

READERS' FORUM

Reader sees struggle between philosophies

To the Editor:

This political season in Robeson County is more than interesting. In my opinion, there is a tremendous struggle for power going on in this county. The results of this struggle will set the political stage and philosophy of leadership for this county for the next twenty years.

There are two very different, competing leadership philosophies at work. One believes in keeping people ignorant, uninformed, coerced and dictated to. The other one believes in openness and encouraging people

to be involved in helping to shape the type of county and relationships that we will have in the future. Some of the leaders in the first group want complete and absolute control of this county and its people. This writer encourages people who are concerned about building a better tomorrow for ourselves and for our children to watch the first group and to reject them.

The following quote was taken from *The Lessons of History* by Will and Ariel Durant. "Democracy is the most difficult of all forms of government, since it requires the

widest spread of intelligence, and we forgot to make ourselves intelligent when we made ourselves sovereign... A cynic remarked that 'you mustn't enthrone ignorance just because there is so much of it.' However, ignorance is not long enthroned, for it lends itself to manipulation by the forces that mold public opinion. It may be true, as Lincoln supposed, that 'you can't fool all the people all the time,' but you can fool enough of them to rule a large country." And I might add, to rule a large county.

Samuel Kerns
Pembroke, NC

Asst. D.A. Carter & Judge Brooks respected by black community

To the Editor:

I was disappointed with the Robesonian's recent treatment of the Morgan marijuanan possession cases in Superior Court. Although the cases were concluded the week of February 17, 1992, the Robesonian's reporter did not even try to talk to the defense attorneys involved before writing his news article of March 7, 1992 nor did the editor before writing his editorial of March 9, 1992. During the over two week period before the story was printed the reporter seemingly managed to talk to everyone on one side of the cases but not one from the other side. In fact, it is my understanding that the reporter did not even try to talk to Assistant District Attorney John Carter who prosecuted the cases, but that Carter called the reporter when Carter learned of the soon to be published story. Why would an investigative reporter go to the press without trying to talk to anyone who was present when the guilty plea of Ms. Morgan was taken (except the judge

who is not supposed to publicly comment on such matters anyway)? Why would an editor write such an editorial based upon such a factually inadequate investigation? Surely, the general public has the right to expect more from the responsible press.

Now that the facts have come to light it appears that the Robesonian has made the proverbial "mountain out of a molehill." In so doing it upset the evening meal of some, such as Mr. H. Lewis, who apparently were taken in by the inaccuracies.

I have known Judge Dexter Brooks for about 15 years. Before he went on the bench he was my personal attorney. As an attorney he always used the law as an instrument for constructive change in Robeson County. He was always willing to assist the Black community groups without charge. We have shared many good times together as we addressed my concerns for my own people. Since his appointment as judge he has made a special effort to

be visible in the Black and white communities to demonstrate his commitment to the principle of fairness for all, regardless of race. I believe that one can get justice in his courtroom, and mercy if it is appropriate.

The Black community similarly respects John Carter as one of our own. Over the years he has grown into a first class trial lawyer. He was always a decent human being. I have the utmost confidence in his judgment.

In the cartoon that accompanied the editorial the Confederate Soldier on the monument in front of the courthouse looked surprised. Perhaps the old soldier in truth was really surprised to see Blacks and Native Americans moving into positions of authority in Robeson. The times are indeed a changing and men such as Judge Brooks and Assistant D.A. John Carter are making it so.

Sincerely Yours,
George E. Zeigler
Maxton

Reader disappointed in house candidate

To the Editor:

As a registered voter in Hoke County, I have felt for many years that our county seemed to end up overlooked in most of the political happenings. In 1990 the new Census made it possible for the Indian people of Hoke County to be represented in the House of Representatives as part of the 85th District. This was a good feeling for me as a resident of Hoke County and as an

Indian. Prior to the Justice Department approving the re-districting plans for the House of Representatives, a community meeting was held with Indian people in Hoke County. At this meeting, Ronnie Sutton, who is now a candidate for House District 85, met with us and asked us to support him because he was planning to run for the N.C. Senate. We all listened to what he had to say and were expecting him to file for the N.C.

Senate, as he had led us to believe he would do.

It was quite a shock to me and many other Indian people who were in that meeting when he announced later that he was seeking a seat in the N.C. House. We were wrong apparently to expect him to be a man of his word. The only conclusion I can come up with, as he has not met with us since to explain his change of mind, is that someone else is telling him

Along The Robeson Trail

By Dr. Stan Kialak, Director PSU Native American Resource Center

The film "Dances With Wolves" is one of the most popular movies ever made about Native Americans. A part of its popularity stems from the fact that Kevin Costner consulted with Lakota people in the making of the film. But in the film, the Pawnee Indians were portrayed as the "cruel bad guys," probably because the Lakota and Pawnee historically have not been the best of friends. But what is the Pawnee side of things?

The Pawnee Nation traditionally was composed of four groups or bands, the Skidi, the Chaui, the Kitkehahaki, and the Pitahauerat. The Pawnee language belongs to the Caddoan language family (along with Wichita, Arikara, Waco, and others). When Europeans first came upon the Pawnee, they occupied lands in what is now Nebraska. But Pawnee legends tell of a time long ago when they migrated from somewhere to the south.

The Pawnee were farmers and buffalo hunters of the prairie. They grew corn and other crops, and hunted buffalo on foot. They lived in oval earthen houses made of timber and soil. They prayed to the Great Spirit, whom they called Tirawa, and held many rituals in thanksgiving. They were known for ceremonies involving many days of singing and feasting, with magicians who performed amazing feats. At the end of the ceremony, everyone pledged lasting friendship and love.

With the coming of European horses, the days of peace for the Pawnee people were soon to be over. Other Indian nations, especially the Kansa, Omaha, and Osage from the east, the Comanche and Cheyenne from the north and west, and the Apache from the south, got horses for their

warriors before the Pawnee did. At the same time, population pressures caused these other groups to move into what had been Pawnee territory. Virtually surrounded by mounted enemies, the Pawnee foot soldiers suffered massive losses.

Whole warrior societies (i.e. the Fighting Lances and the Knife Lances) were wiped out while trying to defend their villages. So many Pawnee women and children were sold into slavery as a result of these battles that French settlers in the Mississippi Valley thought the word Pawnee (in French spelled "Pani") meant Indian slaves in general. Apache warriors took a great many Pawnee to be sold in New Spain; on one occasion, twenty very young Pawnee children were beheaded by Apaches in Santa Fe because no Spaniard would buy them. In response to treatment such as this, it is not surprising that in later conflicts the Pawnee, themselves, would earn a reputation for being especially cruel to their enemies.

Nowadays the Sovereign Nation of the Pawnee holds land in and around Pawnee, Oklahoma. There are approximately 2,200 enrolled members. The seal of the Pawnee Nation bears the proud phrase by which they call themselves: "Chaticks Si Chaticks" which means "Men of Men" or "Men among Men."

For more information about the fascinating history and culture of the Pawnee from their own perspective, visit the Native American Resource Center in Old Main Building, on the campus of Pembroke State University.

what to do. Personally, I have a problem with a man who does not seem to know what he wants to do. Sutton should have filed for the Senate, in my opinion, or not have runned for anything. Certainly, some of us would have had more respect for him than we do now.

I thought that your readers would be interested in this meeting prior to the election. My only purpose is to help inform those persons who do not know that Sutton's word, in my opinion, is not anything that one can bank on.

George Locklear
Antioch Precinct
Hoke County

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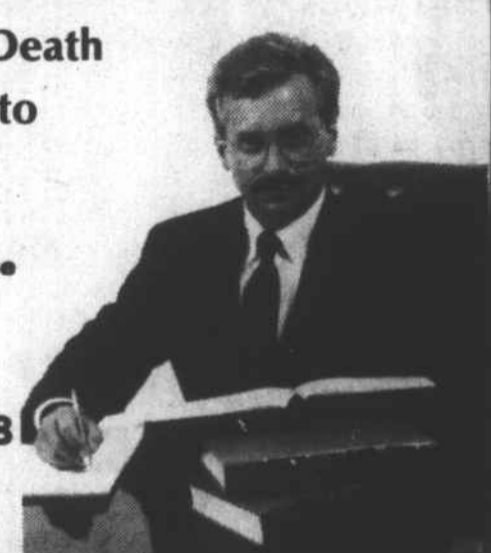
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