

## Patrick Bullard announces candidacy for seat on Board of Education



**Patrick Bullard**  
Patrick L. Bullard, former Robeson County School Finance Officer, filed for school board district 5 seat. Mr. Bullard will challenge incumbent Mr. Paul Brooks in the May 2nd primary. He is the son of Lindbergh and Barbara Bullard, and the grandson of the late Mr. and Mrs. Hartford and Eula Jane Bullard, and the late Mrs. Jannie Lucille Lowry. Mr. Bullard attended Union El-

ementary school and graduated from Purnell Swett High in 1984. Upon graduation from Pembroke State University in 1988, Mr. Bullard was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Air Force and served four years as an accounting and finance officer. He finished his military career as the Accounting and Finance Officer at Pope AFB, NC. Prior to joining the board of education, Mr. Bullard served as the plant controller for a local business. He is currently working in private industry as a financial analyst.

Mr. Bullard released the following statement:  
"I will work to ensure that new library books are placed in our elementary schools. A child must first be able to read before she/he is able to operate a computer. I will also work to secure new technology infrastructure for our schools and implement new technology programs for both teachers and students. The current administration has failed miserably in its efforts to capitalize on the opportunities created by the previous administration. For example, a state of the art computer and software system was purchased approximately three years ago to prevent outsiders from being able to contact students

within our system. Dr. Barry Harding publicly admitted a few weeks ago that this system has been broken for several months, and then turned right around and proclaimed that "Robeson County Schools were leading the state in technology". I would also like to explore the possibilities of reducing our teacher/pupil ratios.

"I will fight to see that a freeze is placed on board members' salaries. The board chairman's salary has increased from \$300 three years ago to \$600 today. Last summer board members "unknowingly" gave themselves a \$50 per month pay raise while teacher assistants received a \$15 per month pay raise. Robeson County is approximately the fourth poorest school system in North Carolina. With that said, there is simply no room in Robeson County for one more increase in board members' salaries. I will ensure that board members travel expenses are itemized in the local budget, which will allow the voting public to see how much money each and every board member spent on travel, food, etc.

"As your next school board member for district 5, I promise to ensure Responsible and Productive expenditures of taxpayer monies. Children will be priority number one in my budget recommendations."



**Delano Cummings**

## County schools plan cell phones

An interesting item appeared on the agenda of the county school board meeting Monday night. Raymond Cummings, Transportation Director, outlined plans to put cell phones in the 268 school buses. The cost will be an estimated \$1,800 a month. The phones will be programmed so that only outgoing calls can be made, and then only to the central office, the bus garage or schools on the bus route. Cummings summed it up well when he said, "We're always looking for ways to increase safety for our children. This will keep drivers from having to leave the bus in case of a breakdown or other emergency and leave students unattended."

Cummings also said that he hopes to receive an initial grant of \$6,000 from the SDPI to pay for hardware needed to install the phones in the buses.

**Social promotions on the way out**  
The board also got their first look at a new policy which is intended to end social promotions. The policy is the state-mandated Student Accountability Standards. Dr. Linda Emanuel, assistant superintendent, explained the program. The new standards will be implemented for fifth grade students during the 2000-2001 school year, for third and eighth graders during the 2001-2002 school year and for high school students in 2002-2003.

Students will have to meet state standards for reading, writing, math and other subjects before they can be promoted or graduate.

Dr. Barry Harding, Supt., does expect an increase in student retention at least for the first year. Good planning seems to be the answer. Dr. Harding said a system of checks and balances will ensure that any child having academic problems will be quickly identified and given a remedial plan.

Dr. Emanuel also said the plan has tough standards for attendance too, calling for k-8 students to attend 168 out of 180 days to be eligible for graduation, while high schoolers will have to attend 85 out of 90 days per semester. As always, an appeals process will be in place for those students who miss days for unavoidable reasons.  
-by Bruce Barton

## Pembroke first in county to have web site

Pembroke, NC--After months of preparation, the much anticipated Town of Pembroke website is no on-line.

On March 7, 2000 the Official Website of the Town of Pembroke, North Carolina was presented to the Internet and global on-line community. [www.pembroke.com](http://www.pembroke.com) has the distinction of being the first town in Robeson County to have its own website.

The site includes information about the leadership of Pembroke, town history, and links to local area websites such as the Lumbee Tribe, UNC-Pembroke, and the Robeson County Board of Education.

The Town of Pembroke website has many outstanding features including current event photos, a community attractions page, and a page dedi-

cated to the opportunities of life in Pembroke.

Mayor Milton R. Hunt stated, "Our town has so much to offer. If you are a residents student, or visitor, we hope this website provides the information you need on our wonderful town."

The Internet site should help attract business and new residents to the town, Town Manger McDuffie Cummings said.

"The Web is a good way to pro-

mote the community and attract new businesses and others to the area," Cummings said. "Anyone with access to the Web is now our neighbor."

[www.pembroke.com](http://www.pembroke.com) was designed by Angel Lilly-Clark and Ben Jacobs of Lumbee River Website Design Services, a division of Lumbee Regional Development Association. For more information about this site contact LRDA at (910) 521-8602.

## McIntyre Co-Sponsors Character Education Bill

Washington, DC - U.S. Representative Mike McIntyre has co-sponsored legislation in the U.S. House to promote character education in our schools. The "Character Counts for the 21st Century Act" would provide grants to state and local educational agencies for the design and implementation of character education initiatives that incorporate important elements of good character.

Congressman McIntyre stated, "In addition to parents and family, our schools have a role to play in promoting good citizenship and character. This legislation would help our schools become safer and increase awareness among students about the importance of rights, responsibility, and respect. Character education has worked in many school systems in North Carolina, and we need to provide the resources so all of our schools can participate. This legislation puts us on a path toward that, and I am hopeful we can enact it soon."

The bill directs the U.S. Secretary of Education to work with schools to identify model character education initiatives after which schools may pattern their own character education efforts. Grant applications would be evaluated based on: goals and objectives; activities designed to meet those goals and objectives, plans for coordination among parents, students, school officials and other community members; curriculum and instructional practices to be developed and used; and methods of teacher training and parent education to be developed and used.

The Character Counts for the 21st Century Act would incorporate the following elements of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, caring, fairness, citizenship, perseverance, courage, and self-discipline.

Congressman McIntyre regularly volunteers in North Carolina schools to teach our students about citizenship and our nation's government. He is Co-Chairman of a task force on children and is a member of an education task force on Capitol Hill.

Congressman McIntyre's North Carolina colleague, Bob Etheridge, is the author of the "Character Counts for the 21st Century Act."

## McIntyre co-sponsors Bulletproof Vests for Law Enforcement

Washington, D.C.--U.S. Representative Mike McIntyre has become an original cosponsor of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 2000. This legislation would reauthorize the highly successful grant program which McIntyre supported in 1998 to help law enforcement officers in the line of duty.

Congressman McIntyre stated, "We need to do all that we can to protect those who serve to protect us. The goal of this legislation is simple: to save the lives of police and corrections officers. The FBI estimates that the risk of fatality for an officer not wearing body armor is 14 times higher than for officers wearing vests. I encourage my colleagues in both the House and Senate to pass this legislation immediately so that we can provide a bulletproof vest for every state and local law enforcement officer who needs one."

In 1999, the grant program distributed enough awards to fully match funds for the purchase of 87,000 vests for 3,511 jurisdictions across the nation. Congressman McIntyre is a member of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus.

## Local Author Share his Experiences in Viet Nam

by Yvonne Barnes Dial

For the majority of authors, writing serves as a healer and a chance to rid pain and bitterness, not to forget to appreciate the joys and blessings one has encountered. For Delano Cummings, writing his novel, Moon Dash Warrior, definitely provided the opportunity for the author to finally recover and heal from some experiences he encountered in the War in Viet Nam as a Marine.

Mr. Cummings shared his engagement in the war with students in Yvonne Barnes Dial's junior English classes March 20th at Purnell Swett High School "I felt patriotic and I wanted to defend my country," Cummings stated as he began to share about his experience. To allow the students to capture a feel of his novel, he read from his working involving an ambush that he fought in against the North Viet Namese

As bullets rang out, Marines cried out and some were injured," he read. Other events he shared involved how children were strapped with grenades and walked among a group of Marines, pulled the pin of the grenade to kill the soldiers as well and themselves, and how a young boy approximately eight years old, served as a spy for North Viet Nam and visited a South Viet Namese village that Mr. Cummings stayed in to protect the people. Later, Mr. Cummings discovered that the young boy was spying on him for the North Viet Namese.

Considering the narrow escapes from death in Viet Nam, Mr. Cummings regards it as a mystery that he is alive today. In his book he constantly

refers to a "Higher Power" that always guided him while he served in Viet Nam. In one ambush encounter, he revealed how a spirit instructed him to "move over" as he fired at the enemy and again he feels a spirit guiding him to "move over." Minutes later, bullets from the enemy were fired at the very location he previously had been. "Everyone has a voice, a higher power that guides them," he stated to the students.

"I constantly have flashbacks and I hear the noises and can sense the smells I experienced in Viet Nam," shared Cummings. "Some guys lost their lives and they didn't get back. Someone need to know." For twenty years, he struggled with flashbacks of the war and found it difficult to talk about his experiences to any one. Then he takes a trip to Washington, D.C. to the Pentagon to gather unclassified documents of patrol reports that he participated in during the Viet Nam War. This valuable information provided concrete evidence for his novel. "I started feeling better about myself after the book was published," responded Mr. Cummings.

Since his book has been published, Mr. Cummings has traveled to fourteen states promoting his book. He also attends Native American pow wows across the United States.

Mr. Cummings encouraged the students to write and express their feelings. "I never believed that I would have ever written a book," he said. "Writing helped me to heal," he stated. He left the students with the inspirational statement to give their best in life.

## Weinstein calls on governor to help save tobacco settlement funds

RALEIGH, NC - - State Sen. David Weinstein called on Gov. Jim Hunt today to immediately order the legislature into a special session to save billions in tobacco settlement funds that are now threatened by a Florida lawsuit.

"Tobacco growers, especially those in the counties I represent, have already been hit hard by the industry's instability - and they stand to lose their livelihoods unless we act now to protect them," said Weinstein, D-Robeson. "Today, I ask Gov. Hunt to take quick action to protect the settlement funds that are helping our farmers cope with changes in the tobacco industry."

North Carolina - based R.J. Reynolds, Phillip Morris and other tobacco companies are facing a judgment in a Florida class-action lawsuit that could include punitive damages worth hundreds of billions of dollars. Virginia and other states have approved or are considering new laws limiting the amount of bond money the companies would have to post to appeal the lawsuit.

Weinstein aid that without similar legislation for North Carolina, the bill for a bond on the lawsuit could drive the companies into bankruptcy. That means the companies could be forced to lay off thousands of North

Carolina workers. It could also prevent the companies from paying the \$6.5 billion they have agreed to provide the state and to tobacco farmers and quota holders under a national legal settlement signed in 1998.

Under the first part of the settlement, also known as Phase I, North Carolina will receive \$4.6 billion over 25 years to help tobacco-dependent communities, to provide direct help for farmers and factory workers, and to address public health problems such as teen smoking and cancer. The second part of the settlement, Phase II, will provide another \$1.9 billion over 12 years in direct assistance for tobacco farmers and allotment holders.

So far, 10,831 tobacco farmers and quota holders in Bladen, Cumberland, Hoke, Robeson and Sampson counties - which Weinstein represents - have received close to \$14.7 million in direct aid from the so-called Phase II portion of the settlement. If the companies files bankruptcy, those farmers and quota holders could lose future Phase II assistance, Weinstein said.

"North Carolina tobacco farmers - not to mention our local economies - could suffer irreparable harm if these companies go under," Weinstein said. "We simply cannot let that happen."

## NC Clean 2000 Project begins in

During the month of April, the Division of Victim and Justice Services will focus on cleaning the litter from our highways. During the month of April, 2000, the Community Service Work Program will be participating in the N.C. Clean 2000 Project that has been initiated by Governor Hunt to help clean up major highways and thoroughfares in North Carolina of litter and debris. Key thorough fares will be identified in each of our one hundred counties for clean up.

On Saturdays, April 1, 8, 15, 29, Community Service offenders will be assigned to pick up trash and debris. Staff in District 16A will be working in Hoke, Robeson and Scotland counties on these days.

## Seniors in Motion

Senior citizens and disabled people now have assistance to live at home and remain independent. A local program is available to determine the need for mobility equipment on an individual basis.

In-home appointments are scheduled to evaluate both the environment and medical requirements of the disabled senior.

The focus of this program is to help individuals continue to stay in their own home and care for themselves by providing mobility equipment.

Equipment available at this time, includes both manual and power wheelchairs, scooters, walkers and rollators. For help and further information, please call: The Seniors in Motion Program toll free at: 1-800-594-1225.

## Cape Fear Valley Website Chats

Cape Fear Valley Health System has scheduled additional health chats on Cape Fear Valley's website, [www.capefearvalley.com](http://www.capefearvalley.com), in the coming weeks.

Upcoming chats and topics are:  
--Tuesday, April 4 - Dr. Elizabeth Gamboa, neuropsychologist, on the topic of neuropsychology across the lifespan.

--Tuesday, April 25 - Dr. Perry Harmon, gynecologist, on the subject of estrogen replacement therapy. All chats are scheduled from 7 to 9 p.m. For more information, please contact Clinton Weaver, Assistant Administrator for Marketing & Outreach, at (910) 609-6098.

## Kindergarten Registration

Pembroke Elementary School Pembroke Elementary School will be having Kindergarten Registration on Wednesday, April 19, 2000 from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00.

- Parents must bring:
    - a certified birth certificate (not a mother's copy)
    - a current immunization record
    - a Social Security Card
    - a 911 address
    - Tribal Enrollment Card (if applicable)
    - Insurance Card
- Please contact the school at 521-4202 if you have questions.

## Noah Woods to hold Public Forum

Robeson County Commissioner for District 4, Mr. Noah Woods, will hold Public Forums in Robeson County Commissioner District 4 at the following locations on dates and at times listed: Commissioner Raymond Cummings, District 5 will join Mr. Woods at the Red Springs location.

- Maxton**  
April 4, 2000 - 7:00 PM  
Maxton District Courtroom  
105 N. Florence Street  
Maxton, NC
  - Pembroke**  
April 11, 2000 - 7:00 PM  
Courthouse 210 Main Street  
Pembroke, NC
  - Red Springs**  
April 13, 2000 - 6:00 PM  
Community Center  
218 S. Main Street  
Red Springs, NC
  - Prospect**  
April 18, 2000 - 7:00 PM  
Prospect School  
4024 Missouri Road  
Maxton, NC
- The purpose of the Public Forums is to receive comments, input, and to answer questions from constituents regarding matters of interest to citizens of Robeson County. Commissioners Woods & Cummings welcome your attendance.