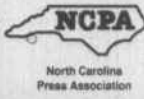


# OPINION

## THE CHRONICLE

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Justice G.K. Butterfield, standing far right, is the only black and just one of two Democrats left on the Supreme Court.

## The last of the African-Americans

Justice G.K. Butterfield fighting to keep his seat on the N.C. Supreme Court

N.C. Supreme Court Justice G.K. Butterfield is the only African-American and one of only two Democrats sitting on the state's highest court. The state Supreme Court, headed by I. Beverly Lake, has a 5-2 Republican margin, and if something doesn't happen to slow the tide of right-wing conservatism in North Carolina, we'll find ourselves with a single-minded high court, and that isn't good for anybody.

Justice Butterfield was appointed to the bench, and because he had no primary opposition, this November will mark the first time he's run for statewide office. African-Americans don't have enough votes to elect Butterfield by themselves; they'll need the help of thousands of non-African-Americans. This is yet another chance for white North Carolinians to show that Ralph Campbell and Henry Frye aren't the only African-Americans that can be elected to statewide office in North Carolina. But, having said that, it must also be mentioned that notwithstanding the proclivities of white voters, Butterfield still must have a huge African-American turnout Nov. 5 if he will have any reasonable chance of winning.

Butterfield, a Wilson native, has forged ties with the Fitch family as well as with the political grand patriarch of Wilson County, James Baxter Hunt Jr. Butterfield's Wilson and eastern North Carolina roots will bode well for him; but in addition to eastern N.C. votes, he'll need to pay attention to the votes along the major interstate corridors. As in all other statewide races, Cumberland, Wake, Durham, Guilford, Forsyth and Mecklenburg counties will go a long way toward deciding the outcome of the race. African-Americans residing in these counties will have an opportunity to swing the race for or against Butterfield. Butterfield has his work cut out for him, but it's doable.

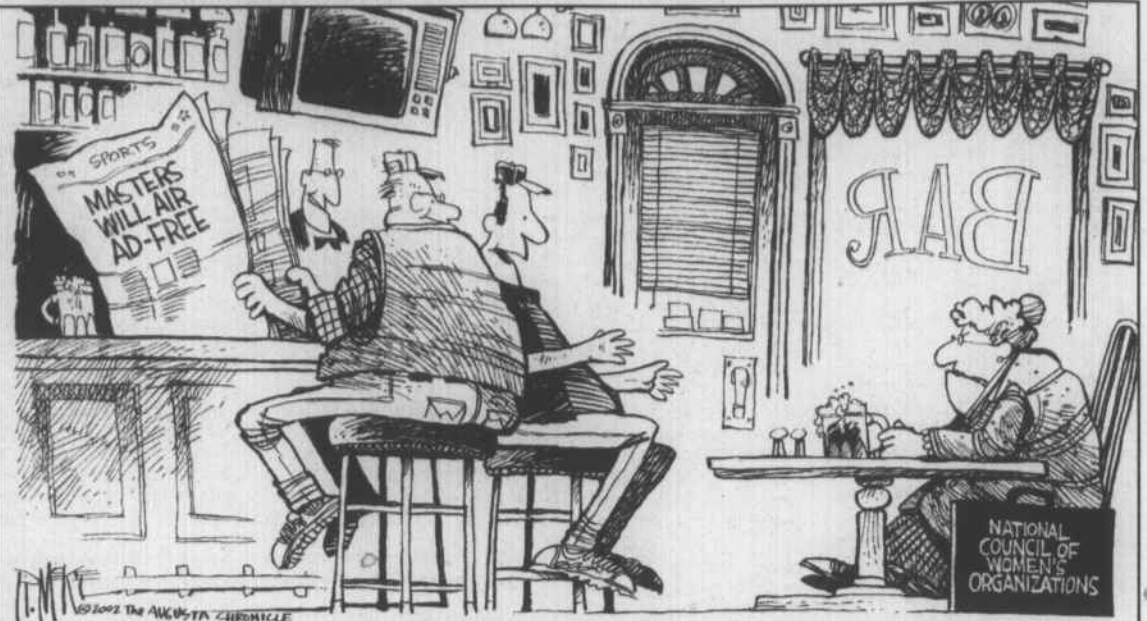
Written by Val Atkinson. Contact him at JonesStreet@nc.rr.com.

### Clarification

In the paper's staff editorial last week, it was stated that the Sheriff's Office has never had a high-ranking black. That is not entirely true. In the 1960s, retired Eldridge Alston served as deputy sheriff for the county.



Submit letters and columns to: Chronicle Mailbag, P.O. Box 1636, Winston-Salem, NC 27102



"HEY, LADY, DO YOU THINK WE COULD TALK YOU INTO BOYCOTTING THE WORLD SERIES and the SUPER BOWL, TOO?..."

## Letter to the Editor

Thanks, RJR

To the Editor:

Last week's RJR Championship at Tanglewood Park brought to a close a long and distinguished Senior Tour event for our region. Since 1987, RJR has been the title sponsor of the Senior Tour's wealthiest event. Each year, citizens from around the region looked forward to the return of some of golf's greatest players to Winston-Salem. Golf greats such as: Arnie, Player, Chi Chi, Dent, Irwin, Trevino and more participated.

Of course this was more than just golf. The big winners from the tournament were the

community and area charities. RJR, through the tournament, contributed more than \$4.7 million to area charities. From an economic impact standpoint the tournament meant people in hotels, restaurants and in the shopping centers. The Vantage put Tanglewood Park on the golfing map. Golfers everywhere come to play Tanglewood's championship course to see how they would fare on a course that held the 1974 PGA Championship and the Senior Tour event.

In a time when many corporations fail to live up to their promises, Andy Schindler and R.J. Reynolds lived up to theirs. In the aftermath of the 9-

11 events, Reynolds could have quietly ended its sponsorship last year. Even amid a terrible economy, anticipation of weak ticket sales and declining community support, RJR did what it promised: It held the final tournament.

Our community and our region owe Schindler and R.J. Reynolds a debt of gratitude, not only for this event, but in everything that they do for the citizens of our city. Thanks for your continued commitment to our community, thanks for 16 wonderful years of golf at Tanglewood Park, and thanks for living up to your promises. Also, thanks to the countless volunteers who returned year

after year to help put this tournament on.

We will miss the Vantage/RJR Championship. We hope that someone steps in to sponsor an event next year. But even more important, we are thankful that RJR continues to call Winston-Salem home.

Sincerely,

Winston-Salem Business Inc.  
Steve Williams, Chairman

Greater Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce  
Murray Greason, Chairman

Winston-Salem Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Bob McCoy, President

## Boycott-bustin' black folks



James Clingman  
Blackonomics

Friday the 13th was true to form for the groups that called the economic sanctions against the city of Cincinnati. Namely the weekend that began on Friday, Sept. 13, 2002, was the kickoff of the Procter and Gamble Riverfront Classic, a football game between Morgan State and Florida A&M, and other associated activities. Despite the boycotters' many attempts to persuade the schools and the promoter to cancel or relocate the game, it came nevertheless and brought with it thousands of black folks. It was indeed a boycott buster - at least for that weekend.

The classic also brought with it something else. As the lead story on the local news that Saturday evening after the game informed us, "Football game brings \$20 million in economic impact to the city." Talk about a boycott buster, the game is what Cincinnati had been waiting for all year. The boycott has cost the city at least \$60 million in tourism revenue, but the black football game made a huge dent in that number.

The promoters said it was an effort to afford black youths an opportunity to attend a black college. They said it was an effort to help black folks. They said it was not about a football game but about education. They said it kept black businesses in business. They said the game should not be considered in opposition to the boycott, even though it was played in a stadium that ripped off black people when it was built (some call it the River-Fraud stadium) and in the downtown "boycott zone." They said black youths needed the opportunity to see black colleges in action and to be exposed to the kinds of activities they could expect if they attend black colleges.

There was a considerable amount of sponsorship money provided to the promoters of the game as well. Procter and Gamble, Fifth-Third Bank and



Cincinnati's Paul Brown Stadium, home of the Riverfront Classic.

Hamilton County (a surprising first time that had been done). Surely there were others, but those three contributed nearly a half-million to the cause. A few white folks on a local news show were even touting the game as a "multicultural" event rather than a black football game.

Because of the game Morgan State and FAMU will share \$400,000; at least that's what the newspaper stated. In addition, black vendors probably made a few thousand each, maybe even \$100,000 collectively. There were the other promotional revenues that were generated by the black media, certainly a good thing, and the promoters' income, too. Who knows, maybe they made a couple of hundred thousand dollars.

Now, let's look at the stadium, which belongs to Mike Brown. You know him, he runs the lousiest team in the NFL, the Cincinnati Bengals. That's right, we built a stadium for him with our tax dollars, a \$575 million stadium with no roof on it, so it's not even in use most of the time. In addition, Mikey-boy gets the concessions, that is, food and drinks; he gets the parking rights, too. He also gets the county to pay for empty seats just in case the Bengals don't sell out. Is this guy shrewd or what? He managed to get a

public entity to use tax dollars to guarantee his business success by making up the costs for not-so-well attended games. What a genius! I wonder how he knew the Bengals would not sell out. And add \$6 hot dogs to all of this.

Back to the black colleges' football game. The hotels made their usual 49 percent on every dollar the black folks spent, and I am sure the restaurants - only two of which are black owned in the downtown area - made their share as well. I remind you that the news reported a \$20 million economic impact on the city. If those numbers are anywhere near correct, in the aggregate, black folks did not even get 10 percent of that.

But that's all right. They had a great time and the game showed us the good side of Cincinnati, according to Cincinnati's newly crowned black leader, former federal Judge Nathaniel Jones. He was the one the television news media just happened to find on the streets and the one the print media sought out for comments. He also is the same person who resigned from a position with the local Community Action Agency because it moved its annual dinner away from downtown in recognition of the boycott. He said he would not be associated with a group that would

"capitulate" to boycotters' demands.

Jones is also the same person who sits on the \$7.8 billion Toyota Diversity advisory board, formed after Toyota "capitulated" to the threat of Jesse Jackson's boycott. Finally, he is the one who caused the "capitulation" of that same social service agency to reverse its decision and go back downtown to have its dinner. What power! What hypocrisy!

Yes, the boycott did not survive black folks on Friday the 13th. You know how it is: We have to "get our party" on sometime, even if it means giving up \$18 million in the process.

Here's a thought: Once a year, every black person send a check to a black college.

James E. Clingman, an adjunct professor at the University of Cincinnati's African-American studies department, is former editor of the Cincinnati Herald Newspaper and founder of the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce. He hosts the radio program, "Blackonomics" and is the author of the book "Economic Empowerment or Economic Enslavement - We Have a Choice." He can be reached at (513) 489-4132 or by e-mail at jclingman@blackonomics.com.