

THE CAROLINA INDIAN VOICE

"Building Communicative Bridges
In A Tri-Racial Setting"

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LRLS & ACLU FILE SUIT AGAINST LUMBERTON CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATION

Robeson County and Lumberton residents, assisted by the Lumbee River Legal Services and the American Civil Liberties Union, filed suit today in federal court charging that Lumberton City Board of Education is violating the Voting Rights Act of 1965. According to the complaint, the Lumberton City Board of Education has implemented three annexations of areas in Robeson County, even though the Department of Justice has objected to them on the grounds that they are racially discriminatory.

The three areas, known as Barker Ten Mile, Lakewood Estates and Clyburn Homes and Country Club, were taken into the city school systems between 1967 and 1970. Their combined population is 2,270 persons, of whom 92 percent are white, 1.3 percent are Black and 6.2 percent are Indian. The City of Lumberton as a whole has a population that is 67.8 percent white, 23.6 percent Black and 8.4 percent Indian.

Since the annexations created a new district for election of members to the Lumberton City Board of Education, they were required to be pre-cleared by Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The changes were submitted to the Department of Justice on April 2, 1975.

On June 2, 1975, the Attorney General of the United States objected to them on the grounds that he could not conclude that they did not have the purpose or effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race. The Attorney General said that "extensive contact with minority group members, both Blacks and Indians throughout Robeson

County, indicates the existence of a racially discriminatory purpose behind the annexations, i.e., to assure that the children of suburban whites could continue to attend City of Lumberton Schools, rather than attending the predominantly-minority Robeson County Schools." According to figures submitted by the school board to the Department of Justice, almost 95 percent of students in the annexed areas were white.

The complaint alleges that the school board for the last five years has ignored the Attorney General's objection and has implemented the three annexations, allowing Robeson County students to attend the Lumberton City Schools and persons living in the effected areas to vote in school board elections.

The plaintiffs in the lawsuit say they want the Voting Rights Act fully and faithfully enforced. They have requested that a three-judge court be convened to enjoin any further use of the objectionable annexations.

Terry Blackwood and Laughlin McDonald, attorneys for the plaintiffs, said today that non-compliance with the Voting Rights Act is not an isolated phenomenon. "Unfortunately, there is still resistance in the South to full political equality of minorities." Noting that the pre-clearance provisions of the Voting Rights Act will effectively expire in 1982, they claimed that "flouting of the Voting Rights Act has been fairly commonplace and points up a clear need for continued protection for minority voting rights."

IN 1975 the Attorney General, stated

Blackwood, "found substantial evidence that the boundaries of these Lumberton School annexations were outlined in a convoluted, meandering fashion with the result that Blacks and Indians were virtually excluded from the three annexations in question."

Julian Pierce, Director of Lumbee River Legal Services and Jeanne Chastain, head of the Lumbee River Legal Services' Indian Law Unit, commented, "Exclusion of Blacks and Indians from these annexations was a clear violation of the Fifteenth Amendment."

McDonald said that the ACLU has a case similar to the one filed today pending in the federal courts in Georgia involving the failure of the Sumter County Board of Education to comply with objection by the Attorney General. The Sumter County Board, whose members once included President Carter, was notified by the Justice Department in 1973 that its system of at-large elections was unlawful. "In spite of that objection," McDonald says, "the school board has continued to hold elections at-large." A decision in the Georgia case is expected soon.

Lumbee River Legal Services is an affiliate program of Legal Services of North Carolina, and has recently been designated by the Legal Services Corporation to offer assistance to the low-income residents of Cumberland County beginning in early 1981. The ACLU is a nationwide non-profit organization which advocates for civil rights.

For further information, contact Terry Blackwood, Lumbee River Legal Services, P.O. Drawer 939, Pembroke, NC 28372, telephone 919-521-2831; and Laughlin McDonald, ACLU, Suite 355, 52 Fiarlie Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia, 30303, telephone number 404-523-2721.

SPECULATION ABOUT HOUSE SEAT NARROWS TO DIAL AND WOODS

It's the talk of Robeson County: who will replace Rep. Horace Locklear in the North Carolina House of Representatives? Locklear announced in last week's issue of The Carolina Indian Voice that he was resigning from the House because of "personal, family and business reasons," noting that the seat had become a full time job.

Speculation initially centered around Herman Dial, the chairman of the Robeson County Board of Commissioners, but Dial dashed the talk about his replacing Locklear by saying, "I believe I can better serve the people by staying where I am..."

A number of notables have been mentioned in recent days, including Dr. E.B. Turner, Lumberton's erudite city councilman and Bob Davis, a former member of the House of Representatives. Both are Black. Davis was toppled in the last election when Bill Gay, formerly the principal of Lumberton High School, outpolled him dismantling the fragile tri-racial representation in the General Assembly. Both Gay and the other Representative --David Parnell--are white.

But most of the conversation in the county has centered around Adolph Dial, chairman of PSU's Indian Studies

Department or Ruth Woods, director of Robeson County Schools' Indian Education Program, as possible successors to Locklear. Both are Indians; both are well respected in the professional and political circles.

Others mentioned have been Ronald Revels, a member of the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs' board of directors; O. Tom Blanks, who made a spirited but unsuccessfully bid for sheriff in the early 70s; Dexter Brooks, a Pembroke attorney; Dr. Dalton Brooks, head of institutional research at PSU; and Herman Dial, noted earlier, who has since denied any interest in the seat.

The successor will be named by Governor Jim Hunt after receiving a recommendation from the legislative committees of Robeson, Hoke, and Scotland County's Democratic Parties. Wyvis Oxendine and Landa Gaddy, an Indian and Black respectively, represent Robeson County. The committees are allocated votes on a pro rate basis with Robeson County holding the majority of votes based on the overwhelming number of democratic voters and populace in Robeson County.

At press time Locklear still had not officially resigned by submitting an official letter of resignation to the local democratic party chairman

Locklear new 'Strike at Wind' GM



CARNELL LOCKLEAR

Carnell Locklear, 39, a native of Pembroke who attended Pembroke State University in 1961-62, is the new general manager of "Strike At The Wind," the outdoor Indian drama which will enter its sixth season next year.

Locklear, who graduated from Pembroke Senior High in 1960, has portrayed the role of "Boss Strong" for five years in the play. He plans to continue that role while serving as general manager.

In October the First American Showcase organization of Pembroke raised \$5,000, part of which was used to send Locklear to Hollywood for some auditions. After spending some two weeks there, he returned and said his auditions were "very positive but nothing definite had been decided."

His contract as general manager of "Strike At The Wind" began Dec. 1, and he plans to devote his full energies to making it a success. Locklear will be the fourth GM of "Strike At The Wind," succeeding Rock Kershaw.

"I am ready to sacrifice and to listen to any suggestions that will make the drama a success," he said. Locklear also wants to encourage everyone within a 60-mile radius of Pembroke to get behind the drama. He describes the play as "strong and unique, a drama in which the people who live in the Pembroke area act out the roles."

Prior to becoming GM of the drama, Locklear worked for the state of North Carolina for seven years. He served for the last three years as a field representative for the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development. The counties for which he was responsible were Harnett, Sampson, Bladen, Hoke, and Scotland.

He is very interested in the fact that Gov. Jim Hunt is encouraging the movie industry to film more movies in North Carolina. He hopes to work with a New York group which is talking of doing a documentary on the American Indians of North Carolina.

Locklear is married to Peggy Lee Locklear. They are parents of five children: Michelle, 11; Edwards, 10; Shawn, 8; Quennell, 6; and Wyndion, 4. "Strike At The Wind" has offices in Old Main.

PEOPLE AND PLACES AND THINGS

HIGHFILL RESIGNS AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At the Nov. 20 Council of Governments Board meeting,

Executive Director John V. Highfill tendered his resignation to the board effective Jan. 2, 1981. Highfill has been with the COG since January of 1974 and stated that he had seen a lot of changes and that "improvements still need to be made, but it is a strong and increasingly effective organization well-prepared for the future." He said that he will be parting with some sense of loss at leaving the work of regional councils and the many friendships and associations he has enjoyed over the years, but he was confident of the successful future of the COG since "the COG Board and your member governments are more positive and supportive now toward the COG concept than I dared hope a few years ago." He stated, "I deeply appreciate your long support of my staff leadership and, equally important, your support of the COG concept. However, over the last couple of years I have begun to find less challenge and a limited opportunity to learn and grow as a professional administrator and planner."

The Board unanimously accepted his resignation with deep regret and unanimously voted to give him a resolution of appreciation and commendation for his dedicated work with the council.

The COG Board has advertised the position locally and nationally with applications due by Feb. 2, 1981. A screening committee of the Board will establish a selection criteria and then interview a limited number of applicants in Feb. or March.

911 COMES TO LUMBERTON

On Dec. 15, 1980, the City of Lumberton will inaugurate its 911 telephone system in cooperation with Southern Bell telephone. The 911 number will be the second in Robeson County following the Town of Fairmont. This concept allows any person in the county with the 738 or 739 exchange to dial the three digit number and be put in immediate contact with either fire, police or rescue personnel. This system is significantly faster and easier than the normal seven digit number which 911 replaces, since residents do not have to look up a number but can easily remember 911. Also, persons trying to call the number at night in the dark or who are blind can more easily find the 911 digits on their telephone than they could find the normal 7 digit number.

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT IS EVIDENT



The Christmas Spirit is evident at the Lumberton Correctional Unit too. A number of community people joined the Eagle Claw Jaycees Friday for a number of festive activities, including home cooked barbeque and other niceties following talent presentations by Carnell Locklear, the irrepressible "Boss Strong" of "Strike at the Wind" fame and now general manager of the popular outdoor drama; Miss Lumbee, Brigitte Brayboy; her chaperone, Mrs. Florence Ransom; Sue Curtin, a volunteer; and the inmates themselves.

The Christmas extravaganza was organized by the Inmate Jaycee club-the Eagle Claw Jaycees and Ms. Nora Hunt and her staff. Ms. Hunt is program director at the unit; Harry Mitchell is program supervisor.

It is rumored that Santa Claus appeared at the unit later in the afternoon. Shown (left to right) are Sue Curtin, Nora Hunt, Carnell Locklear, Ms. Florence Ransom, Miss Lumbee-Brigitte Brayboy, and Harry Mitchell.

An Update — Christmas Appeal

The Christmas appeal for Lumbee Regional Development Association's (LRDA) Community Food and Nutrition Project is not final yet; monies are still being received as we go to press early because of Christmas falling on a Thursday this year.

We are publishing early (actually on Tuesday although the issue is still officially dated Thursday, December 25, 1980) so that we may share the Christmas season with our families.

We will give a final accounting in next week's issue of The Carolina Indian Voice. To date more than \$1100.00 has been raised for the emergency fund of this fine program-LRDA's Community Food and Nutrition Project. Thanks to all of you for sharing with those less fortunate than yourselves this Christmas season. Your giving is what Christmas is all about.

Merry Christmas to all of you.

The offices of The Carolina Indian Voice will be closed Wednesday (Dec. 24) and Thursday (Dec. 25- Christmas day).

The offices of The Carolina Indian Voice and Superior Office Supplies will re-open Friday, December 26, 1980.

Holiday Hours

The Robeson County Public Library will be closed for the Christmas Holiday on December 24, 25, 26, and 27. The library will be open Monday, December 29 from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. and Tuesday, December 30 from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. The library will be open December 29, 30, 31 and closed on New Year's Day, Jan. 1.

TURNER ELECTED TO LEAGUE BOARD

Lumberton City Councilman Dr. E.B. Turner was elected to the Board of Directors of the North Carolina League of Municipalities as the representative from the 7th district. Dr. Turner assumed his responsibilities for the second year at the League's 71st Annual Convention in Raleigh last October.

JOY TO ALL



"Make a joyful noise unto the
Lord. . ." Singing loud and clear
and all together . . .

"Merry Christmas everyone!"