

# Editorial And Opinion Page



## AS I SEE IT

Bruce Barton

**Pembroke, I hardly know you ...**

PEMBROKE-Have you noticed how Pembroke is changing? If the town were a woman, I might say, "Pembroke, I hardly know you ..."

When I go to the post office now, I meet people that I have never seen before. Strangers. Pembroke is growing rapidly, the progressive say. But I would reply that provincialism, even quaintness, has a place too. Until recently, I was always comforted by the uniqueness, the "Indianness" of Pembroke. No more! Pembroke looks like any other Robeson County town to me these days, no more, no less. It's sad, isn't it?

When I was a boy growing up on Barker Street, I knew every person, seemingly, in Pembroke, by name and profession. Now, I hardly know anyone. Pembroke has become a hot bed for Section 8 Housing, and receives strangers daily. They come to live in our community, with maladies and special needs. Our Realtors build for them, and gladly go to the post office and pick up the check that is there for public assisted rent, a lot of times, it seems, from the Lumberton Housing Authority. Why is there so much Section 8 Housing in Pembroke? Isn't something out of kilter, or am I out of sync with the times? And, if we truly need Section 8 housing, why isn't it administered by Pembroke's Housing Authority instead of Lumberton? And Public Housing! It seems to me that we have more public housing that we need. I notice that, from time to time, we run ads heralding public housing. We have this municipal plum that we want to share with others. We need enough public housing, not too much. Ummm!

As noted elsewhere, Pembroke used to be predominately Indian: now it is like any other municipality in Robeson County. Pembroke is quietly losing her character, her uniqueness. And maybe that is the price we pay for progress. It is sad to see some of the changes in Pembroke, and someone told me recently that he was approached by a woman of the evening. God forbid! Not in Pembroke, I cried out. And he replied, sadly, "Yes, Brother Bruce, yes. She asked me to do something that scared the bejabbers out of me." Ummm! Pembroke, I hardly know you.

It might be a myth anyway. Pembroke has always been an anomaly, never truly an Indian town, not as far as who owns the property is concerned. For years, the largest taxpayer in Pembroke was Pates Supply Company. Pates Supply Company is still a major force in the life of Pembroke. For instance, Pembroke District Court rents from them. And the former sheriff's two sons are major landowners and taxpayers in Pembroke. They were left sizable holdings by the late Ruth McCormick, who at one time was married to the Stone boys' daddy, Hubert Stone. Ruth McCormick, a very nice lady, left the Stone boys much of her holdings. For instance, she was the largest stockholder in Pates Supply Company and owned a significant amount of First Union stock. The Stone boys own it now, and lots more besides. And, of course, it goes without saying that they, or anyone else, have a right to own property in Pembroke. The point is made to address the issue of the changing face of Pembroke.

The university has also changed the complexion of Pembroke, most times for the betterment of the community. But not always. I had a dispute with a university official a few years ago. I cried out in anger that university faculty members and administration only helped create pot holes in Pembroke as they traveled in and out, never stopping to buy anything. That has not changed appreciably over the years. But I understand that the university is encouraging a developer to build a housing development tailored to the university family. That sounds good and encouraging.

And the fast food industry has discovered Pembroke. We have everything but a McDonalds and I wouldn't be a bit surprised to see one of that genre crop up in the near future.

And drugs. Drugs are destroying our children, especially our Indian males. It seems that the Indian psyche is not structured to receive drugs into its fragile system. Drug dealers and users have discovered Pembroke, all persuasions and colors. It seems that the pigmentation of ones skin does not interest those who sell drugs, or those who ingest them, in the least. Drugs destroy all who dare use them, including our Indian youngsters. Using drugs is like playing with a loaded gun. It is bound to go off from time to time and inflict much harm. What can we do?

I pondered aloud to myself, after a recent visit to the post office, "Ah, Pembroke ... I hardly know you." How sad! But would I want to deny anyone the right to shop and live and even cuss and do drugs in Pembroke? Well, I would hope that we can eventually curtail the sale of drugs in Pembroke and the rest of Robeson too. The rest of it? ... Well, we'll just have to live with it and count it as progress and the constitutional price we pay for the right to live in a free land and eat a Double Burger at noon.

## Murawsky and Locklear Wed

Nicole Lyn Murawsky and J. Edwin Locklear both of Angier (NC) were married April 13, 2000 at nine o'clock in the morning at Dunn's River, Jamaica. Reverend Adrian A. McLean officiated the double ring ceremony. A private wedding brunch followed at Dunn's River Sandals Resort. The bride's mother, Sheryl Taylor, and Ronald Ellis hosted a post-wedding luncheon reception at their home in Wilmington (NC) on April 22.

The bride is the daughter of Sheryl Taylor of Wilmington and J. Eric Murawsky of Fayetteville (NC) and Stuttgart, Germany. She is the granddaughter of Walter and Josephine Furbie of Bergholz, Ohio, and Loraine Murawsky and the late Walter Murawsky of Mason, Ohio.

Parents of the groom are Horace Locklear and Barbara Brayboy Locklear of Angier (NC). He is the grandson of Eva Harris Brayboy and the late Tecumseh Bryan Brayboy, Jr. of Pembroke, and the late Riley Lee and Margaret L. Locklear of Lumberton.

The bride is employed with Gregory Real Estate in Angier. The groom is employed with Olde Mill Motors in Angier. The couple lives in Angier.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# Voice of the People

The Family-Part #1

After focusing on the housing issue, I have been pondering the family and how important it is. Family is the greatest unit on earth. God knew what he was doing when he gave us father, mother, sister, brother, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins. What a great foundation. I can remember as a young girl all the family at my grandparents' home, sitting on the porch and listening to the older people talk. The topics included the harvest, religion and the future. We had a large family and we were taught by every member of the family concerning one issue or another. One person didn't have all the answers, but together with the family, we could work out any problem. My great grandmother was very wise and didn't seize the moment to correct you when you were wrong. My grandmother was strong and a hard working woman with a great love for her family. I saw her raise her children and grandchildren. I will always be grateful to have had a grandmother like Gertha Mae Collins.

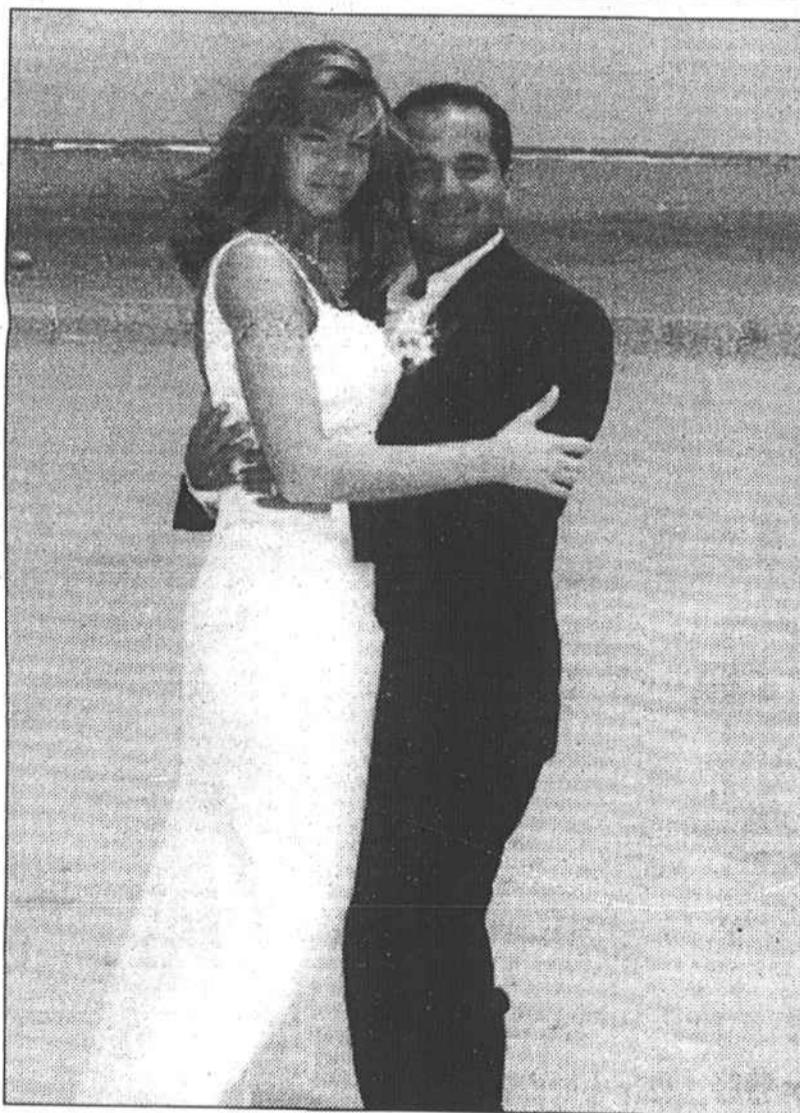
If you had a problem and went to her, don't think the answer would always be in your favor because if you were wrong, she would tell you so. She was always right, even though I didn't agree with her then. I realize it now. Time has a way of teaching you correct principles and if we could listen to our elders and have faith in their righteous judgment, we could exceed above and beyond what we imagine.

The reason for this reminiscing is because I feel the family is under attack by a dark and powerful force. We can see it in divorce, violence, drugs and alcohol, abuse, cheating, murders, abortion, abandonment and above all, there is no prayer at home or in school. All these things are tools of that dark power. God gave us family so that we would never be alone. I look at the elderly and remember what God said: "Honor thy father and mother." Families have become so wrapped up in the world and being overcome by money, power and positions that they have forgotten God's word. That is the very reason for their existence. They have abandoned in nursing homes and rest homes or even left the elderly alone for long periods of time and never seeing their family. This was never meant to be. Love is the greatest gift we have and charity edifies much. I know we bring nothing in this world and nothing but our works will leave this world when we depart. Whether they are good works or bad works, they will follow us.

Children are being taken by social services from the family and put into foster homes and our courts are assisting them in the very act. Indian children are taken more from Indian families in Robeson County than any other race. As a family member I have seen this madness and we must stand together as a family to stop all the deception and deceit that is happening to our families in home, school as well as by the government. Our generation is behind and has little money. But they had a great love for family. A lot of the good tradition of our forefathers needed to be kept and taught to our children, like love, respect, honor, compassion and service. I was taught these things and most importantly to take good care of each other. I know the fight that the Cuban family had over the little boy was not handled in the right way, but they believed in what they were doing was right. They were protecting the family.

When children are taken out of their home, the government sees revenue and jobs. I see pain and suffering in a long term aspect. I would really like to hear from the people if you have had the same feelings write to me and ask some questions about any issue and together we will find the answer. Thank you for reading and listening to Wind in Her Hair. I want to listen to you, so write.

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Mr. and Mrs. J. Edwin Locklear  
(former Nicole Lyn Murawsky)

## Lessons from a 'deaf mute'

### Rantin' and Ravin'



Garry Lewis Barton

Back in the early '80s, my brother Bruce, my sister Connee, and I were working on putting out that week's issue of The Carolina Indian Voice. Suddenly, out of the blue, a stranger sauntered in and handed each of us a blue card.

"I am a deaf mute," the card read, "unable to work to support my family. Please help me."

Gosh! I looked at that poor, 'deaf mute' and a wave of sympathy and pity washed over me so completely it started leaking out of my eyes.

I was so overcome by emotion and choked up I couldn't say or do anything except reach into my pocket for my last five dollars.

The whole time I was reaching for my last five dollars with one hand and wiping tears with the other, warning bells were going off inside my drenched and soggy head.

"Self," my dark angel whispered to myself in my ear, "that poor 'deaf mute' is wearing nicer clothes than you."

"Yeah," my good guardian angel piped up in the other ear, "but he'll never be able to hear Mozart!"

Of course, I had never heard Mozart's music either, and I had good hearing, but that was beside the point.

"Self," the dark angel tried reasoning with myself, "you're setting yourself up for the fall."

"Nah," my guardian angel said, "Here's a fellow human being in need. It's a lot better to give than to receive."

"Not if it's your last five dollars!" I don't know where that came from. But it was pretty obvious doubt had somehow crept in.

Well, to make a long story short, all three of us gave that poor, 'deaf mute' the last money we possessed to our names.

Since it was lunch time and I had given not only from my heart but my stomach too (since that five dollars had been earmarked for buying my lunch) I decided to go to Mama's on Pine Street, knowing if I looked pitiful enough she'd feed me.

I walked outside en route to getting into my raggedy, broken-down, rusted-out old 1956 panel chevy truck just in time to catch the tail end of a conversation. It was between our 'deaf mute' and a fella with him who must have been a 'deaf mute' too because he had a basket full of blue cards too, and probably a pocket full of money.

"It's a miracle!" My guardian angel cried exuberantly.

"Right!" My sarcastic dark angel interjected.

Then I was able to distinguish their words and knew it wasn't a miracle after all: "One dumb - - - (I'll let y'all fill in the blanks since this is a family newspaper) was actually crying in there," our 'deaf mute' was saying, pointing toward the building which housed the Carolina Indian Voice.

The two got into a brand, spanking new white 1983 Buick Skylark and drove off, still laughing uproariously, no doubt in search of other suckers like me.

And as I climbed into my worn-out old vehicle, I caught myself wondering where I could get some blue cards printed up.

Of course, after I got over the hurt and embarrassment of getting fleeced, I realized I'd never be able to stoop so low as to exploit folks' sympathy like that. And being the resilient ol' coddler that I am, I was soon feeling good about myself again.

You see, I realized that I did nothing wrong. I had no reason to feel bad. After all, I did what was expected of me. My brother, sister and I reacted the way we were taught by a conscientious mama (Berna Barton) who instilled in all her young'uns compassion for our fellow man.

I can laugh about the incident now. But it was no laughing matter back then. Caught up in the passion of the moment, I was embarrassed and angry at myself for being gullible enough to be taken in by an impostor claiming to be 'handicapped.' And I remember vowing to myself that I would never fall for that line again.

But that's a selfish response and it's not fair to the next 'deaf mute' I encounter who might legitimately be in need.

That 'deaf mute' impostor could not have had a conscience. Being unable to hear during these technologically-advanced times is not necessarily a handicap. Being unable to care is.

I'm a lot richer than he'll ever be because I'd rather have compassion for my fellow man than a whole fleet of brand new Buick Skylarks. He might have left laughing. And left with my last five dollars. But he won't have the last laugh.

We all must answer to a Higher Authority for everything we do. And when I stand before God after my time on earth is through, I won't be found guilty of not caring enough for my fellow man to at least try and help. Conversely, that five dollars will cost him dearly when he stands before the great I Am.

Of course, I must admit that for years after the incident, if a 'deaf mute' came up to me and handed me a blue card asking for a handout, I would invariably ask, "You got change for a twenty?"

If he said "Yeah," "no," or anything else, I'd keep my money in my pocket and hand him his card back.

Hey! I said I was compassionate! Not stupid! We'll talk again, folk.

## DEBT PROBLEMS!

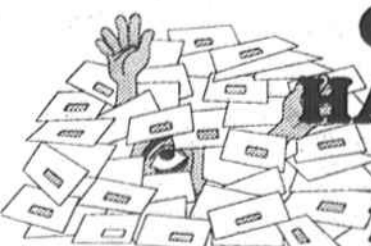


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The "Seniors in Motion" program understands the financial difficulties that currently face senior citizens and disabled persons. This program takes these difficulties into consideration and employs a caring attitude while dealing with inquiries.

For more information about the "Seniors in Motion" program, please call 1-800-594-1225.

Catching a flyball is a pleasure. But knowing what to do with it after you catch it is a business.  
—Tommy Henrich.

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