

Selma Times-Journal

Local events helping to emphasize nonviolence

Staff

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Nonviolence and protecting victims are the focus of several movements within Selma.

For several weeks, people in the community will hear more about seminars and meetings to raise awareness of the 40 days of nonviolence declared by Mayor James Perkins Jr. on April 4.

Millie Lee Dulaney of Selma has organized a teen talking circle, which she intends to help young people talk through their problems.

"Making peace must start within ourselves and in our family," she said. "We commit ourselves to become nonviolent in our homes; to respect myself and others; avoid uncaring criticism, hateful words, physical attacks and to share our feelings honestly."

The talking circle is scheduled from 5 to 7 p.m. today. Dulaney asks that people call 877-4648 for more information.

Earlier this week, Perkins joined 300 mayors across the nation to form Mayors Against Illegal Guns at a summit in Washington.

During that summit, the coalition announced a partnership with Wal-Mart to ensure guns do not get into the wrong hands. The company, which is the largest seller of firearms in the nation, has adopted the new Responsible Firearms Retailer Partnership, a 10-point voluntary code for selling firearms.

"It was reported that over 1,000 Wal-Mart stores sell guns and will be affected by the partnership," Perkins said in a prepared statement. "Our local Wal-Mart does sell guns, and I appreciate the extra steps Wal-Mart is taking to further ensure that the guns they sell do not get into the wrong hands."

Additionally, this is National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

Chris Peterson, a Selma native, moved back home in 2005 after living in Los Angeles. He was surprised when he found out Selma's nearest Victims of Crime and Leniency (VOCAL) house was in Montgomery.

He decided to start a local house, where staff members are available to assist the family and loved ones of violent crime, providing direct services to victims and their families, and providing public education and awareness.

Peterson is working to set up a membership drive.

"I feel people that are victims of crimes don't know what rights they have," he said. "They've endured a lot, and we want to fill that need or fill that void."

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