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Public Hearings Indicate Unenthusiastic Support of Consolidated High School

Combining Maxton, Prospect, Pembroke High Schools

By Bruce Barton

A majority (with a significant number in opposition) seemed to say "if it is good for our children o.k. but we still do not wish to lose our community schools."

Public hearings were held Monday night at Pembroke Senior High School and Tuesday night at Prospect School concerning a proposed West Robeson High School that will involve the consolidation of the present Pembroke Senior High School, Prospect High School and Maxton High School.

An additional hearing will be held at Maxton's Townsend Middle School Cafeteria on August 6 at 8 p.m.

Present at each hearing has been Lacy Presnell, who heads the division of school planning with the North Carolina Department of Instruction. Presnell has supported the concept of consolidation emphatically. County School Superintendent Purnell Swett and his staff conducted the meetings, along with County School Board Chairman Ralph Hunt.

Presnell was part of a committee asked by the local Robeson County Board of Education to prepare a feasibility study concerning merger of the county and Maxton systems. The committee recommended merger.

The committee states that merger (and consolidation of the three schools) will offer additional course offerings, more diversified personnel, financial advantages and better facility usage.

Presnell noted that the county board was not bound by the committee or its recommendations noting "They have the option to do what they want to with our findings."

Presnell attempted to allay some expressed fears of "a big school" by saying that grade 9 to a high school offered them better courses and better peer acceptance by the 10th, 11th and 12th graders."

Presnell noted that "1200-1800 was considered to be a good school size." Presnell also down played possible bussing by quoting an old mountain lady who was purported to say in a similar situation that "I am more concerned about what my daughter will get when she gets there than I am with her getting there." The consolidated school is expected to have between 1800-2000 students.

If officially approved by the county school board, the school is expected to be operational in the fall of 1981 or 1982 at an estimated cost of three and one half million dollars. Presnell termed the proposed new school "a giant step for progress."

But not everyone agreed with school officials and Presnell.

Some 85 concerned parents attended the hearing at Pembroke Monday night. Milton Hunt, a Pembroke Town Councilman, stated three reasons why he opposes the consolidation of the three schools. Hunt said, "I oppose the consolidation because I hate to see any community lose their school; too, the proposed school size is too big; and we were never told about the proposed consolidation when the school bond issue was being talked about and passed...."

Hunt noted too that only 13.4% of the registered voters voted on the successful school bond issue.

But a number of citizens spoke in favor of the consolidation because of increased course offerings, a better comprehensive school program, and the opportunity to meet and learn about different kinds of people, including Indian, Black and white students.

One jarring note was introduced by former school board member Herbert Moore who asked "Where are the board members from this attendance zone?" School board members Jerry Lowry, Simeon Oxendine and Tommy Swett were absent. Superintendent Purnell

Swett said, "Two of them have legitimate excuses, one I do not know about."

Milton Hunt also reminded Swett and the board members present that the county board of commissioners had refused to approve the merger of the Maxton and county school boards until consolidation was taken out of the merger plan. But Swett (and Herman Dial, chairman of the board of commissioners concurred) said the commissioners asked that consolidation be taken out because it was the rightful province of the school board, and was not the charged responsibility of the commissioners.

If the consolidation plan is approved after the community input via the hearings, the consolidated high school is expected to house all students from the ninth to the 12th grades in the respective attendance zones.

What is now Pembroke Senior High School would become a middle school for 7 and 8th graders. Prospect would be for kindergarten through the 8th grade; R.B. Dean School would be K-4 and Townsend would be 5-8.

The other feeder schools probably would continue as is, with slight modifications.

Approximately 60 citizens attended the hearing at Prospect School on Tuesday night. Some expressed concern about Prospect School and its role with the community.

James Flannagan noted, "Only one school is going to lose its identity--and that's Prospect. We're a community; Pembroke and Maxton are towns."

Others noted the success of the athletic program at Prospect; and the large number of doctors that have recently come from Prospect School.

Ben Jacobs asked, "Is it true that minorities have high drop out rates at schools this large?" Although no figures were cited, Presnell said that he did not think so.

Harbert Moore, a former member of the school board from Prospect said, "Bigness is not the answer; what about the administration of a school this large?"

Another citizen, Tracy Britt, bored in repeatedly with the question, "Where is the money going to come from?" Swett responded, "From the school bond monies."

Moore also expressed concern about the lack of Prospect representation on the school board.

Pembroke Community Workshop Lauded



The new quarters of the Pembroke Community Workshop dedicated Monday, July 30.

Dr. Albert Winn, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, U.S. was the dedicatory speaker Monday (July 30) at the new facilities of the Pembroke Community Workshop were dedicated.

Winn said "God is always found on the side of oppressed people." He expressed three reasons for being excited about the Pembroke Community Workshop. Winn said, "The project is for Native Americans; it faces the problem of unemployment and it is helping people to help themselves."

Winn called the Workshop truly "unselfishness of service", noting that the church does not receive any receipts from the non-profit business.

The Pembroke Community Workshop is the brainchild of Rev. John Robinson, a young dynamo Presbyterian minister called to head the Pembroke Area Presbyterian Ministry, the sponsor of the project. Robinson calls the Workshop "a response to a felt need in the community. What we are trying to do is provide a semi-sheltered work environment for people who need to learn the basic industrial skills such as promptness, positive mental attitude, work adjustment, communication skills, etc. We have been very fortunate in finding enough service contracts to keep our workers busy."

The workshop moved into its new facilities in June because of the need for more space. The workshop is now located in the spacious quarters of the former Pembroke Implement building on Main Street in Pembroke. The workshop is also providing space to the Pembroke Alcohol Counseling Program, and is planning to open a special work program for clients in the alcohol program.

Winn lauded the work ethic praising "plain old honest work." Winn noted that "handouts have a tendency to be a

Carnell Locklear is 'Boss Strong'

During the latter part of the 19th century, the Lumbee Indians of Robeson County were very proud of the native son, outlaw Henry Berry Lowrie. Their pride centered around Lowrie's own pride in his heritage.

If he could return today, Lowrie and his people would be very proud of the much acclaimed outdoor drama, "Strike At The Wind!"

The production is now in its fourth season at the Lakeside Amphitheater at the Riverside Country Club near Pembroke, N.C. Most people see the drama as strictly entertainment. But to those deeply involved, the drama is acting, its businesses involving advertising, fund raising, and more.

This summer will mark the fourth season in which Carnell Locklear of Pembroke has played one of the major supporting roles as "Boss Strong".

The affable actor said, "The most difficult thing I have encountered is the portrayal of the varied emotions required in the characterization of Boss Strong."

Apparently he has been successful in creating the character. Carnell is one of the most popular performers in the

show. Critics who have reviewed the show found him to be "vibrant" and stated that he "carried that necessary thread of humor" through the show.

Winn is the highest ranking member of the Presbyterian Church, and is the second moderator to visit Pembroke. Mrs. Sarah Mosley visited last year.

The workshop employs 20 full time workers and 24 summer youth workers. The workshop assembles brushes in Black and Decker handtools. Black and Decker's plant in Fayetteville provides the bulk of the workshop's work.

On hand was Black and Decker's representative Luther Suber who expressed satisfaction with the workshop's performance. Said Suber, "The name of the game has been to keep Black and Decker running and the workshop working."

On hand too was Rev. Russell Parks, chairman of the Pembroke Area Presbyterian Ministry. Parks, pastor of Iona, Ashpole and Rowland Presbyterian churches in the area recounted the growth of the ministry which followed the closing of the Pembroke Presbyterian Church in 1975 due to a lack of members.

The initial outreach of the ministry was the Pembroke Youth Center, which was developed by MacLegerton, Robinson's predecessor. Legerton is now in seminary in New York.

Robinson arrived in Pembroke in 1977. Park said, "He is blessed with rare gifts, a wonderful combination of imagination and practical knowhow."

Mayor Reggie Strickland said, "John Robinson was sent to Pembroke by God. He has been a blessing to us."

A turn a way crowd attended the dedicating service and the buffet following.

show. Carnell describes Boss Strong as "versatile, fun-loving but, at the same time, serious and hardworking." Most people would say the director might have been type casting.

In reviewing the progress of the show, Carnell said, "Strike At The Wind" has improved over the past four years. We have better communication between the performers and the director--more openness and, consequently, more willingness to sacrifice."

Despite a busy schedule, the amiable actor finds time for fishing, singing, dancing, cooking, "helping people", and sharing it all with his wife and five children.

When asked about the future of "Strike At The Wind" and his association with it, Carnell said, "I'll still be here if the board of directors will stand behind the staff and performers. We can't do it all alone." The board members have varied backgrounds and interests so they can have a lot of input in their own communities."

PEOPLE AND LAND THINGS

YOUTH REVIVAL

Island Grove Baptist Church of Pembroke, N.C. will host a Youth Revival beginning August 8th through August 12th. The services will be held each evening starting at 7:30 p.m. Rev. Christopher Hunt will be guest speaker

Everyone is welcome.

FOUNDERS' DAY OBSERVED AT ISLAND GROVE CHURCH

Island Grove Baptist Church will observe Founders' Day on Sunday, August 5th. Rev. Isiah Locklear of Red Springs was the first pastor. There will be a special program honoring this day. Lunch will be served immediately following the program.

Everyone is invited to attend.

STATE WIDE YOUTH EVANGELISM NIGHT

The Baptist State Convention is sponsoring its 9th Statewide Youth Evangelism Night, Friday evening, August 17, at the Greensboro Coliseum. Speaker is Rev. Steve Davis of Tulsa, Oklahoma and soloist, Cynthia Clawson, from Nashville, Tenn. The service begins at 7:15 p.m.

The Burnt Swamp Association Youth Organization invites interested youth to join them in attending this conference. For more information, contact the Baptist Building, 521-9850 or Miss Helen Jacobs, 422-8571.

LOWRY RECEIVES PHARMACY LICENSE



Jason B. Lowry, Jr., a 1978 graduate of the University of South Carolina School of Pharmacy, recently received his Pharmacy License and will be employed with Eckers at South Park Shopping Center in Florence, S.C.

He is married to the former Jo Ann Hunt Lowry, daughter of Mr. Luther Hunt and the late Mrs. Lucille Barnes Hunt.

PEMBROKE JAYCEES TO HOLD LABOR DAY DANCE

The Pembroke Jaycees' Labor Day Dance will be held Friday night, August 31, from 8:30 p.m. until. Free refreshments. Admission is \$3.00 per person. Place: Jaycee Hut (Pembroke).



Carnell Locklear

WILMINGTON STAR SEEKS JOURNALISTS

WILMINGTON-The Wilmington Star newspaper is seeking minorities interested in a career in journalism, especially Indian journalists.

Those interested should contact C. William Smith, Managing editor c/o Wilmington Star, Post Office Box 840, Wilmington, North Carolina 28402 or call 1-(919) 343-2208.

PSU CHANCELLOR TO SPEAK TO LAURINBURG KIWANIS CLUB

LAURINBURG-Dr. Paul R. Givens, new chancellor of Pembroke State University, will be the speaker at the 7 p.m. dinner meeting of the Laurinburg Kiwanis Club this evening. The club meets at the Scotland Inn.

He is the guest of Ralph Parker, vice president of the Laurinburg Kiwanis Club.

Dr. Givens, continuing to meet people throughout the area served by Pembroke State University, was invited to Ft. Bragg Wednesday morning for the opening ceremonies of the new commanding general, Lieut. Thomas W. Tackberry.

Dr. and Mrs. Givens also saw a parachute jump during the ceremonies.

SANDRA LUCAS WORKING AS STATE GOVERNMENT INTERN

Sandra Lucas of Pembroke is one of about 125 students working this summer as a state government intern in Raleigh.

Spending a summer working in state government gives these young people an opportunity to examine firsthand possible careers in public service," said Governor Jim Hunt. "At the same time, they perform valuable services for the people of the state and bring fresh young viewpoints to many of our programs," he added.

Lucas, a student last year at Brigham Young University, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Lucas and is working in the Department of Administration.

The interns earn a stipend and may earn academic credit while participating in the 10-week program which includes seminars and discussion groups as well as on-the-job experience.

The North Carolina Internship Program is coordinated by the Department of Administration's Youth Involvement Office and is open to postsecondary students who are residents of North Carolina or attend school in the state. The program also coordinates non-stipend internships for the fall and spring semesters.

LRDA NAMES OFFICERS

Lumbee Regional Development Association, Inc. conducted its annual board elections during the period of July 10 through July 24, 1979. Four (4) separate elections were held. Three (3) new board members and one (1) incumbent were elected. The three new board members and the areas they represent are as follows: Mr. James Sampson, Gaddy, Rowland, and Thompson townships; Mrs. Emma Locklear, Pembroke, Smiths, and Union townships; and Mr. Ward Clark, Jr., Alfordville and Maxton townships. Mr. Redell Collins was re-elected to serve the Burnt Swamp, Lumber Bridge, Philadelphus, Raft Swamp, Red Springs, and Shannon townships.

These members were installed at the July 30, 1979 LRDA Board meeting. Each new member will serve a three (3) year term.

New board officers were also elected by the association (17) members during the July 30, 1979 meeting. Following are the newly elected officers: Mr. Redell Collins, Chairman; Mr. James Sampson, Treasurer; Mr. Ward Clark, Jr., Secretary.



Mr. Ambrose Chavis, assistant teacher of the Adult Men's Class which is taught by Mr. Claude, is shown (right) presenting the gifts to him in behalf of the church.