

ECSU's Rev. Charles Foster: 'Government to serve people'

By Dwayne Collins

"I have always dedicated myself to being a servant of man, and a servant of God," said the Rev. Charles Foster.

Foster, Program Director for ECSU's University Center, is a candidate for the N.C. House of Representatives for the District 1, which includes Pasquotank County. He will compete with three other candidates in the May 3rd Democratic primary.

"I want the opportunity to serve the people in the General Assembly," said Foster. "This is what government is all about—serving people."

If elected, Foster pledged to serve his district by increasing appropriations for highways, education, and other public projects.

"The General Assembly is a very important body," said Foster, "because they do the business for the state. The local papers have been telling how this section of North Carolina has been receiving the lowest appropriations from the legislature. Whether it's highways or schools, we always end up at the lowest level."

Foster said that Charlotte and the Piedmont "have always got-

ten a little more than their fair share of the pie. I began to analyze why we were getting the crumbs, so to speak. The answer is, they have been sending the most qualified persons to the General Assembly. Those representatives have been able to go in with their data and statistics, and express themselves.

"You get back from the General Assembly based on the quality of persons representing you. If you are not well-represented, appropriations aren't going to be good."

Foster would set two goals as a legislator: "to become the best representative this district has ever had, and to give aggressive leadership in the General Assembly. At all times, I want to make sure I've done my work, and gotten my data together to make my presentations to the General Assembly."

High on Foster's list of priorities, is his commitment to improving the educational opportunities available to North Carolina citizens.

"This is one reason why I decided to run for this office," said Foster. "I've taught in high school for eight years. I've taught business and taught government. I know what it takes to bring about educational improvements."

Foster hopes to reduce class sizes, especially in elementary schools. "The smaller the class,

the more attention students will receive. There should be a teacher-student ratio of 1:21. This, in turn, will help students understand the skills needed."

Foster believes ECSU students should be involved in the political process.

"If students use their votes, they could make a real difference in this community," he said. "In this one school year there have been more students registered than in the past ten years put together. ECSU can make a difference. They can become a powerful force in the community. Students have the power; they must use it effectively."

Foster said his ideas of service were rooted in his early life. "Although we didn't have the material things, we had love, and we were taught to love God, to serve God, and to respect all people."

Foster has been married for 33 years, and he and his wife have seven children. Four have completed college, two are enrolled in college, "and the seventh will enter college this fall."

Foster has received the Presidential Citation, two Purple Hearts, as well as numerous civic awards. He has a masters degree in guidance counselling from Virginia State and a master of divinity from Virginia Union Theological Seminary.

He is presently working toward his doctorate of education at Virginia Tech.



Hezekiah Cooper (left), Dr. Robert Thorne, and Rev. Charles Foster display their solidarity at ECSU. The three ECSU employees are candidates in the May 3rd elections.

Photo by Leamon Pearce



ECSU Style



Versatile Cooper runs on experience

By Jeanne Leigh

Hezekiah Cooper definitely lives by the philosophy, "Variety is the spice of life."

Cooper, acting director of ECSU's Physical Plant, has had so many diverse jobs and experiences, it's a wonder he can remember all of them.

He's been an Air Force sergeant, a hospital orderly, a math teacher, a football coach, a counsellor to emotionally disturbed teenagers, and an administrator—among other things. And he's still found time to be a devoted husband and father.

Cooper, a candidate for re-election to the Pasquotank County Board of Education, says he's running on "experience, dedication and responsibility."

The soft-spoken native of Elizabeth City says he believes more people should become involved in the political process.

"It's a heritage, a right," said Cooper. "It's your individual right to vote for your choice in America. The individual has the choice to express his or her opinions about a candidate for officer in our society."

If re-elected, Cooper hopes to reduce class sizes, especially in elementary schools. "The smaller the class, the more attention students will receive. There should be a teacher student ratio of 1:21. This, in turn, will help students understand the skills needed."

Cooper said he would also like to see an alternative school established in Pasquotank County, which would be concerned with preventing teenage pregnancies, and reversing the "tremendous dropout rate" of students in the county.

Cooper said he will work to get parents more involved in the educational process. "I want to make sure that the citizens have representation in Pasquotank County."

Cooper said his duties as a member of the school board do not interfere with his job as Physical Plant Director, since "most of the meetings are held at night."

Cooper is a 1959 graduate of ECSU, where he became a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. He has also studied at Lane College, N.C. State, Albany State, Appalachian State, East Carolina University, and Pitt Technical Institute. He also attended schools in the U.S. Air Force.

A former teacher and coach at C.S. Brown High School, in Winton, N.C., Cooper has also counselled emotionally disturbed teenage boys and girls at St. Christopher's School in Pobb's Ferry, New York.

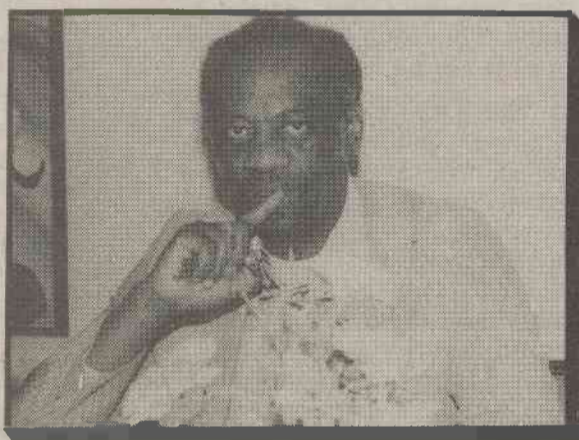
Cooper is married to the former Janet Smith of Murfreesboro, N.C. The couple has two sons, Hector, a senior at UNC, and Javon, a freshmen at A & T.

The Coopers are active members of Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church.

Cooper is also active in a number of organizations, including the NAACP, the American Society of Safety Engineers, the National Education Association, the North Carolina Teachers Association, and the Elk Lodge.

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Rev. Charles Foster



Photos by Richard McIntire



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Hezekiah Cooper

Hezekiah Cooper (with walkie-talkie) is seeking re-election to the Pasquotank County Board of Education. Cooper, Director of ECSU's Physical Plant, is pictured with Glendell Moore, Jimmy Turner, and Joe Taylor.



... with ECSU's own!