

OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

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Online Upgrades



Ernie Pitt

This & That

We have been working diligently for the past eight months on improving the interactivity of our Web site. Soon, you will be able to connect better with us - your community weekly newspaper. The new venture will also allow you to better interact with the men and women who are responsible for putting this newspaper together each week.

We will also provide organizations and individuals the opportunity to connect to each other and share ideas, events, needs and other processes that help unify our community. The changing times require that we meet the challenges of electronic communications.

As I'm sure most of you who are familiar with The Chronicle know, we have always tried to be a catalyst for bringing our community together rather than tearing it apart. There are too many other elements out there that are more than willing to tear us apart. We don't want that to happen, and will never be a party to it. One of the new features we are anticipating on the improved site is the ability to provide video and podcasts for events in our community. These features will be updated regularly and will give the community

instant glimpses at local activities that ordinarily wouldn't be viewed. Also, you will be able to give your input and ask questions about any event or issue in our community.

We want you to feel that this is your Web site. It is for your use in communicating with us, your neighbors, friends, organizations and for posting whatever your individual needs may be. We also will provide a low-cost avenue for our small businesses to reach thousands of potential customers.

I am hopeful that this will foster greater use of The Chronicle by more organizations and businesses, particularly small ones. I know that a lot of organizations already have these things in place. However, as a community newspaper, I also know that there are some organizations out there that don't qualify as small. They're like a lot of our businesses that suffer from being lumped into the small business category when really we ought to be classified as minute businesses. I guess to some extent, we're looking for you.

You still have time to e-mail me and give me some specifics on what you'd like to see. We're very excited about this and hope that you will join us in this effort. May God continue to bless you. Amen? Amen!

Ernie Pitt is the publisher of The Chronicle and the head of the N.C. Black Publishers' Association. Reach him at erpitt@wschronicle.com.

Clarification

An article in last week's Community section about recent honors for Leanna Lee, did not mention that the Doris B. Jones Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed by the Piedmont Regional Association of Volunteer Administration (PRAVA).



Lee



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Support Carter

To the Editor:

Roy Carter is without question the better candidate for fair and equitable representation of the citizens of the 5th Congressional District. Roy is as visible a candidate for this position as anyone I can remember in the past few years. I would encourage voters to contact his Forsyth County headquarters at 336-499-4140 to find out his public schedule and to make an effort to hear him speak.

For voters who belong to a civic group or any organization in need of a speaker, Roy Carter or one of his surrogates will make every effort to accommodate your meeting

time and place. From now until Election Day, Roy will be hosting a Town Hall Meeting in each county in addition to many public meetings already scheduled. He strives to be accessible to all voters.

It is our responsibility as voters to become familiar with the issues, and the best way to do that is to deal directly with the candidate. I would invite and encourage voters to visit his Web site at RoyCarterforCongress.com. I believe voters will agree that we need a fresh approach to government in Washington. Please vote for Roy Carter.

Anne Griffis Wilson,
 Winston-Salem



Former coach Roy Carter is running for the U.S. House.

Hardly the Death of Black Politics



Ron Walters
 Guest Columnist

The Death of Black Politics? Hardly.

When I read Matt Bai's piece in the New York Times with the title above, I thought that he was fooling, but it turned out to be a serious article that put forth much of the thinking that has passed for this "post-Black Power" even "post Civil Rights" generation.

On second thought however, I am not so sure that this has much to do with generation, except for the fact that some of the successes of the previous generation ushered in a new class of more affluent Blacks who eschew the tactics of the past, not because they are unsuccessful, but that in the current atmosphere, they believe it cost more personally to deploy them.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was not universally loved by Black people and was hated and feared by many of the Whites who now put him on posters. The primary reason was that he and many of his generation made the White establishment and the Black who were connected to them uncomfortable with the maintenance of a system of practices built on a racist hierarchy.

The courage to challenge it by some in that generation was not universally exercised by most Blacks because they felt they had much to lose: jobs, prestige, friends and even the support of relatives. I can conceive of that being a major problem today when a



larger Black middle class - which has always led the struggle for justice - now feels that so entrenched that it does not have to deploy the tactics of the past, not because they would not be successful, but because they would be personally vulnerable in the new corporate atmosphere, embarrassed, or lose the support of friends and relatives even more today.

I appreciate the generational feature of the new digital revolution and the use of the internet and other electronic technology to do modern organizing. But when all is said and done and the information is disseminated about the injustices taking place, it takes courage to act upon that information.

In fact, as a leadership scholar, I have always felt that of all the characteristics of leadership, the courage to act was the most important.

The courage to act produces the pressure for change - and it always will. That is one of the laws of the use of power.

It is the responsibility of civil rights activists in any generation to make the pain and suffering that results from racist oppression visible to

systemic leaders so that it can be corrected.

That is why they are not loved, either by those who control American institutions, those who shape media images or even their own people many times.

Just recently, the courage to mobilize the masses of Blacks by civil rights leaders created the visibility of the oppression of Blacks in Benton Harbor Michigan, highlighted Don Imus' racist insults to the young Black women of the Rutgers University basketball team, demanded redress from the federal government to the disaster of Katrina, showed the injustice of the killing of Sean Bell by the New York City police, forced the nation to look at what was happening to six young blacks who faced a legal lynching in Jena, Louisiana, demanded the Justice Department treat the emergence of nooses as hate crimes and so on. The digital revolution was important to these mobilizations, but it did not replace the power of marching feet and the pressure that created for corrective action.

I understand the great yearning for Blacks who have

reached the standard of American affluence not to have to mobilize to demand justice. But until justice comes, that will be their responsibility because they have access to greater resources than the poor. The myth that electing a Black president will resolve these problems, is created by some uncomfortable Blacks, the media and institutional leaders who pine for the emergence of non-confrontational Black leaders because they work within the systems they control.

We need institutional Black leaders, but they have other responsibilities. I remember that in the mid-1970s, the Congressional Black Caucus had to make a proclamation that they would hence forth not be considered civil rights leaders, but legislators, that they could not take on those kinds of issues and tactics. Their task was to pass the laws that either corrected or prevented them.

It is still true today. We need the division of labor in Black leadership to be understood and supported, especially by Blacks, even if the media does not. So, the only circumstance in which Black Politics disappears is if racism disappears, so that those who suffer from it need not take extraordinary measures to achieve justice. In this sense, we don't live in a "post" anything era, because the challenges are still here.

Dr. Ron Walters is the Distinguished Leadership Scholar, director of the African American Leadership Center and Professor of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland College Park. His latest book is "The Price of Racial Reconciliation."