

WHAT NEXT...

Robeson County schools soon will become one as the county and various city systems are merged. The Interim Board of Education for the Public Schools of Robeson County is learning this is not only a difficult task, but it's also very delicate. Unfortunately, it seems the Interim Board cannot deal only with qualifications when hiring; the board must also consider the perceptions of the general public.

A case in point: a small group of individuals recently held a meeting because of concern about the race of the top twelve administrators who were recently hired for the merged system. None of this group seemed overly concerned about the ratio of males to females hired. None of this group seemed very concerned about the qualifications of those hired. In fact, one person attending the meeting, Ken Freeman, stated: "Nobody's advocating that those people shouldn't have good positions, but there's a lot to be said for appreciation of diversity." You see, of the twelve administrators hired, eight were white, two Indian, and two Black, and that was the concern of this group. Several felt more minority representation was needed. We feel that more minority representation is needed. Mr. Freeman even suggested the group might consider going to court, but we fail to understand what legal challenge he or this group feels it has.

While we agree that more minorities should have been hired, the action of this group is too little, too late. Several prominent, minority individuals held positions of influence, power, and trust when the new superintendent was hired for the merged system, and yet some of these individuals voted against Mr. Purnell Swett. Obviously a hidden agenda exists with some of our so-called "leaders." Could it soon be election time... Too often it seems to us that some would rather feather their own nests than do what is right.

The concern over the race of these 12 individuals is rather ironic because the concern in some city systems is over the previous employment of these administrators. Some city systems feel they were short-changed because previous county system employees received more of the top administrative positions. And so it continues and the Interim Board will have to walk on egg shells in order to satisfy all parties.

Since no one has challenged the qualifications of the new administrators, we say lets move forward. The time for meaningful dialogue was during the hiring process. If minorities were short-changed (and we were) in the hiring decisions, in our opinion, it is because no one was there "taking care of business" and keeping the community informed when decisions were being made. It is too late to lock the barn after the mule has already runned away. Leadership was there when Pembroke State University was preparing to hire a new chancellor! We call on our representatives, while acknowledging that they are appointed, to give us a plan of action and stop reacting...

The merged school system faces more than enough real problems. How are we going to upgrade our children's education and where is the money coming from. This should be our primary consideration. There is too much to do and very little time. Let's look to the future and hope for more informed input and communication from our leaders! In our opinion, our leaders dropped the ball. It is too late to save face now!

Robeson County has changed. Not long ago, when officials of the Sheriff's Department said something happened like this, nearly everyone believed the Sheriff's Department's version of the facts. No longer is this the case. This is healthy, especially here in Robeson County.

Sandy Chavis, who was arrested in connection with the murder of Julian Pierce, was recently released on \$300,000 bond; \$200,000 of which came from the community. What does this indicate. To us it would seem to mean that many do not believe the SBI and Sheriff's version of what happened to Julian Pierce. People now ask questions rather than accept the "official" story. Perhaps we are becoming more sophisticated. No longer can we be spoon fed lies, and in the past that is what we have received, lies!

If Sandy Chavis is innocent, we hope he will be freed. If guilty, we demand his punishment. But where is the truth. It is not at the

Robeson County Sheriff's Department. We do not wish to have another "unsolved mystery" on our hands. Remember the drugs which were and still are missing (probably sold and used by now) from the Sheriff's Department--now there is an unsolved mystery! The mystery is why this remains unsolved and even that is really no mystery. Someone once said that "power corrupts" and that person had never been to Robeson County, but somehow he obviously hit the nail on the head in terms of describing how things work in our county. If you have the power you can even take drugs from the Robeson County Sheriff's Department and not have to worry. If you have power, you can write letters and testify for drug dealers and no one blinks an eye. If you have power you can harass, extort, and murder and still walk the streets untouched and a free man. Such power exists in our county. Drug dealers and corrupt officials hold such power and each day we refuse to stand up and challenge them, this power grows and their hold over us becomes even stronger.

But there is hope and somehow it often comes from the strangest places. Last week's events in China serve as a prime example. The absolute power of the Chinese communist party was effectively challenged by students and others who rushed to support the students. The power was challenged and change appears to be coming. We too can challenge the evil that exists in Robeson County. As we have said many times before, you have a duty as a citizen to keep yourself informed. You must ask questions and you must select the very best leaders to serve you. And after all of that, you must make your leaders realize that they serve you and they serve at your pleasure.

As Sandy Chavis goes to trial, we would hope to discover the true story behind Julian Pierce's death. We hope, but realistically unless someone comes forward, it seems we will have to wait a long, long time to know the truth. Power is often an enemy of truth!

If God Should Go On Strike

good is is that God above has never gone on strike
 Because He was not treated fair in things He didn't like
 If only once He'd given up and said, "That's it, I', through
 I've had enough of those on earth, so this is what I'll do
 I'll give my orders to the sun-cut off the heat supply
 And to the moon-give no more light, and run the oceans dry.
 Then just to make things really tough and put the pressure on,
 Turn off the vital oxygen till every breath is gone!"
 You know, He would be justified if fairness was the game,
 For no one has been more abused or met with more disdain,
 Than God, and yet He carries on, supplying you and me
 With all the favors of His grace, and everything for free.
 Men say they want a better deal, and so on strike they go.
 But what a deal we've given God to whom all things we owe.
 We don't care whom we hurt to gain the things we like;
 But what a mess we'd all be in, If God should go on strike.

Awards Banquet to be part of Lumbee Homecoming

The Lumbee Homecoming Awards Banquet will be held on June 29 at 7:30 p.m. at Pembroke Junior High. A full dinner will be served. Tickets are \$8.50 per person. Application deadline is June 15. The awards will be as follows: Advancement of Education Award; Businessperson of the Year Award; The Henry Berry Lowrie Memorial Award; Distinguished Service Award.

Applications should be mailed to Shelby J. Dial, LRDA, Inc., P.O. Box 68, Pembroke, NC 28372-0068 and or can be delivered to the office which is located at the Lumbee Center for Economic Development Employment and Training Division (JTPA office) located across from the Lumbee Drive-In.

If you should have any questions and or need tickets you may contact the JTPA Office or call (919) 521-9761 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

PEMBROKE KIWANIS REPORT

Bill Oxendine of the Robeson County Board of Education was the speaker at the Tuesday night meeting held at the Town and Country Restaurant.

"There have been many accomplishments over the past six or seven years," said the speaker. "Among which has been the teacher and principal evaluation program, the pilot health program at West Robeson High School, and many accreditations of the various schools of the system. The present board goes out of existence on the 30th of June. It has presided over 28 schools including six high schools, 19 elementary schools, Bryan Learning Center, a vocational school, 2 union schools of k-12, and four high schools per se. Six years ago there were no ac-

credited schools on the elementary level, now there are 10 and more will be accredited by December. There are 14,005 in daily attendance and many migrant students have to cross attendance lines. The board is truly big business with a \$45 million budget, employing 1455 people, 709 teachers with 670 non-professionals.

Speaker at the meeting will be Dan Kenney, head men's basketball coach at PSU who will discuss PSU's athletic program, which recently won the Carolinas Conference's Joby Hawn Cup for the conference's best overall excellence in athletics.

Glen Burnette, PSU director of alumni affairs, said the alumni scholarship program will also be discussed.

We are the 15th largest system in the state. By JULY we will have 24,000 students with the merger. All teachers hold teachers' certificates, have met national and state teachers' exam requirements. One half have masters degrees as if required by the Southern Association of Accreditation. All supervisors hold masters degrees. We are the only system that has a pilot program for 3-4 year old pupils, a great asset for their school beginning. Our drop out rate is a bit higher than other systems but close to those of neighboring counties. The pilot health program exams all athletes plus plus its many other features. There is an after school program for latch-key youngsters from 4-6 p.m."

Judge John Friday of the Court of Appeals was the guest of Henry Ward Oxendine and spoke of the heavy schedule due to so many drug cases. He is the brother of President Bill Friday of the University of North Carolina. Dorsey Lowry was a friend of Bill and John Friday's father who spent his retirement at the Holiday Inn in Hickory.

Presiding-President Jeff Maynor; Song leader- Clay Maynor; Invocation-Clay Maynor; Program- Bill Oxendine; Reporter-Ken Johnson.

Thankful?

Today's world has its troubles, which often seem overwhelming—terrorism, drugs, crime, energy, high prices, etc.

But there's also much to be thankful for today. Modern medicine and cures, fast transportation, new forms of communication, a wider variety of foods and frozen foods, better working conditions, greater equality of

opportunity, better highways, more leisure time, and more and better forms of recreation—to name but a few.

Do we enjoy life more? One wonders. If we don't, it's our own fault. A little more attention to human relationships and philosophy, and less emphasis on fast living and money, might be the answer.

BIBLE VERSE



"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

1. Who made the above request?
2. Upon what occasion?
3. Who were "they" to whom he referred?
4. Where may this verse be found?

Answers to Bible Verse

1. Jesus.
2. As he hung on the cross on Golgotha, or Calvary.
3. The Roman soldiers, who crucified Him specifically, but generally to the Jewish leaders who had caused his death.
4. Luke 23, part of the 34th verse.

H. Mitchell Baker, III, P.A.

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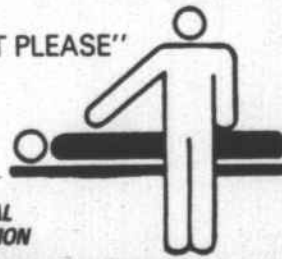
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Iron can cure the chills

You may not have heard, but women who often complain of feeling cold may not be getting enough iron. Women, who lose iron through menstruation, are more susceptible than men to be low in iron, and this can cause 'chilly' problems.

If you're a woman who frequently feels colder than others around you, you might ask your doctor to test the level of ferritin, an iron-carrying protein, in your blood.

We carry several iron supplements which your doctor may recommend. An iron-rich diet is also very important for health...and maybe warmth!

Read Our WEEKLY PHARMACY EDITORIAL

Your Pharmacy

ONE BIG REASON TO BUY A COMMON SENSE MANUFACTURED HOME JUST KEEPS GETTING BIGGER

Kids. They take up a big part of the family budget. More and more of it as they grow. And folks with and without children have told us that saving money is a must when shopping for a manufactured home. That's why we recommend a Common Sense Manufactured Home—you may save up to 40% on electric bills each year over a standard model. The extra insulation locks in comfort and helps keep out the heat and cold. And these homes qualify for CP&L's 5% discount—just apply at your local CP&L office. So if you're in the market for a manufactured home, tell your dealer you want a CP&L Common Sense one—because you've got an ever-growing reason to buy it.

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