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"Building Communicative Bridges
in A Tri-Racial Setting"

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ROBESON COUNTY

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Merry Christmas

We sincerely wish each of you a very Merry Christmas! God bless you for being a part of our lives during the previous year. Friends are precious. And a few detractors keep us honest.

Merry Christmas from...
Bruce Barton Editor
Garry Barton Assoc. Editor
Connee Brayboy Assoc. Editor
Ricky Barton Circulation
And all our correspondents & social commentators.

SCHOOL BOARD REAFFIRMS REX RENNERT AS SCHOOL SITE

by Connee Brayboy

The Robeson County Board of Education met on Tuesday in a brief session where they denied a request for student re-assignment and passed a resolution asking for a six-hundred million dollar state-wide school bond. In addition they heard a report from Supt. Purnell Swett on the occupancy of East Robeson High School. The students moved into East Robeson on Friday with "no major problems."

Once again it seems the board has decided to continue with the construction of North Robeson High on the Rex-Rennert site as initially planned. On motion by Major David Green the construction of North Robeson is no longer "delayed indefinitely." Mr. Rufus Graham seconded the motion by Green. Voting for was everyone in attendance, except Ronald Hammonds and Sim Oxendine. E.B. Morton was not present for the meeting. Laymon

Locklear who had previously made a motion to delay the construction indefinitely voted to continue as originally planned. Said he, "I have voted both ways on this issue. It has been sixty days since my motion and no monies have been found to build a new school."

The Board also released the following statements relative to an appearance by Essie M. Locklear who said she did not receive her retirement money but it was no longer there; and in response to recently news reports that the Robeson County School System was 71 out of 100 units for Civil Rights Violations

"The Robeson County Board of Education has reviewed the contents of the State Bureau of Investigation's report relating to Ms. Essie M. Chavis Locklear's charge that someone other than herself and without her authorization made application to the North Carolina Teachers and State Employees Retirement System for her accumulated funds. Implication had been made that an employee of the Board of Education was involved in such charges.

"Upon reviewing the contents of the SBI report, the Robeson County Board of Education can only concur with their findings which demonstrated that no person employed with this agency now or in the past was involved in any way with any wrong doing."

CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATION

"On December 12, 1979, the Office of Civil Rights, HEW, released a report which was circulated nation-wide. On the report Robeson County was listed 71st out of 100 worst school districts in the districts in the nation for Civil Rights violations from stand point of the Office of Civil Rights.

"This report has never been received by the Robeson County Board of Education is very disturbed about such release being made without the Board having prior knowledge in order to answer the avalanche of questions that came from the news media across this State. When a report of this nature is released it gives the public the impression that the Robeson County Board of Education is willfully involved in wrong doings- which has a tendency to question the credibility of the Board. However, once the facts of the report were understood by the administration, they realized they were not in violation with its approved plan from HEW, in regard to student assignment.

"Based on information the Superintendent and others have been able to obtain, Robeson County was on that report because of not matching into some magic formula the Office of Civil Rights used to determine the optimum situation for the integration of the school system. Back in the late 60s and '70s when a team from the Office of Civil Rights Personnel spent some time visiting Robeson County, they realized that Robeson County is a tri-racial county, a county with a large geographical area and also a county in which the ethnic population is not evenly distributed among the county, that it was not feasible nor practical to ask Robeson County to fit in the 'ideal mode'.

The plan was approved and is the plan the Robeson County Board of Education has been operating by.

"The Board indicates that any federal funds that Robeson County currently receives from various programs is not in jeopardy of being terminated, and no punitive action will be taken. The Board is confident that any future investigation in regard to student assignment that the same facts that prevailed in the early days when the plan was approved is still available today. The Board feels it was unfortunate that such report was released in the manner in which it was and hopes in the future that they will in no way be released in this fashion."

PEOPLE AND THINGS

MAYNOR NAMED BOARD MEMBER OF FOUR COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

L.R.D.A. Board chairman, Rod Locklear, announces the selection, by the Board of Directors of L.R.D.A., of Mr. Charles A. Maynor, LRDA Board Member, to serve as a Board Member of Four County Community Action Agency. Four County Community Action Agency serves Robeson, Scotland, Richmond and Hoke Counties.

PEMBROKE SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS EMBARK UPON A CHRISTMAS PROJECT

The students enrolled in the Industrial Cooperative Training Program at Pembroke Senior High School embarked upon a Christmas project several months ago. Rather than go out into the community, it was decided by the students to select someone within the school. Their choice was unanimous- Mr. Waltz Locklear. Mr. Maynor was selected by the students because they recognized his many contributions and hard work for Pembroke Senior High School.

You are cordially invited to attend a reception honoring Mr. Waltz in the school cafeteria from 10:35 a.m. thru 11:15 a.m. on December 20, 1979. Your attendance will be appreciated.

This event will set a precedent at PSHS. As far as I know, this is the first time students have honored a school employee. It is my desire this will be continued by future I.C.T. students. --Submitted by C.A. McLeod, I.C.T. Coordinator

ISLAND GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Island Grove Baptist Church's Christmas program will be held Sunday, December 23, 1979, beginning at 5 p.m. The Pastor is Rev. Coolidge Cummings. The public is cordially invited.

Watch Night Service will be held at Island Grove Monday, December 31, 1979 with 2 guest speakers. The purpose of the service is to usher in the New Year.

COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL SPONSORS TRIP TO N.C. STATE GAME

The County 4-H Council is sponsoring a bus trip to the N.C. State vs East Carolina basketball game in Raleigh January 2, 1980. The cost will be \$6 for youth and \$7 for adults, which includes bus transportation and tickets to the game.

Buses will leave the O.P. Owens Agricultural Center parking lot on Highway 72 west at 5:15 p.m. and return about 11:30 p.m. The basketball game will start at 7:30 p.m. Please call the County Extension Office at 738-8111 for more information.

1980 YOUNG FARMERS FORUM SLATED FOR JAN. 4 AND 5

An exciting, new program for young farm families will be held in Raleigh on January 4 and 5. The program is the 1980 Young Farmers Forum, and the theme this year is "Learning Can Be Fun." The meeting will be held at the Royal Villa Hotel and Convention Center on Highway 70.

Young farmers between the ages of 18 and 40, along with their wives, are encouraged to attend this interesting event. According to Buck Orter, assistant agricultural Extension agent, registration fee has been held to a very nominal charge of only \$10 per person so that everyone can attend.

There will be several very interesting seminars which are highlighted by some outstanding Extension personnel and major chemical companies. Governor James B. Hunt will be the featured speaker for lunch on Friday, and this session will be presided over by Ed Lewis, Jr., a native of Robeson County.

There will be an excellent ladies' program for all the wives who plan to attend. Topics will include houseplants and a fashion show.

Anyone wishing to obtain further information or registration blanks should contact the County Extension Office at 738-8111.

100% OF 1979 PRACTICAL NURSING GRADUATES AT RTI RECEIVE PASSING SCORES

One hundred percent of the 1979 Practical Nursing graduates at Robeson Technical Institute received passing scores on the State Board Test Pool Examination, according to Frank Leggett, Vice-President of Student Services.

"Twelve of the graduates scored high enough to meet State Board Exam requirements in all other states, too," said Leggett. "All states use these exam scores as part of their requirements for licensing. We are very proud that our graduates show up so well year after year on State Board Exams."

The 1979 PN graduates are Kellen T. Byrd, Sandra F. Davis, Pauline M. McConley, Barbara L. Norris, Pamela R. Parker, Lumberton; Melba J. Bulard, Marlene Q. Herndon, Parkton; Betty J. Cain, Sherry J. Hammonds, Betty L. Williams, St. Pauls; Susan F. Freeman, Hope Mills; Linda L. McArthur, Dillon, S.C.; Janice L. Womack, Ramona B. Townsend, Red Springs.

HENRY BERRY BAND PLANS BENEFIT DANCE

by Harvey Godwin, Jr.

Great pride in the Lumbee ace is exalted by the young Lumbee Indian professionals who have presented them selves recently. The Lumbee professional spectrum is contrasted by doctors and lawyers to actors and musicians. Never before have so many talented Lumbees been able to gain and take advantage of such opportunities. The talent has always been there, but the opportunities have never been presented.

"It takes great courage and insight for six professional young men from a small town to travel to New York for the purpose of playing music. This was accomplished recently by the Henry Berry Band. Traveling in a repaired school bus, they made their way to New York only to be greeted by two feet of snow. These are only a couple of obstacles faced by the Henry Berry Band. As their name implies, strength and justice will prevail in times of crisis and misfortune. After getting settled, the Henry Berry Band was the opening band for other acts.

The Henry Berry Band is beginning to make its mark on the eastern coastline from New York to Macon, Ga. Their confidence is gradually building through the support of admirers from other states other than North Carolina. The Henry Berry Band is now apart of Star Struck Productions of N.Y. and are managed by Tom Barone. Their Pembroke business manager is James "Bank" Maynor.

All this sounds like the Henry Berry Band is rich and famous, but that is truly erroneous. The truth of the matter is, they are in dire need of new technical equipment in order to return to New York in February. This equipment is necessary for their hopes of becoming a steady touring band. Hopefully this will lead to their first album.

This Saturday night, there will be a benefit show by Henry Berry Band to help raise money for these purposes. Unfortunately, in this business it takes a lot of money to achieve certain goals. It will be held at the Star American Washhouse. There will be a pig picking starting at 8 p.m.

visits the White House



Tommy Swett, director of Special Programs at Pembroke State University, congratulates Judge Shirley M. Hufstetter, the first Secretary of Education in the newly-formed Cabinet post, at a reception given in her honor after swearing-in ceremonies recently at

the White House. Swett is president of the Southeastern Assn. of Educational Opportunity Programs and was in Washington attending a Leadership Training Advisory Committee meeting at the time he was invited to the reception.

Pembroke Jaycees Christmas Party

Dine and dance at the Pembroke Jaycees' Christmas Party on Saturday night, December 22, 1979 at 7:30 p.m. at the Pembroke Jaycee Hut. The admission price is \$15 per couple.

Tickets are on sale at Rogers' Drug Store or from any Pembroke Jaycee. Co-chairmen for the project are Oceanus Lowry and Ted Brewington.

Are Indians Shortchanged?

BY BRUCE BARTON

It sounds like a song title: ECAP! It means Energy Crisis Assistance Program. The state, following the lead of President Jimmy Carter who proposed the legislation nationally, has begun the program to help families remain warm and healthy this winter. The initial phase of the program is Energy Crisis Assistance Program That program began this week, and is administered locally by Four County Community Services, Inc., quartered in Laurinburg.

The program is administered by a grant from the state economic opportunity office.

Four County began certifying eligible households this week. Families certified as living in poverty and those families receiving Supplemental Security Income are eligible to participate in the program.

The express purpose of the program is to assist low income families in meeting the continuing exorbitant heating bills. There are three basic types of assistance: (1) Back bills, payment of overdue bills incurred for delivery of fuel made since July of 1979; (2) Advance payments, payments to utilities or fuel dealers to cover the cost of delivering fuel or energy to those participating in the program and (3) Crisis Fund, Assistance for those families with emergency needs for the purchase of blankets, fuel or portable space heaters.

The guidelines for the program assert that program priority will be given to households headed by an elderly person (age 60 or over) or a handicapped person. Special arrangements, according to the guidelines, will be made to provide outreach for those who cannot travel.

Individuals who consider themselves qualified may make application for this assistance through any of the twelve neighborhood centers operated by Four-County Community Services. In Bladen County these are located in the Council area (Baltimore Center, Tar Hill area (New Light Center) and in Elizabethtown (at the Courthouse). In Hoke County centers are located in the Cannon Heights area and in the South

Hoke community. In Robeson County centers are in Fairmont, Lumberton, Maxton, Red Springs, and Rex-Rennert community. In Scotland County they are in Laurinburg (on Stewartville Road) and in the Oak Hill community.

Locally, the program has raised a number of questions. Complaints have filtered into our office, questioning the fairness of the program to the mostly Indian community.

Some of the problems with ECAP, according to complaints listed with us, are (1) Elderly people having to wait in line as much as two days; (2) Indian people generally not being served; (3) workers expressing the attitude (mostly in their action) that they're doing the clients a favor; (4) Transportation problems; (5) the handicapped not being given special attention and consideration; and (6) not enough staff to effectively administer the program.

The program takes on special significance, especially in Robeson County, where traditional attitudes have developed. Some people seem to think that Four County is mostly for the Black populace; while others express the notion that LRDA (Lumbee Regional Development Association) is incorporated to take care of the needs of the Indian community.

Because of needs, it sometimes seems that way but both programs are set up to help those who need them. Four County, especially, is charged to serve all the constituents in their four county area-Indians, Blacks and whites

And LRDA, although established as an Indian agency for Indian people, crosses racial lines in administering programs. The agency is now administering a program for the Farmers Home Administration in the area of alleviating the delinquency problems the agency is facing in loan collections.

Maybe the State Fuel Assistance Director should intervene and make sure Indian families who need the ECAP program are served. The need to stay warm and pay exorbitant fuel and electric bills is not a racial one. All of us are faced with an energy crisis and it is going to take all of us working together to solve the problem threatening us.

Senior Citizens Honored

The third annual Senior Citizens Fun Day was held Wednesday at the Pembroke Jaycees' Clubhouse. Some 16 senior citizen chapters took part in the festivities.

The senior citizens groups all were organized by Lumbee Regional Development Association's General Community Project. Gary Deese is project director.

Larry Roberts, President of the Pembroke Jaycees, served as master of ceremonies.

It was a fun day, with presentation of gifts and plaques highlighting the day. Welcomes were extended by Roderick Locklear, chairman of the board of directors of LRDA; Kenneth R. Maynor, executive director of LRDA; and James A. "Pete" Jacobs, Mayor of Pembroke.

The estimated crowd of more than 200 feasted on hot dogs and hamburgers and enjoyed the festive activities, including entertainment by Veronica Bryant, Miss Lumbee, and others.

In his remarks to the senior citizens, Locklear paid particular honor to them: "If you will think back with me...it was through your efforts and those of your parents who put up the fight and the struggle...who built churches and schools...that has enabled us to survive as a people."

The LRDA sponsored senior citizen chapters are: Antioch, Bethel Hill, Deep Branch, Evans Crossroads, Fairgrove, Hammonds Court, Island Grove, Mt. Moriah, New Point, Oxendine, Pembroke, Prospect, Saddletree, Smith town, Smyrna and Union Chapel.

Busses Collide in Pembroke Area

by David Malcolm

A Robeson County school bus driven by Kim Bryant collided with another county school bus, being driven by Wanda Lou Wilkins between 3 o'clock and 3:30 p.m. yesterday afternoon on High School Road, about a half mile outside of Pembroke.

Trooper Lennis Watts of the North Carolina Highway Patrol investigated the accident which apparently occurred when the brakes on Bryant's bus failed as she was attempting to stop for Wilkins' bus which had stopped to let

off some students. Six area high school students were taken to Southeastern General Hospital in Lumberton after complaining of pain in their arms, legs or sides. Treated and released were Gail McNeill, Melinda Parnell, Eric Lowery, Angela Lowry, Phyllis McNair and Anita Cheek.

Bryant and Wilkins are both students at Pembroke Senior High School. The final report on the accident was still pending at press time and it was not known whether any charges would be filed.