



Title: It was *never* about a hot dog and a Coke®!

Author: Rodney L. Hurst, Sr.

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Rodney Hurst has spent most of his adult life working in Jacksonville, Florida's Black community as a community advocate and as an elected City Councilman. Hurst, then the 16-year old president of the Jacksonville Youth Council NAACP, gives his eyewitness account of a violent chapter in Jacksonville, Florida's civil rights history.

On August 27, 1960, infamously referred to as Ax Handle Saturday, more than 200 white males with ax handles and baseball bats attacked members of the Jacksonville Youth Council NAACP in downtown Jacksonville.

The events leading up to Ax Handle Saturday, the events after that infamous day, and the racial and political climate of Jacksonville, Florida in the late fifties and early sixties, make compelling reading.

Though Jacksonville's lunch counter sit-ins and other "direct action" demonstrations against racism and segregation were very visible in 1960, Hurst is quick to point out lunch counters were vestiges to attack racism and discrimination. In Hurst's words, "It was never about a hot dog and a coke. It is always about human dignity and respect."

Rodney Hurst will speak at the Ritz Theatre and Lavilla Museum on Tuesday, October 9, 2007 from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm in conjunction with 381 Days: The Montgomery Bus Boycott Story*. Hurst will discuss race relations in Jacksonville during the late fifties and early sixties, and will preview his upcoming book, "It was *never* about a hot dog and a Coke®!"

*Exhibition developed by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service in collaboration with the Troy University Rosa Parks Library and Museum, made possible through the generous support of AARP.