



Dr. Dorian Newton, O&E Committee Chair

June 26, 2026

Welcome to our Outreach & Education Biweekly Series

The Center for African American History, Art, & Culture (CAAHAC), located at 120 York St. NE, Aiken, SC 29801, and housed in the historic Immanuel Institute, preserves and celebrates the creativity, resilience, and significant contributions of Aiken's African American community. Through exhibits, lectures, art shows, concerts, and educational programs, we aim to inspire, celebrate diversity, and highlight African Americans' vital role locally, statewide, and nationally.

This biweekly message marks the fourth installment of our new Community Outreach & Education series—a chapter-by-chapter exploration of books like Carolyn Click's *The Cost of the Vote: George Elmore and the Battle for the Ballot*. This inaugural work connects historical narratives to contemporary civic life, encouraging reflection and engagement across our community.

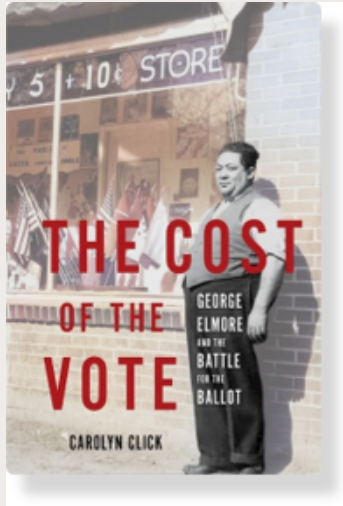


“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Spotlight:

The Cost of the Vote by Carolyn Click Chapter 4 – “*Difficulty with White People*”

As Carolyn Click’s *The Cost of the Vote* was recently honored with the 2026 South Carolina African American Heritage Commission Book Prize, its message holds special significance for Aiken and beyond.



This period, we turn our focus to Chapter 4 of Carolyn Click’s *The Cost of the Vote*, titled “Difficulty with White People.” The chapter is framed through the memory of Melvin Hodges, who attended sixth grade at Waverly Grammar School in Columbia. His teacher, Miss Ida Boyd, taught her students about the *Elmore v. Rice* decision and told them how Judge J. Waties Waring of Charleston was having “difficulty with the white people in Charleston” because he viewed segregation as “per se inequality.” That phrase became the title of the chapter.

Chapter 4 places this story within the broader wave of violence and political backlash against Black veterans and citizens after World War II. It recounts the blinding of Sergeant Isaac Woodard on February 12, 1946, just hours after his honorable discharge. Woodard, a decorated veteran who had served three years in the Pacific and earned a Battle Star, was brutally beaten by Batesburg Police Chief Lynwood Shull after a dispute with a bus driver over using the restroom. The chapter also examines the Moore’s Ford lynchings in Georgia on July 25, 1946, the legal victory in *King v. Chapman* (1945) that struck down Georgia’s white primary, and the fierce political resistance led by figures such as Eugene Talmadge. It further traces how this pattern of resistance continued into the 1950s, as white political leaders responded to *Brown v. Board of Education* with “Massive Resistance.” In South Carolina, Governor James Byrnes led efforts to maintain segregation, while Strom Thurmond conducted the longest single-person filibuster in Senate history in 1957 to block the Civil Rights Act. These events illustrate the violent and political opposition Black Southerners faced as they sought full citizenship.

Reflection Questions

This period, consider how the book's lessons apply to our committee's work. Use these questions to reflect on your role in CAAHAC outreach and education:

1. **How does young Melvin Hodges' memory of Miss Ida Boyd teaching about the Elmore v. Rice decision help us understand the importance of passing on civil rights history to the next generation?**
2. **In what ways can we draw from the Woodard case and the Moore's Ford lynchings to strengthen our commitment to telling the full truth of the postwar struggle for civil rights?**
3. **How might the national response to both the Woodard case and the Moore's Ford lynchings inspire our own efforts to respond to injustice?**
4. **What does the legal victory in King v. Chapman, the violent backlash, and later political resistance (including Strom Thurmond's 1957 filibuster) teach us about the relationship between court decisions and organized opposition?**
5. **How can we use stories like those in Chapter 4 to help younger generations understand that the fight for civil rights has always required courage in the face of resistance?**
6. **In what ways do these postwar events call us to examine how systems of law enforcement, politics, and justice have failed to protect Black citizens — and what is our responsibility in addressing that legacy today?**

Practical Actions for the Next Two Weeks

To move from reflection to action and support our book club and outreach goals, consider these steps:

- 1 Read or re-read Chapter 4 and reflect on how young Melvin Hodges' memory of Miss Ida Boyd's teaching connects personal stories to the broader events of the era. Share one key takeaway during the next book club discussion.
- 2 Research and share accurate information about either the Isaac Woodard case or the Moore's Ford lynchings with at least one person outside the committee.
- 3 Consider how our programming can better honor and educate about the experiences of Black veterans and the long fight against segregation and the white primary.
- 4 Reflect on the recent Juneteenth celebrations and consider how the themes of resilience and justice from Chapter 4 connect to our ongoing work.
- 5 Participate actively in the CAAHAC Online Book Club or GroupMe by posting a reflection from Chapter 3 or suggesting ways these stories can shape our summer outreach and education efforts.

Closing Thoughts

Chapter 4 reminds us that the fight for justice has always required individuals willing to stand against strong opposition. Through the memory of young Melvin Hodges, we see how teachers like Miss Ida Boyd passed on important civil rights history to the next generation. From the blinding of Sergeant Isaac Woodard to the Moore's Ford lynchings, from the legal victory in *King v. Chapman* to the fierce political resistance of figures like Eugene Talmadge, James Byrnes, and Strom Thurmond, the chapter shows the violent and sustained opposition Black Southerners faced as they sought full citizenship. These stories of courage in the face of unimaginable cruelty call our committee to continue the work of truth-telling, education, and remembrance. As we move through the summer months, let us carry the memory of Sergeant Woodard, the Moore's Ford victims, and so many others who paid a terrible price for simply asking to be treated with dignity. Their sacrifice demands that we remain steadfast in the pursuit of justice.

Historical Spotlight

On February 12, 1946, Sergeant Isaac Woodard, a Black World War II veteran who had honorably served three years in the Pacific and earned a Battle Star for bravery, was just hours from home when he was pulled from a Greyhound bus in Batesburg, South Carolina. After a verbal dispute with the bus driver over using the restroom, Woodard was arrested by Batesburg Police Chief Lynwood Shull and savagely beaten with a blackjack, leaving him permanently blind. The case became national news in large part because of powerful radio broadcasts by Orson Welles. When NAACP Executive Secretary Walter White met with President Harry Truman in September 1946, he personally told the President the story of Woodard's blinding. Truman was reportedly shaken and exclaimed, "My God! I had no idea it was as terrible as that! We've got to do something!" The Woodard case, along with the Moore's Ford lynchings and other acts of postwar violence, helped push Truman to create the President's Committee on Civil Rights and later issue Executive Order 9981, which desegregated the United States armed forces in 1948. Though Chief Shull was acquitted by an all-white jury, the case became a catalyst that helped shift the national conscience. (Source: Carolyn Click, *The Cost of the Vote*, Chapter 4; Richard Gergel, *Unexampled Courage*)

CAAHAC Bookstore & Gift Shop Update To support our mission and the local literary community, we encourage you to purchase or borrow *The Cost of the Vote* from independent bookstores such as The Book Tavern in Augusta or All Good Books in Columbia, or to check availability through the Aiken County Public Library system. The CAAHAC gift shop may also have copies available for community members. Every book acquired helps sustain our educational programs, outreach initiatives, and the preservation of these essential stories.

Things to Look Forward To:

- Reflecting on the recent Juneteenth celebrations and the powerful stories of resilience and freedom they highlighted across our community.
- **July 10, 2026 – Next Biweekly Message** Our next installment will continue exploring *The Cost of the Vote* and the long road toward voting rights and full citizenship.
- Ongoing summer community programs, including book club discussions and historical education efforts focused on South Carolina's civil rights legacy.

Let us carry the spirit of hard work, uplift, and community from Chapter 4 into every conversation, every classroom, and every gathering as we work together to honor the past and build a stronger, more connected future for all.

Warm Regards,

Dr. Dorian Newton

CAAHAC Outreach & Education Committee