

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.

Dialogue on race needs to be expanded

The city of Winston-Salem, the Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity and Institute for Dismantling Racism (IDR) are some of the entities that have been sponsoring recent public forums about race relations.

According to city officials, their talks were going on before Michael Brown and Eric Garner, unarmed black men, were killed by police officers last year in Missouri and New York City.

The Darryl Hunt case, in which an innocent black Winston-Salem man in 1984 was wrongfully convicted of the rape and murder of a young white woman, prompted the city to move toward dialogues on race, Council Member Derwin Montgomery said. Hunt served 19½ years in prison before he was freed after someone else confessed to the crime.

Also, Winston-Salem dealt with a riot on Liberty Street in 1967 after police killed a black man during an arrest for drunkenness.

Lately, the amount of talks has increased since Brown and Garner were killed. IDR has held a series of talks, with a third one in the planning stages, for instance.

The talks seem to involve establishment-type people or handpicked participants. They usually involve panels. Grass-roots community workers don't seem to be involved.

Mayor Allen Joines and the Faith Based Coalition presented "Black Lives Matter Late Night Musical" on Friday, March 27. It started at 10 p.m. at Diggs Memorial United Holy Church. This seemed to be a switch from the norm. It was billed as an event "Educating & Raising Awareness On the Plight of 'Young Men of Color.'"

Team BAM (Becoming a Man) is helping young black men grow into productive citizens. Money was raised to help the organization at the March 27 event. But when has Team BAM members been on the list of panelists in the community dialogues?

A 40-year-old black man asked a question on March 27 at the Black Lives Matter event. He asked: "As a 40-year-old black man in this community, how can we get our people in this community to be less intimidated against police?"

With all the talking among all the groups in Winston-Salem, why doesn't this community member know the answer to this question? How many 40-year-old black men are a part of the conversations about race? How many 20-year-old black men are part of the dialogue? How many black teenagers are part of the talks? These are some of the main people who interact with police. These are some of the main people who want answers. They want to know how to prevent escalation of incidents with the police. But if they are not part of the dialogue, how will they know?

The "Black Lives Matter" event seems to be moving in the right direction. Not only was good information provided, but entertainment also was added to attract people.

The dialogues about race in Winston-Salem should be expanded. How many white residents, not panelists or chosen participants, are part of the conversations?

How many other people of color are talking about race? How many Latinos are part of the dialogues? Police-and-community relations affect people of color of all hues.

More representatives from the Winston-Salem area need to be part of the conversations. Where are the gang members in the talks? Where are the single mothers who are raising the black boys who statistically will interact with police at some time in their lives? Where are the elderly men and women who want to trust police but have questions about that trust?

Montgomery, who represents the East Ward, said March 27 at the Black Lives Matter event that he wanted people to act after the event.

"The question is, what do we do when we leave here tonight? I hope when you leave here tonight, you feel empowered to do something," he said.

One thing that could happen is someone could form a dialogue that includes a wider variety of participants.

If Winston-Salem truly wants to move ahead, all parts of the community need to be part of the dialogues on race. Without comprehensive inclusion, the talks could do more harm than good.



We have to fight for our candidates



Ernie Pitt
From the
Publisher

As we approach the 2016 elections, there is much we need to do and much we can do. The racist elements in our state and nation have made it quite plain that their intent is to make us poorer and a non-entity in the governance of OUR country.

How long is it going to take for us to realize that we must come together as one and fight this nonsense? We have to realize and recognize that the gentry class will say and do anything to achieve THEIR goals, which very rarely means anything good for

our people. Why are we so eager to please those who are literally trying to destroy us? Why would any sane black American support the policies of a racist party that advocates eliminating healthcare for everyone; cutting food stamps for the poor; denying equal rights to the LGBT community; reducing taxes for the rich; denying tax deductions for homeowners, etc...etc... etc.

Now, my real point is that we as minorities have the ability to change some of that. In 2016, we have an individual, in fact, two individuals we should support — Ken Spaulding, who's running tit-for-tat with Roy Cooper for governor; and Linda Coleman, who very nearly won the lieutenant governor's race in the last election.



Spaulding



Coleman

The only thing that's really missing is our community's commitment to making it happen. No Democrat can win an election without our vote. So, what's keeping us from supporting qualified candidates from our own community? We have to make a commitment to win. That means raising money, getting the word out, one-on-one pushing for our candidates. Just because our candidate may be behind or even perceived as being

unelectable, we still have to fight.

We owe it to our ancestors who have really paid the price. We can vote now ... but, for how long? Our people suffered untold atrocities for that simple act. Don't we owe them a good fight? Our people have been lynched, burned at the stake, crucified, whipped beyond imagination, enslaved, taught to hate one another, to spy on one another. When are we going to end this madness?

I say it is totally up to us to change this paradigm. No one is going to do anything for us but us. We need to fight for Ken Spaulding and Linda Coleman. They are our only real hope for dignity and change.

Ernie Pitt

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks

To the Editor:

Please accept my sincere thanks for The Chronicle's Lifetime Achievement Award on your 30th Anniversary Celebration of providing our community with news that matters to everybody. You make us all proud as journalism is such a powerful tool for stimulating thought and bringing a platform for discourse to civilization. Our spot within this context here in Winston-Salem is better because of The Chronicle. The journey continues and I know The Chronicle will see to its being properly penned.

Congratulations to all of you as you undergo new and challenging changes. We look forward to growing with you. Let me know if I can do anything to assist.

With God's richest blessings,
Sincerely,
Evelyn Terry,
N.C. state representative
for Forsyth County's 71st District

To the Editor:

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Pitt, the Chronicle and the committee for selecting me as recipient of the Man of Year Award 2015. I am very humbled to have been chosen for this award knowing that there were many qualified nominees.

The city of Winston-Salem provides so many opportunities to serve the community and give back some of what we have been blessed to receive. I consider the time well spent and a contribution to my own personal and professional growth. I'm appreciative of your recognizing my work in this way and plan to continue serving to the best of my ability.

I congratulate the Chronicle for hosting this event each year and seeking out those individuals who have made a difference in this city. It is indeed a privilege and honor to serve this community.

Thank you again for your recognition and support.

Dr. Nathan E. Scovens,
Man of the Year,
Pastor of Galilee Missionary Baptist Church

Thank You and Congratulations

To the Editor:

First, let me thank the Chronicle for recognizing me, along with others, with a 2015 Community Service Award. I am very grateful to have the opportunity to serve my community. With this award, I recommit myself to continuing service to our community, for there is still much needed work to be done in our city, state and nation.

Second, I would like to congratulate the Chronicle on their 30th Annual Community Service Awards. Along with your national recognitions as an outstanding newspaper, 40 years is a testament of great journalism and your dedication to our community. I am proud to see your Mission Statement being fulfilled. Again, thank you for this honor.

Linda Sutton
Community Organizer

Thanks for article

To the Editor:

I would like to thank you for publishing the brilliant article written by Henry J. Pankey, "Cherish the Black History historian who lives

among us."

There have been more than 200 articles written on or about me, Pankey's article is the first one that succinctly captures the essence of my more than 40 years of research and writing.

He clearly illustrated the methodology that I used in publishing 30 books, more than 150 articles, essays, bibliophiles, and book reviews. The books that I have published can be found in 50 states and 50 countries (China, India, Japan, South Africa, Russia, Germany, Lebanon, England, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Greece, Kuwait, Israel, Nigeria, Kenya, etc.) and translated in several foreign languages.

Although the article was primarily written about me in honor of Black History Month, it can be viewed in a much larger context to include other facets of Black history when he declared "African-American writers (must) continue the Afrocentric role of the griot (story-teller) responsible for recording and salvaging history in an inter-generational manner passed from one generation to the next."

Pankey also gave insight to African-American writers and what it takes to be successful to have arduous work habits, keen intellect, creative wordsmith, acumen skills in writing, pride, dignity, courage and convictions and write about historical truths on controversial subjects.



Davis

