

Editorial and Opinion Page

From the Office of the Superintendent
by Dr. Barry Harding

Last week could've marked an important step in the careers of fourteen students in the Public Schools of Robeson County. For those fourteen qualified to become part of the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program which was established by North Carolina Legislature in 1986 to reverse a trend which, at that time, indicated a decline in the number and quality of students entering teacher education programs. The Teaching Fellows Program has been successful in that effort.

Generally considered to be the most ambitious teacher recruitment program in the country, it's designed to identify academically gifted students who have leadership potential and who are interested in teaching. Thus the program's purpose was to attract the best and brightest to enter the teaching profession.

To accomplish that emphasis is placed on the applicant's level of commitment to teaching by school personnel as well as the applicant's level of school/community/employment activities. Additionally, a nine person committee composed of a banker and judge along with educators interviewed the 29 applicants in our school system who were interested in pursuing entrance in the program.

This process has already resulted in the selection of some 4400 of North Carolina's brightest and most talented high school seniors as Teaching Fellows. Just as important is the fact that graduates of the program are now teaching in public schools in 95 North Carolina counties including our own Robeson County.

The program provides \$5,000 a year for a maximum of four years to 400 high school seniors who agree to teach for four years in North Carolina public school. Upon becoming teachers, they are forgiven one fourth of the tuition for each year that they teach in

a state public school or one third of the tuition for each year they teach in a school in the state designated as

low-performing. Thus, in either three to four years, the entire amount of the tuition is forgiven. Should they not teach in a state public for a full three or four years, though, they are then obligated to repay that portion of the tuition which covers the time which they didn't spend teaching. Should they never begin teaching, that would call for the entire amount paid for them. After graduation from college, Teaching Fellows have seven years in which to satisfy their obligation of the investment the state made in their education.

Thus the program gives young people in our system who may not have the finances to attend college but are interested in teaching the ability to select from among the fourteen colleges and universities which take part in the program.

It's important to note here that, even if applicants are successful in being approved by the local selection committee, it is still their responsibility to obtain admission to the college of their choice from among those fourteen.

I'm particularly glad to see that, among the fourteen students who were approved for acceptance into the program in Robeson County, seven were minority students. That's especially important for us, assuming that, upon graduation, at least some of them return to Robeson County to teach. They could be a part of the answer to the difficulty we have in attracting minority teachers.

Until April 8, 1999 when the Teaching Fellows Awards are made, we'll be keeping our fingers crossed for our fourteen applicants. In the meantime, I would like to encourage students who will be entering their senior year during the next school year to seriously start considering making the effort to take part in next year's selection. It's a tremendously worthwhile program for the students, the teaching profession and Robeson County.

Carolina Indian Voice
Call (910) 521-2826.

Pembroke Kiwanis Report

by Dr. Ken Johnson

The weekly meeting was held Tuesday evening at the Jade Garden Restaurant with George Kenworthy presiding.

Todd Jones, Program Chairman, presented Lt. Thomas Rowdy, Chief Jailer of the Robeson County Jail under Sheriff Glenn Maynor. He stated that he appreciated the confidence shown in him. He explained that Saturday nights are very busy at the jail. "We have to be like lawyers, at times," he said, "meaning, of course, a day does not go by that we don't learn something new. We have 42 inmates charged with murders. The hospital staff is on duty twenty-four hours a day. Dr. Locklear, Dr. Douglas and Dr. Strawcutter our the doctors for the jail."

Mr. Jones continued: "We have TV on sometimes into the early morning hours to keep things under control. An inmate has thirty dollars a week to spend in the canteen, if he has not been a problem. No money is used. Just a credit system. But no

one wants to lose his canteen privileges. 325 to 330 is our average number of inmates daily. The longest stay of one inmate is from September 10th, 1994. We have inmates from all over the country. We have four crews of 14 officers each. Everything is set up to accommodate 700 inmates. The cafeteria will accommodate 700. Visitation is once a week for twenty minutes, the length depending on the situation. Trustees are not to be trusted." Lt. Rowdy had a really interesting presentation.

The Annual Spaghetti Supper will be this Friday, December 4 from 5 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. at the Pembroke Elementary School and the Pancake Breakfast is Saturday, December 5 between 6:30 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5. Funds are for community projects. Hope to see you there at the Pembroke Elementary School.

Invocation-Albert Hunt. Song Leader-Bob Lowry. Reporter-Ken Johnson.

You hope no one in your family will ever need CPR. We hope you're right.

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Winter Concert set for Sampson-Livermore Library

Pembroke, N.C. --- The great hall reading room of the Sampson-Livermore Library will be the setting for the Winter Concert of UNC Pembroke's Concert Choir.

The concert is free and will be Tuesday, Dec. 2 at 7:30 pm.

The 30 member choir will present a concert of seasonal music that includes a performance of Bach's Christmas Cantata, #142, "To Us a Child is Born." It will be sung in German with a string ensemble providing accompaniment.

Soloists for the performance will be Kendall McDougald and Octavius Locklear, both of Laurinburg, and Michael Woodard of Whispering Pines.

The Concert Choir will also perform selections from the United States, Hungary, Latvia, and many other countries. Included in the program will be "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" arranged by Dr. Larry Arnold of the UNCP Music Department.

The Concert Choir is under the direction of Dr. Gary Wright.

"The reason the library was selected for the concert is to show off the newly constructed addition and to share the acoustics of this area," Dr. Wright said. "The choir will sing from the balcony overlooking the audience in the Great Room. The library lends itself beautifully to what it should be a lovely and lively evening of music."

Long live the "real" King!

Ranting & Raving



Garry Lewis Barton

Alabama, where 200 families lived. The religious fanatics dressed alike in black (no, as far as I know, Johnny Cash ain't Amish!). And their religion forbids them enjoying any of the modern conveniences such as electricity and cars the rest of us take for granted. They're best known for being seen decked out in their black garb, riding in their black, horse-drawn wagons.

Where we stopped for directions, someone told us that whatever we did, not to approach an Amish person because their religion also forbids them interacting with outsiders. But telling Lisa and Renee that was like telling a fish not to swim. Seeming to have come to the conclusion that the Amish folk were simply too introverted for their own good, and over my strenuous objections, Lisa flagged down the first black buggy that came along when we became lost. Of course, the black-clad fella's kind nature prompted him to give her directions anyhow. Poor fella's still probably on his knees asking God for absolution after his encounter with Lisa and Renee.

I wondered what the Amish folk did for entertainment since they couldn't watch TV, go to the movies, and such. Then I noticed that each house we visited seemed to have at least 12 young'uns milling around the yard. And that pretty much solved the riddle.

Then we experienced the other end of the spectrum by visiting the lavishly-furnished Graceland in which Elvis had a TV in each room, not to mention four TVs side-by-side in the living room so he could watch all four networks (all that were available at the time) at once.

Ironically, the folk in the Amish Community seemed happy and content as they went about their everyday business. And Elvis, living in the lap of luxury, according to the tour guides, was sad and unhappy basically because his fame made Graceland his virtual prison.

My sister Renee, quite a character and entertainer (buck dancing and comedy being her specialty) in her own right, is quite possibly the biggest Elvis fan to ever strain a vocal cord. His death in 1977 hasn't diminished her ardor or enthusiasm, or obsession, or whatever.

One moment that stands out vividly in my mind occurred when Renee, obviously overcome with emotion, threw her hands skyward and wailed to the high heavens at the top of her lungs, "We love you Elvis!" Thinking to apologize for Renee's public outburst, I shuffled over toward Lisa. But upon seeing crocodile-size tears cascading down her cheeks too, I reconsidered. I opted instead for falling back a few steps in hopes folk hadn't seen me walk in with them.

A cobblestone fence surrounds Graceland to keep folk out, or at least the non-paying variety. Traditionally, Elvis fans from all over the world write a brief message on the wall. "We love you, Elvis!", the same sentiments my sister Renee had expressed so eloquently and wetly back in the house, and "Elvis is still King," seemed to be the two most-repeated ones. Another I liked was: "What about that son-in-law?", referring to black (or whatever color he is now) entertainer Michael Jackson who was then married to Elvis' daughter Lisa Marie.

Money can't necessarily buy happiness, folk. If it could, Elvis would have been the happiest man alive. And no one's ever been seen in a hearse on their way to the graveyard pulling a U-Haul.

The Amish seemed to practice moderation and orderliness. And Elvis was excessive and unpredictable. Personally, I wish he had been Amish. If so, he might still be with us. But he lived hard, and he died hard. That's why I thought another message was appropriate: "Elvis, some call you King. I hope you knew Jesus, the real King." I hope so, too, folk. "Cause you know what the Bible says about it being harder for a camel to fit through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven."

I heartily recommend the Graceland tour to y'all. But we shouldn't idolize or worship Elvis, folk. After all, he was just a man. And like all men, he had an appointment with the Grim Reaper. Of course, the Bible also says we reap what we sow. And I dare say that despite the fact Elvis was basically a good man known for helping others, his lavish lifestyle seemed to hasten his appointed hour.

Indeed, perhaps there is some truth to what another fan scribbled: "We, your fans, killed you, Elvis! We loved you to death!"

Indeed!
We'll talk again, folk.

Reflections

by Alta Nye Oxendine

Hurricane Mitch

Let's remember to pray for all the devastated people in Nicaragua and Honduras who are suffering in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. Also the Red Cross and other relief workers who are helping homeless people there.

Byron

I wish there was enough time and space to tell a story each week or two about something NEW my grandson has come up with! Byron, who keeps talking about how he's growing BIGGER, turned three on November 8. NOW IT'S THRILLING TO WATCH, AND PARTICIPATE IN, HIS IMAGINATIVE PLAY, INCLUDING PLAYING BASEBALL WITH ONLY A "MAKE BELIEVE" BAT AND BALL.

Still Celebrating!

Last year a number of friends, along with my daughter and grandson, my son-in-law and his family, gathered to help me celebrate my 70th birthday. For my seventy-first birthday this past September I had a cozy, quiet, relaxing, meal with the

three most special people in my family.

My most precious memory of my "special day" is grandson, Byron, singing "Happy Birthday, Nana" as he woke up from his morning nap.

That week-end a friend whom I hadn't seen for years treated me to a delicious meal at Western Sizzlin'.

But the gift I think of every day is the new (to me) used printer my brother, Russ, had been using at his Denver home. (He now has another.) My old printer quit early in 1997. I'd been hoping to find another one old enough to be compatible with my computer.

In the meantime I'd been having to copy all my computer-writing by hand.

So it seemed TOO good to be true when I connected, everything up. IMMEDIATELY the printed started printing, without having to upgrade a THING!

(After I wrote this a couple of months ago, my COMPUTER developed a problem. But, within a week Donnie Daniels got it going again. What a relief!)

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