

# Editorial And Opinion Page



## AS I SEE IT

Bruce Barton

### Crazy times in Ol' Robeson

Lunacy reigns supreme in Ol' Robeson, especially in the public arena where many of the participants dance about butt-naked politically ... except for their racial under pants.

In this corner, some are calling for Dr. Barry Harding's scalp, and in the other, they are demanding that we give Fred Williams a new contract, and unbridled freedom to hire and fire, and administratively do what ever makes him feel good.

Robesonians, in various colors, have essentially lost their cultural bearings, and many seem to have lost their way politically. Would it alarm you if I revealed to inquiring minds that Dr. Barry Harding, the embattled superintendent of the Public Schools of Robeson County, is an Indian? And would you be surprised to find out that Fred Williams, the president of Robeson Community College, is white? Many letter writers are calling for Harding's political scalp, and they are hell bent on denying him a new contract when his present one expires in June of 2002. No activists, or the county newspaper, have called for Williams to step down.

Instead, many of Harding's critics are raising hell and demanding that the RCC trustees extend Williams' contract without examination or explanation. They want it done now, and if the trustees don't do it, these political recalcitrants are threatening to do God knows what.

Notice the color scheme throughout all of this. The activists, mostly conservative whites, want Harding fired and, at the same time, Williams praised and given unlimited authority. Is this lunacy or not? It makes you wonder, doesn't it?

Harding is damned mostly by whites; Williams is called to task, in the main, by minorities on the board of trustees, principally Johnny Hunt, an Indian, and Thomas Jones, a Black. The attacks against Hunt and Jones and Harding have been scathing and scurrilous. Williams is not blamed for any of the problems at RCC, and is treated as the second coming of John Dewey by the Robesonian, his editorial cheerleader. The trustees, including Hunt and Jones, have a constitutional duty to provide oversight. Williams, as chief administrative head, makes recommendations and the trustees vote either yes or no. That sounds reasonable, as I see it. I cynically survey the political landscape. Would this be believed in New York City, or in any other far away place? Nah! Only in Ol' Robeson!

## Pediatric Pointers

by Dr. Joey Bell, Pembroke Pediatrics

### ASTHMA

There is an old wives tale that says if you let a cat sleep in a child's room, the cat will jump onto the child's chest and steal his breath away. As strange as it sounds, this old tale holds some truth in the case of children with asthma. When a child has asthma things like animal fur, dust, and cigarette smoke can cause their lungs to spasm. These spasms reduce the amount of air that can enter the lungs. The result is coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. Other things that can cause lung spasms include: cold, allergies, exercise, weather changes, emotional stress, certain medications, and inhaled irritants (like hairspray and perfume).

The four types of asthma are mild intermittent, mild persistent, moderate persistent, and severe persistent. A child is diagnosed with a specific category of asthma based on the frequency and severity of asthma attacks. If left untreated, asthma could cause a variety of problems. Long or frequent asthma attacks can rob the brain and body of oxygen resulting in hospitalization or possibly death. Because the consequences of asthma can be fatal, it is imperative to treat this disease appropriately. One of the most important things you can do for a child with asthma is to keep them away from irritants and substances that may cause an asthma attack. Other helpful practices are minimizing exposure to cold air, reducing strenuous physical activity, reducing stress, and attempting to calm the child during an active asthma attack.

There are several medications that can be used to treat asthma. The most common drug used is Albuterol. Albuterol is a bronchodilator, which means that it helps to stop spasms and open up the lungs to make breathing easier. It is most effective when used during or immediately before an asthma attack. Steroids, like Rhinocort, are often used to treat moderate and severe asthma. Steroids decrease inflammation in the lungs. They are most effectively used everyday to help prevent and decrease the severity of asthma attacks.

Asthma medicines are available in liquid, tablet, and gas forms. The age of the child and their category of disease determine the type of drug given. A nebulizer, or breathing machine, is the best way to deliver medicine directly to the lungs. It is good for children who have severe disease, are having an active attack, or are unable to use an inhaler. Inhalers are good for older kids because they are easy to carry around and can be used quickly. The incidence of asthma has steadily increased over the past few years. I am sure that everyone reading this article knows as least one person with asthma. As research is done and medicine evolves, many of the mysteries surrounding asthma are revealed. It is not the crippling disease that it once was. With proper management most children with asthma are able to run and play and lead normal lives (although I still wouldn't let them sleep with the cat!).

Life every man holds dear, but the dear man holds honor far more precious-dear than life.

—William Shakespeare, Troilus and Cressida

## EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

### RCC approves SACS response and caves in to constitutional duties

LUMBERTON-It was like a Freudian nightmare, or some psychological dream that was more surreal than real. The picture on the front page of the Robesonian said it all. Here were these big WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) guys sitting on the front row at RCC with placards reading: "Obey SACS", "Save RCC", "Save our college". Another sign cried out, "Don't trust the trustees." Big guys. They were part of about 150 people attending the RCC board of trustees meeting Monday evening. They were there to hear responses to the SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) Probation.

And, as we see it, the RCC trustees caved in to the political pressure and passed a measure that they hope will get them out of trouble with SACS. The trustees, by a show of hands, approved the responses which mostly included a request that Fred Williams, as president, be given more authority to run the school. Both Johnny Hunt and Thomas Jones spoke out forcefully in opposition to the measure before John Staton, a Black trustee from Red Springs, made the motion. The docile trustees hope the set of responses will get them off probation.

In a more positive move, the trustees tabled a request to renew Williams' contract and approved a request that RCC apply for a \$1.5 million grant to build a business-technology training center at the proposed COMtech Park near Pembroke.

According to Staton, the most important response to the SACS sanction was to give Williams the authority to hire, fire and make lateral changes. If Williams is given this ultimate authority, what is there for trustees to do other than to sit prettily before the electorate and smile for the cameras?

Thomas Jones and Johnny Hunt both noted that giving Williams such power would threaten minorities if careful oversight by the trustees were not maintained. Jones noted that the trustees should be careful because Indians and Blacks might be overlooked in the future in the hiring process. Hunt expressed dismay that SACS had chastised the board for allowing race to rear its ugly head in board deliberations. Hunt also said that RCC's hiring practices had traditionally been unfair because Indians and Blacks had not been hired proportionately over the years.

In spite of the sometimes heated debate, Staton's motion ultimately passed without fanfare. It was a sad ending to a sad story. It was a sad day for minorities at RCC. In our editorial opinion, the trustees caved in to political pressure and turned away from their constitutional duty to provide oversight and reasonableness in conducting RCC's business.

SACS seems suspect to us too, and should be investigated. They have been heavy handed, and seem to have succumbed to the public relations stink ascending over this political road kill. The agency has repeatedly over reacted, and essentially ignored the multi-cultural facts of life in Robeson County. Their sanctions are inadequate, and do not safeguard minorities at RCC. They (SACS) seem to have made decisions without really knowing what they are doing.

We editorially and publicly call on President Fred Williams to present us a print out of the employment at RCC for the past five years. We have written to him and ask him for a copy of the employees by race, position and salary range over the past five years. Come on, RCC Board of Trustees, let's make him put the focus on the real issues facing RCC. Do any of you know the employment statistics at RCC??? If so, share them with us!

And, finally, we call editorially for Fred Williams to step down as president of Robeson Community College. The buck ought to stop in the president's office, and he ought to be held accountable for any shortcomings at RCC.

### Who Am I? by Erwin Jacobs

Last evening, on January 12, a large group of people descended on Evans Fire House to pay their love and respect to Georgia Bell Locklear, celebrating her birthday. As the cars began to fill up the parking lot, trays and arm loads of food began to enter the building approaching the hour of 7:00 p.m. I found a spot and back my car in so I wouldn't have any problems leaving. Little did I know I would be among the last to leave. I got back home around 9:45 p.m.

Miss Locklear who is a cousin of mine, and many others who attended this occasion informed me when I accepted the invitation that I would see many people, some relatives and many friends from different parts of North Carolina. You might ask what has this to do with my writings "Who Am I"?

The whole room was filled to capacity and a lot of people's faces met my eyes as I began to go around shaking hands and greeting all the guests I could maneuver between the rows of tables to get to. Finally a little passed 7:30 "ish", Reverend Stanford Locklear got our attention, welcoming everyone and telling the audience about the many lives Miss Locklear had touched and helped in their time of sickness and then he blessed the food as several people were looking at their watches, and one man in particular, replied "It said 7 p.m. and I am hungry as he fixed himself a small plate of food from the sweets' table. Many people

who were invited could not come. I don't know where they would have sit unless they would have lined the walls with chairs for them. This is what my article is all about, people touching other people's lives. Yes I'm glad I had the opportunity to fellowship with old and new acquaintances at this humble gathering. We as Christians need to let our fellow man and woman know while they are living among us how much we appreciate there God given talents and good deeds, not wait until the breath has left their bodies. Early in the Holy Bible God asked Cain where is your brother Abel. You should know the story. If not, read the Book of Genesis and you can see my point. Cain replied, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

I am enclosing a letter I had written to the Artesia, New Mexico Gazette before I returned home after 18 days trying to help my Navy buddy's wife look after him in October and the thirt three days of November 2000. Please print the letter along with my article. Yesterday I got a free video in my mail. I hope many of you did also about the Life of Jesus. Oh, I enjoyed it so much and I was awaiting my time to depart for the birthday party. yes, we are our brother's keeper if we have the love of Jesus and god in our hearts.

Until next time, peace, joy and God's blessings on you. Let God's light shine in your heart.

A faithful servant!  
Erwin Jacobs



The youngest person ever to become president was Theodore Roosevelt. He was 42 years old.



Eight United States Presidents were originally from Virginia.

## Small Business Still Thrives, But In New, Innovative Forms

By Bill Histed

Some of the small towns I've been in recently had a number of vacant store fronts. Many of our "Ma and Pa" stores of years ago are memories now. Many local drug stores, variety stores and other types of local businesses have become chain store dominated. On the surface, it might appear that the family business is dead and buried.

Upon closer examination, I am convinced that small business is very much alive; in fact, many family businesses today might be thinking "smarter" than some of the huge corporations by keeping their overhead to a bare minimum.

Near where I live, there is a large, busy flea market with 500 spaces. I can tell you, not one space is occupied by a Fortune 500 company. These spaces are run mostly by families that only have to be there two or three days a week, don't have a utility bill or deposits to worry about. They pay a flat \$10 per day, period.

There are tens of thousands of family businesses today being operated in flea markets, farmers' markets and in antique stores. There are bed and breakfasts, family businesses run part-time from homes selling everything from eggs to dolls to sharpening saws.

There are hundreds of thousands more small businesses being operated on the internet. Next to no overhead is involved; many such "businesses" are operated from the dining room table or from a spare bedroom. How many people do YOU know who are selling something to some kind?

Small business is still going strong; it just has taken on new methods of operation. Many billions of dollars are taken in monthly by small home-based businesses.

Literally millions of Americans are selling something; Avon, Amway, Reliv, Tupperware, Stanley, House of Lloyd, etc. If I can give a free mention. I mention these names not to give free advertising, but as evidence that you can easily see for yourself.

There are many families that do direct mail, firms that have "house parties," people who have "stands" at fairs and street festivals, etc. One common thread for many of these small businesses is that they do not generally have huge rents, large utility bills and many of the large expenses associated with their huge corporate counterparts.

Small businesses that once had a downtown store front today are sometimes operated out of the den or guest bedroom.

Small business is not dead...it is less and less on Main Street and more and more in flea markets, home parties, on the internet or being run out of a spare room at almost no operating overhead.

Bill Histed writes at 1020 N. Church Ave., Mulberry, FL 33860.



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—Donald R. Florea, farmer

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