



I like Dave Chappelle

I like Dave Chappelle, the popular comic who appeared as part of the UNC-P Homecoming fare Saturday night. I had seen him previously on his HBO specials on Cable TV. He is frank, but very funny. He has some interesting twists and turns and insights about life in general. His honesty is a welcome respite from the lies we face every day in the work place and the political arena. Even when he strayed into areas that made me squeamish, I took a deep breath and laughed uproariously. Chappelle, an HBO regular, and movie star, played to a full house as the Temptations did Friday night. I just hate I missed the Temptations.

I congratulate UNC-P for providing entertainment that is both entertaining and fun. I might have been the oldest and greyest headed person in Givens Performing Arts Center. It didn't bother me in the least. I had a great time.

Patrick Bullard was big in his vote Monday night

Being a politician in Robeson County demands tough votes from time to time. But *Race* is ever present, and most times politicians just vote their racial concerns. They tuck their racial tails and run for the safety of their own kind. But ever once in a while someone will restore our faith in politicians. Such was the case Monday night when Patrick Bullard voted with the majority to negotiate a new contract for the superintendent, Dr. Barry Harding.

Harding had previously fired Bullard when he worked as finance officer for the Public Schools of Robeson County. It takes a big man to vote unselfishly, and also to put personal and racial concerns aside. Not too many people in Robeson County are big enough to do it. It happens so infrequently in Robeson County that we wanted to take this moment and thank Mr. Bullard for a vote that I am sure he wrestled with before he cast it in the affirmative Monday night. I truly believe Patrick Bullard gave Supt. Harding the benefit of the doubt, and did what he felt was best for the children of Robeson County. There is a mean spirit in Robeson County and on the board of education. It is always hopeful and helpful when someone is big enough to turn from the evil one. Bullard has taken a step away from the rank, racial table. His vote was, as I see it, both prudent and wise. I commend Mr. Bullard for a bigness of spirit and grace that is seldom seen in ol' Robeson.

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

Recent events and votes mark a new day, hopefully

PEMBROKE-THE TRIBAL COUNCIL OF THE LUMBEE NATION met Saturday (Feb. 10) at the Public Library in Pembroke and continued to lay out its agenda for the future. The council, under the leadership of Chairman Milton R. Hunt, was workmanlike in its approach. The steady hand is encouraging, and portends a good omen for what lies ahead on the political horizon.

The council finalized the make up of seven committees that will consider needs of the tribe encompassing everything from housing to the drafting of a constitution. The council decided that the number of people serving on a committee can vary as long as it does not include more than 13, which would be a majority and quorum of the council.

The committees are housing, public relations, constitution, federal recognition, health and human resources, personnel/transition and finance.

The council's next meeting will be February 20 at 6:30 p.m. at the Burnt Swamp Baptist Building in Pembroke. The March meeting will be held on March 24 at 10 a.m. at the same place. After the next two meetings, the council's regular meetings will be the third Saturday morning of each month. Time and place to be at the Burnt Swamp Building unless otherwise posted.

The council also is advertising for legal counsel and voted to name Lumbée Guaranty Bank as its bank of record.

The professional and businesslike demeanor at the council table suggests that the tribe's business is in good hands and is encouraging to those of us who have engaged in interecine feuds for most of our tribal lives.

Supt. Harding to receive new contract on 6-5 vote

It was nerve racking to the overflow audience at Monday night's meeting of the Public Schools of Robeson County's board of education, most of whom had come to cheer on deliberations in Supt. Barry Harding's favor. And, finally, after an agenda filled meeting, it was time to vote on the contract of Dr. Barry Harding's. Should it be renewed, or should we look for another to lead us out of the educational wilderness? On a razor-thin 6-5 affirmative vote, the board decided to offer Dr. Barry Harding a new contract. Voting "yes" were Gloria Lowry, Mitchell "Bosco" Locklear, Robert Deese, Mike Smith and Patrick Bullard. Voting "no" were Terry Smith, James DeFreece, Steve Martin, Millicent Nealy and Brenda

Fairly. Chairman John Campbell broke the tie in Harding's favor with a simple declaration that "I am in favor of extending Dr. Harding's contract." In racially crazy Robeson County, it was three Indians, a White and a Black voting "Yes" and two Blacks, and three Whites voting "no." It was hard to figure out the philosophical rhyme and reason of the vote without factoring in race as the over riding reason why most people voted as they did. The most interesting vote was the "yes" vote of Indian Patrick Bullard. It was a big vote in many ways because Harding had fired Bullard when he was fiscal officer for the school system early on in his administration. Harding became superintendent in 1998. His present contract would have expired in 2002. A committee will b - ap

pointed by Chairman Campbell to begin negotiations with Harding over a new contract.

The vote came after two presentations: one in favor of Harding's performance as superintendent; the other against. Speaking in favor of Harding was Rev. Jimmy Hunt. Lumberton High teacher Kitty Britt spoke forcefully against Harding, citing various graphics to buttress her position. Hunt noted that the system is on the right track. Hunt, and other Harding supporters, believe opposition to Harding is led by a few disgruntled teachers who, according to Hunt, "want to run the system."

It was Robeson County at its best and worst, all at the self-same time. In this case, the best side won ... barely.

I. Murchison not retained as RCC attorney

Another meeting was going on at the same time the county school board was in session. Robeson Community College trustees met and voted to delay action on President Fred Williams' contract until its February 20 meeting. The board agreed to meet with Williams at 5:30 p.m. on that date and then discuss plans to address a Southern Association of Colleges and Schools one year probation against the school at its regular meeting time at 7 p.m.

The trustees did decide to not retain the services of long time attorney, I. Murchison Biggs. The trustees plan to form a committee to look for another attorney.

It was action that was needed because the trustees do not seem to have been receiving very good legal advice, considering the hot seat they find themselves in over the SACS probation and their dispute with Williams over hiring practices at the community college.

All these meetings and votes are hopeful. Robeson County is surviving, in spite of our racial feuds. We're getting better ... barely.

Around Ol' Robeson

PROPOSED ANNEXATIONS HERALDS CONTINUED GROWTH IN PEMBROKE

PEMBROKE-The Pembroke Town Council met last Monday night (Feb. 5) and approved a request from Bill and Rachel Deese to annex their restaurant, Papa Bills, on N.C. 711.

At the same meeting, the council set two public hearings for March 5 to consider annexation requests from businessman Greg Bryant to bring his proposed 350 acre project into the town limits. The upscale project about a mile east of town on N.C. 711 will be called University Park and includes a medical arts building, retail complex, condominiums, apartment building and homes that begin at \$125,000. Bryant also proposes, in conjunction with the town, to set aside 10 to 12 acres for a sports park that is expected to include a ball field, walking trail, cookout area and playground equipment. The proposed park would be next to Candy Park Road.

The second hearing will respond to a request from developer Archie Lowery to annex a site about three miles west of town on Deep Branch Road. The proposed development includes a subdivision, convenience store, washerette and a car wash. About 70 acres is proposed for the subdivision. Lowery proposes that lots will cost between \$15,00 - \$35,000 and homes will have a minimum requirement of 1,800 square feet.

Rolls Remain Open

The Board of Directors of Lumbée Regional Development Association approved an extension of the application deadline for tribal membership. The Tribal rolls will remain open 90 days to allow those individuals who missed the first deadline another opportunity to apply for Lumbée enrollment.

The deadline date for Lumbée enrollment application is April 12, 2001. If anyone needs enrollment information, please contact the Lumbée Tribal Enrollment Office at (910) 521-2462.

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November 21, 1995-February 9, 1999
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Mom and Dad, Bill and Brannagan and his new brother, Brannagan Kai Locklear

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