor said that many were participating in the Million Black Men March under the wrong banner. He purported that they march under the Banner of Blood. I don't think he realized that he had truly pulsed the heart of the call to march. On Monday Black Men

did exactly that: African American men, many with your sons, brothers, fathers, uncles and the sisters who love you, DID march under the Banner of Blood - a banner not just dripping with blood, but one drenching the gathering with the blood of so many BLACK MEN who have died in or for or because of this country. Millions of these men were kidnapped African slaves who died during the Middle Passage. Thousands of others were murdered and maimed under slavery's cruelty. Thousands of others died bravely fighting America's wars. Many innocent others have died at the hands of our law enforcement officers and this country's discriminating justice system. More still have died senseless violent deaths at the hands of their own brothers. The blood of black men has flowed heavily in the streets and along the byways of America!

As an African American woman, I think I may voice the sentiment of millions of African American women who watched this magnificent GATHERING of black manhood. Every face I saw, young and old, calm or animated, was beautiful! Every speaker I heard - Maya Angelou, Kweisi Mfume, Stevie Wonder, Jesse Jackson, Betty Shabazz, and especially the infamous Louis Farrakhan - was memorable. African American men - real men - pledging to be responsible men: to love and encourage each other; to cherish and love us; to love, cherish and raise our children; to build and support black businesses; to help make our communities a safe and wonderful place to live and raise our children; to value education for themselves, as our dour children; and to help eliminate the problems of violence, crime, drug use, teenage pregnancy, and absentee fathers in our communities. You, my brothers, know that the entire village must work to maintain itself; the village must raise the children; the village must become economically sufficient and one day economically independent. This is not about separatism; the separation occurred many years ago, and we were not responsible for it. However, we are responsible for our villages in this country. This is about survival and sanity and common sense.

I must say, with tears misting my eyes even as I write, THANK YOU, all the beautiful Black Men, including two of my brothers, several friends and more acquaintances, who were there. You gave me and other African American women the sweetest, most precious gift you could ever give. You gave us HOPE for the future of our people, especially our children. You gave us a warm shield of protective love and care, something Black women desperately need. You gave yourselves the spirit of sharing a purpose, of pride and of strength. We or you are not alone in this struggle. We have each other backs and I believe that God and our ancestors are smiling down on all of us.

This is for the love within you which emanates outward to encircle all of us in the warmth of its glow.

Angela Reid

### Bond Gains Support

#### To the Editor:

We strongly encourage all parents, grandparents, students, and others eligible to vote and who love children to support the 1995 School Bond Referendum with a YES vote on November 7. By supporting the Bond Referendum, you will be investing in the future of our children and our community. The improvements in the quality of education that we give our children today will determine the quality of our citizenry, workforce, and economy of tomorrow.

We believe that our entire community, country, and region

will benefit when we support better facilities and equipment for our children here in Forsyth County. We believe that the bond referendum is critical to our total community and the quality of education and life that we want for all citizens of our country. We must have adequate school buildings, additional classrooms, instructional space, and improved computer equipment for our children. The use of general obligation bonds offers the most economical method of financing these improvements.

On November 7, we will be voting on our most valuable resource, our children, our grandchildren... our future. Let's avoid using more expensive ways to finance the improvements. OUR KIDS ARE WORTH IT!! PLEASE take a stand for our children and their children. PLEASE support the Bond Referendum and vote YES on November 7.

Nigel D. Alston  
Patrick Diamond

### Exhibit Opened

#### To the Editor:

Thank you so much for featuring SECCA's Artist and the Community project by Willie Birch in the African-American Tymes supplement. Veronica Clemmons' article about Birch's residency with the students at Wiley Middle and Bolton Elementary Schools was excellent. I'm sure your readers would be interested in knowing that Willie Birch's exhibition at SECCA opened October 28 and runs through January 28. The exhibition includes Birch's drawings and sculpture tracing his experiences from Bertrandville, La. to Brooklyn, N.Y. and back to New Orleans where he currently resides. These moving and emotional works chronicle his life as an African American and cover a five-year span.

We at SECCA welcome your readers to view this important and enriching exhibition.

Susan Lubowsky

### St. Philip's Reunion

#### To the Editor:

My hat is off to the Chronicle for the coverage and prominence given the St. Philip's Reunion October 21st in Old Salem. The occasion was historical and emotional and the Chronicle's attention to and participation in this moment was appropriate and commendable.

Few African Americans in our community are aware of the rich history surrounding historic St. Philip's and the related connections to the original Happy Hill settlement. Fred Wilson's exhibit has focused more attention on this history but an even greater awareness is needed in the African-American community of this treasure. While the general media has given great coverage also to the exhibit, the Chronicle's entree into the local African-American community is critical to the future of St. Philip's as well as original Happy Hill. Your consistent coverage of St. Philip's over the years is very much appreciated.

The exhibit will remain available for tours through December 1995. Reservations must be made in advance.

Mel White

## VOICES IN THE COMMUNITY

Do you think that Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools care about black children? The Chronicle asked this question to several residents last week.



Larry H. Watlington

Yes. I think the local schools care about black children to a certain extent. It really depends on the teachers. That makes the difference. Sometimes, the teachers label our children prematurely.



Fossie Allen

No, they don't care about children with special problems. Union Cross Elementary told me that my daughter who was born with a (spinal disease) could not go there. It was not fair to her.



Sherlane Hill

I feel that more attention should be paid to the needs of African American students.



Wilburn Hayden

They care more now than they have in the past. They are more concerned.



Jo Anne Brown

Some teachers are genuinely concerned about our black children. Black teachers do a better job of relating to our children. Some white teachers are concerned, but discipline problems get in the way.

### 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, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102.