

# Editorial And Opinion Page



## AS I SEE IT Bruce Barton

### Thanks for your expressions of concern

Dozens of you contacted me in the last few days and expressed concern about my spiritual welfare following my last column in which I lamented about some of my spiritual dilemmas. I want to say, emphatically, that my spiritual laments and disappointments are due, in large measure, to my being spiritually offended by a small number of people, **not Jesus!** My soul is well and my eternal preparations have been made, but I am touched by your expressions of concern. Spiritual matters are the most important issues facing man, and lying about it seems fruitless and without reward. After all, God himself knows our every thought and if we are disconcerted we might as well come clean and tell it.

But my sister, Connee, accuses me of being a wee bit maudlin. It might be so, but I care deeply about spiritual matters: after all, our eternal life depends upon it. Anyway, I am not offended by your prayers nor your expressions of concern. The outpourings, instead, buttress and encourage me on every hand. Thanks!

### Best wishes to Coach Kelvin Sampson & the Oklahoma Sooners Basketball Team

**NORMAN, OKLAHOMA**—Best wishes to *Pembroke* native and Coach Kelvin Sampson and the Oklahoma Sooners as they recently won the prestigious Big 12 Conference tournament, advancing to the National NCAA Men's Basketball tournament. The Sooners had to beat Missouri, Kansas and Texas to win the tournament. They open play in the NCAA tournament Friday night (March 16) in the Pyramid Arena in Memphis, Tenn. in the South Regionals against Indiana State. Time to be announced. The Sooners (26-6) are looking good right now, in spite of some internal problems that led Coach Sampson to suspend his point guard, J.R. Raymond, for unspecified team and school infractions going into the conference tournament. Go Sooners! We'll have results next week. We like Coach Sampson a lot because he believes following the rules applies to everyone, including his star point guard. Victories are sweeter and have more meaning when they are won by working hard and following the rules.

### The Healing Force to perform at local church and school

North Carolina performing artists **The Healing Force** will perform at Jones Chapel Missionary Baptist Church at 7:00 PM, Wednesday, March 28. Admission to this performance is free and the public is invited.

Founded in 1975 by Joseph and Gail Anderson, who acted with the African Folkloric Troupe and studied with the National Black Theater on New York. **The Healing Force** began full-time professional work in 1990. Since then they have traveled and performed throughout the country. The Winston-Salem based group will perform a program featuring singing, music, and story-telling, with audience participation. According to Mr. John Staton, "We are delighted to host

this event and we hope to have a good audience. The public can expect a lively, entertaining and inspiring production for the entire family." In addition to this public performance, the group will also conduct a school residency at the Red Springs Middle School. Red Springs Arts Council President, John Bowman, notes, "That **The Healing Force's** school programs are designed to encourage positive behavior, creative opportunities and enrich the school curriculum." This project received support from the North Carolina Arts Council, and agency funded by the state of North Carolina and the National Endowment for the Arts. For additional information, call 843-5248 or 843-2427.

### The Carolina Indian Voice Published each Thursday in Pembroke, N.C. by First American Publications

The first issue of the weekly newspaper, *The Carolina Indian Voice* was published on January 17, 1973, by then editor, owner and founder, Bruce Barton with a \$500 personal loan. It has a proud history of continuous publication, having never missed an issue since its inception. Bruce's sister, Connee Brayboy, the current editor, is the only person to have enjoyed full-time employment since the newspaper's inception. A brother, Garry Lewis Barton came to work full-time in 1973 and ended his affiliation with the newspaper in 1985; its founder, Bruce Barton left to further his education shortly thereafter. Another brother, Ricky Barton, has been affiliated on a part-time basis with the newspaper since its inception. For the first time in years, the four siblings are reunited and dedicated to publishing the best newspaper humanly possible.

Connee Brayboy ..... Editor

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## Along The Robeson Trail

by Dr. Stan Knick, Director, UNCP Native American Resource Center

Human beings are an adaptive lot. Generally when they are presented with a challenge and given enough time to deal with it, they are capable of coming up with an adaptation to suit their needs. Inventions such as the bow and arrow, agriculture and ceramics are examples of adaptations made by ancient people in many lands, including the ancestors of today's Native Americans. The list of adaptations made throughout prehistory and history by Native Americans is virtually endless.

One Native American adaptation which has not received a lot of attention is Indian Sign Language, also known as Plains Sign Language. In the vast area of the great plains and eastern plateau there lived many different groups of Native people. Although in some ways their respective traditional cultures were somewhat similar, their languages were extremely diverse. Not only were there different languages (including Lakota, Pawnee, Arapaho, Kiowa, Crow, Shoshone, Cheyenne and others), but also entirely different language families (including Algonkian, Caddoan, Kiowan, Shoshonean and Siouan). Meanwhile these people did not live in isolation, but came into regular contact with each other in the conduct of trade and political alliances.

Because there was so much linguistic diversity, there was a profound need for the development of ways to communicate across language barriers. Over time the people jointly developed a language using gestures instead of spoken words to carry on the necessary business. If one of these Indian nations had been consistently able to dominate the others, sign language might not have been necessary. In the course of human history, dominated nations frequently have been compelled to learn the language of dominant nations. But where there was a relative balance of power as on the plains and eastern plateau, some other adaptation had to be made to meet the linguistic challenge of how to talk to strangers.

Enter Indian Sign Language. Anyone could learn to use it. Words which were difficult to pronounce and sounds which were hard to make from other languages could be avoided. Many signs could be used that simply looked like the object or action they were meant to represent (these are called "iconic" signs). Signs which were widely and repeatedly used by members of various nations became permanent parts of the language. Eventually the language became so complex that even subtle conversations involving irony and

humor could be enjoyed.

When the Spaniard Coronado "explored" the southern plains in the early 1540s, he saw Native people using sign language. Countless other explorers and settlers observed Indian Sign Language in use; some of them even learned to make use of the language themselves.

Sign language was not only used between nations, but also within nations. The use of signs was a common part of ordinary communication, where signs added emphasis and subtle meanings to stories and public speeches. In the twentieth century it is especially in the realms of storytelling and religious ceremony that sign language has survived. Elders in the Assiniboin, Blackfeet, Crow and Northern Cheyenne (among other) nations still use Indian Sign Language, and some are even re-introducing sign language instruction to their younger members. What began as an adaptation to communicate with strangers has evolved into a way to keep traditional Indian culture alive.

For more information, visit the Native American Resource Center in historic Old Main Building, on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke (our Internet address is [www.uncp.edu/nativemuseum](http://www.uncp.edu/nativemuseum)).



Jonathan Nicholas Chavis with his Brazil friends.

## Returning with honor

How far would someone go for something they believed in? Do you think they would be willing to leave everything they hold dear behind...their family, their friends, and their life, as they knew it...just for the sake of something they felt was a righteous cause? Well that was the choice twenty-one year old Jonathan Nicholas Chavis, a native of Robeson County, chose to make two years ago. Jonathan, the son of Herman and Connie Chavis, was sent to the beautiful and historical lands of England to serve a two-year mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Now, two years have passed and Jonathan has finally arrived home to the appraising arms of his family and friends. Yes, much is different about the young lad, (a bit of England's lingo) but to all, it appears as though he has changed for the better and became a young man that is finally at peace with himself. Jonathan has said this of his mission:

"Serving a mission for the Lord has been the greatest experience in my life. My role as a missionary was to bring souls closer to Christ, through serving and teaching them the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was a privilege to serve others and see their life change for the better. I love this work with all my heart and know that this is what God wanted me to do. Although I put my education on hold for two years I do not feel my quest for knowledge went lacking. While on my mission, I was able to gain a greater knowledge of myself and others, the purpose of life, and most importantly a greater testimony of Jesus Christ. These two years have been the greatest two years of my life, and I will always treasure the experience of serving a mission for the Lord.

As far as the future is concerned, I will be attending Brigham Young University (BYU) in Utah this summer. My plans are to pursue a career in the medical field. I know if I rely on the Lord in all I do I can accomplish much more than I ever expected."

Jonathan was one of over 60,000 missionaries serving worldwide for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. If you would like to know more concerning the church and their teachings, you may contact the local missionaries at (910) 521-2612.



Jonathan Nicholas Chavis with his South African family.

### Lumberton Junior High PTO to meet at Open House

Lumberton Junior High P.T.O. will meet at 7:00 P.M., Monday, March 26th. OPEN HOUSE will be held from 7:30- 8:30 P.M.. All parents are urged to attend

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### Lumberton Junior Advisory Council to meet March 28

Lumberton Junior High School's Advisory Council meeting will be held on Monday, March 26th at 5:00 P.M.

## NC Back to Sleep Campaign Begins in State

**RALEIGH**-- Child care providers and private sitters can play a critical role in reducing the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) by placing infants on their backs when sleeping, according to the N.C. Back to Sleep Campaign. Babies who sleep on their stomachs are five times more likely to die of SIDS, the leading cause of infant death from 1 month to 1 year of age. In 1998, six infants died of SIDS in North Carolina while being cared for outside the home, either in a child care setting or with a private sitter. Nationwide, 20 percent of all SIDS deaths occur in child care settings, according to a recent study.

This month, the Back to Sleep Campaign working with the N.C. Outdoor Advertising Association, will sponsor 60 billboards across the state to call attention to the "Stomach to Play...Back to Sleep" message. The billboards will appear in counties with some of the highest SIDS rates, including Brunswick, Cleveland, Cumberland, Forsyth, Guilford, Johnston, Mecklenburg, McDowell, Scotland, and Wake. "All care givers- child care providers, grandparents, baby-sitters- should be aware that putting infants to sleep on their backs for naps and at night significantly reduces the risk of SIDS," Christine O'Meara, campaign coordinator, said. "Parents who use this safe sleep practice at home must ensure that infants are consistently placed on their backs to sleep when they are away from home."

Recent studies show that the risk for SIDS increases 18 to 20 times when infants, accustomed to sleeping on their backs at home, are placed on their stomachs to sleep in other child care settings. Research reported in *Pediatrics*, the Academy of Pediatrics journal, also found that the majority of SIDS deaths outside the home occurred when infants were sleeping on their stomachs, although they were accustomed to sleeping on their backs.

Nearly 100 babies die of SIDS each year in North Carolina. In addition to sleep position, O'Meara said a smoke-free environment, a firm crib mattress, and a crib without pillows, soft blankets or toys also can help reduce the risk of SIDS. The Back to Sleep Campaign is coordinated by the N.C. Healthy Start Foundation in conjunction with the N.C. Division of Public Health, Women's and Children's Health Section. More information about reducing the risk of SIDS is available by calling the bilingual N.C. Family Health Resource Line at 1-800-FOR-BABY (1-800-367-2229) or visiting [www.nchealthystart.org](http://www.nchealthystart.org)

## In the Armed Forces

Army Master Sgt. Stephen Gibbs has retired from the U.S. Army after 20 years of military service. Prior to retiring, Gibbs was assigned to the 512th Quartermaster Company at Hunter Army Airfield, Hinesville, Ga.

Gibbs is the son of Christine Gibbs of Mayberry Lane, Shannon, N.C. He is married to Mitzi E. Gibbs. In 1981, he graduated from Magnolia High School, Lumberton, N.C. He received a degree in 1990 from Central Texas College, Killeen, Texas.

Army Pvt. Clifton C. Oxendine has graduated from basic combat training at Fort Jackson, Columbia, S.C. During the training, the soldier received instruction and practice in drill and ceremony, marching, rifle marksmanship, armed and unarmed combat, map reading, field tactics, military courtesy, military justice, physical fitness, first aid, and Army history and traditions. He is the son of Edwina Jacobs of 413 Preston Road, Maxton, N.C. Oxendine is a 2000 graduate of Purnell Swett High School, Pembroke, N.C.

## Prospect Kindergraden Registration scheduled

Prospect School Kindergarten registration will be held on Tuesday, April 3, 2001. The hours will be from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Media Center. Parents need to bring a certified birth certificate, original shot records and Social Security number to the school. Native American Students should also have their Tribal registration information. Your child should be 5 years old by October 16. Applications will also be available for Pre-K registration. Parents are not required to bring their children.