

AS I SEE IT... Bruce Barton

Possibly my last season in Strike at the Wind!

RED BANKS- I have possibly finished my last season as Allen Lowrie (Henry Berry Lowrie's daddy) in *Strike at the Wind!*, the popular outdoor drama about Henry Berry Lowrie and his white, black and red friends and foes in ol' Robeson. It's always a hoot but I was worn out this season, noting that I will be 61 years old come October 1. The season, thankfully, came to a close, without a rain out, Saturday night (August 10). And the crowds were decent and appreciative.

In the 24 seasons of *Strike at the Wind!* I have played Allen Lowrie a bunch, at least 8 times, and one season (I probably shouldn't tell this ...) I emoted as Sheriff Rueben King when no one else stepped forward to play the role.

I have made many wonderful friends during those hot and humid nights, and none that I respect more than Robert Bryant, who has played Shoemaker John since the show's inception in 1976.

Robert Bryant might be the most honorable man I have met since returning to Robeson County in 1972 to start the *Carolina Indian Voice* Newspaper. Now 70 something, Robert is still going strong and talking about coming back next year "if they'll have me." **THEY WILL!** David Oxendine, the director, calls Bryant a good and decent man, a calming influence back stage, and one of the most teachable actors he has ever worked with.



Bruce Barton (Allen Lowrie) and Robert Bryant (Shoemaker John).

Reader says Let's Save the Trees at the new Pembroke Town Hall

Dear Connie,
Allow me to say a word on behalf of the two large pecan trees standing on the property line on the right hand side of the field on which the new town hall will be built on the Union Chapel Road.

These trees are beautiful, have been there along time and may be deemed as landmarks. They provide shade and as many of us know are God's air conditioners, in that a tree that size pumps hundreds of gallons of water into the surrounding air everyday. The water of course is in the form of water vapor, but it is in the form of water vapor but it does cool the air. I know that new trees will be planted on the site, but the presence of these established tree would add much to the handsome appearance of the planned and needed new town hall. I wish to go on record as opposed to the planned destruction of these magnificent trees. If the trees are on the property line, that's all the more reason to leave them there to make the line. In all these years the weight of the pecans has never caused them to lose any limbs and I see no reason to be suddenly afraid of the trees on that score.

Wes Taukchiray
Maxton, NC

Then There Was Spring

Underneath the dead limbs hovers life
It is only asleep but no one seems to notice it
Until Mother Nature speaks her magic words
No one hears only a sound that comes from the South
Only there was the sound of the wind whistling through the pines
Not long before a cloud I saw rain drops following close behind
With each passing night and day
There is the sound of singing birds oh so loud
So is the mystic time of the cricket underneath the dead leaves
So is in every passing winter then and there was Spring

Submitted by Rev. James D. Dial

School opening is "smooth", according to Supt. Harding

LUMBERTON-Supt. Barry Harding gave some good news at the board of education meeting Monday, August 12 then sat quietly as the board fine-tuned their search for a new superintendent to replace him.

But first, Harding praised the 41 schools of the PSRC for a smooth opening for 24,298 students. And later in the meeting heard Assistant Superintendent Linda Emanuel note that when the present schools undergoing SACS accreditation complete the process, all schools in the PSRC will be certified by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Grants galore, some \$10 million for technology upgrades, reading and more

Then came some more good news, all \$9,622,473.63 worth of it. Counting a recent grant of \$437,400 to refurbish the gym at the Indian Education Resource Center in Pembroke, the total climbs to more than \$10 million.

And \$2,067,791 for Improving Teacher Quality (\$1,593,787) and a second grant \$474,054 to improve reading at the six high schools.

Then the euphoria of the moment was pierced by a long discussion about the process for choosing a new superintendent in 2003 to replace Dr. Harding. Dr. Harding sat quietly as Chairman Mike Smith complained about comments appearing in the *Robesonian* Newspaper in which board members Steve Martin and Terry Smith accused unnamed board members of prolonging the search process until the elections Sept. 10.

Responding to Chairman Smith, Terry Smith merely noted brusquely that the board is "dragging its feet" and "It shouldn't take a month or three meetings to do this process." Terry Smith also added, "I have a right to my opinion." And Chairman Smith noted, in agreement, that it was just his opinion.

After the exchange between the Smiths, the board re-affirmed the contract with the state school board association to assist them in the search process, agreeing to the \$4,500 fee assessed earlier.

And, in another matter, the board agreed to send a resolution to the local state legislative delegation asking them to propose legislation raising the mandatory attendance age from the present 16 to 18.

And in a positive light, the board unanimously agreed to a resolution from the community and board member **Gloria Lowery** to name a hall at Magnolia in honor of the late and esteemed **James Hester Hammonds**, a long time assistant principal at the school and a community leader.

Tribal Economic Development Chair Attend DOD Workshop

By Alex Baker, ITG Public Relations

Craig McMillian, District 10 representative and Chairman of the Lumbee Tribal Economic Development Committee, attended a recent Department of Defense Workshop at Campbell University.

The workshop provided information for bidding and participating in the annual federal government awards in the amount of \$200 billion. According to McMillian, most of the contractors are not registered with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) database and registering would provide technical assistance to contractors assessing bonding, marketing and estimate informations and assistance.

McMillian also stated that a significant number of contractors in Robeson County are eligible for making application for federal contracts through the HUBZone. In order to qualify, contractors must (1) be a small business, (2) operate a business owned and controlled only by US citizen, (3) maintain an office in a HUBZone, and (4) employ at least 35% employees who reside in the HUBZone.

Another barrier identified by McMillian is the fact that contractors have to demonstrate a proven track record with federal awards and if contractors cannot win the awards, they cannot create this required track record.

Contractors are encouraged to pick up applications for the Picerne Military Housing Project, a 10-year and \$455 million project at Fort Bragg from the Lumbee Tribal Office at 707 Union Chapel Road in Pembroke. Interested individuals are encouraged to seek additional information on the Lumbee Tribal Economic Development Committee at www.lumbeetribe.com

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