

"Building Communicative Bridges
In A Tri-Racial Setting"

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LUMBERTON CITY SCHOOLS EXPECTED TO LOSE IN FEDERAL COURT

BY BRUCE BARTON

Raleigh - A three-judge federal court in Raleigh has told Lumbee River Legal Services and the American Civil Liberties Union that their clients are entitled to relief from Voting Rights violations committed by the Lumberton City School Board. Julian T. Pierce, Executive Director of Lumbee River Legal Services, and Laughlin McDonald of the American Civil Liberties Union, represented the plaintiffs in the Federal District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina on Tuesday.

Plaintiffs filed their complaints in federal court last December. They claimed that the annexations known as Lakewood Estates, Barker Ten Mile, Clyburn Pines and Country Club into the Lumberton City Schools in 1967 and 1969 were in violation of the Voting Rights Act and had been formally objected to by the U.S. Attorney General in 1975. Since 1975, the Lumberton City School Board has sought on three separate occasions to have the objections removed. The U.S. Attorney General has steadfastly refused

to remove his objections, the latest refusal being in April, 1981. A panel of three judges, including the Honorable Dickson Phillips, Frank T. Dupree, and W. Earl Britt heard plaintiffs Motion for Summary Judgment. Julian T. Pierce, counsel for the plaintiffs, argued that the U.S. Attorney General had found that these annexations had a discriminatory purpose in that the school boundary lines were drawn in a convoluted and meandering fashion to exclude Indians and Blacks in order to permit white students in these annexed areas to attend predominantly white Lumberton City Schools. The defendants, the Lumberton City School Board, represented by John Campbell and Osborne Lee, conceded that the U.S. Attorney General had objected to the annexations as discriminatory. Judge Phillips stated that the defendants, the Lumberton City School Board, should have received approval from the United States Department of Justice before annexing these areas. The Lumberton

City School Board, instead, went ahead and annexed these areas in violation of federal law. Lumbee River Legal Services and the American Civil Liberties Union argued that the annexations should be decreed null and void and that voters residing in the Lakewood Estates, Barker Ten Mile, Clyburn Pines, Country Club areas not be permitted to vote in the Lumberton City School Board elections. The three judge court asked the parties to draw up proposed orders which seems to indicate that the plaintiffs are entitled to relief. According to Pierce, at press time, the Plaintiffs Proposed Order will request that two of the members now seated on the Lumberton City School Board who live in the annexed areas be removed from the Lumberton City Board of Education. Secondly, the plaintiffs will request that the Lumberton City School Board be ordered not to implement the annexations and school boundary lines that separate the Robeson County School System and the Lumberton City School

System be returned to the boundary lines existing prior to the annexations. Further more, Pierce stated that the Plaintiffs will seek to have residents of the annexed areas enjoined, or prevented, from voting in the Lumberton City School Board elections next month and in the future from serving on the Lumberton City School Board.

W. EARL BRITT ONE OF FEDERAL JUDGES HEARING THE CASE

A number of incredulous brows have been raised because of W. Earl Britt's participation in the case as one of the three judge panel. Britt was actively involved in the educational and legal battles of the '60s and '70s as the attorney for Robeson County in the nefarious "double vote" suit and also was the attorney of record for the Fairmont Schools when the unit seemingly violated the voting rights act in 1969 by, in part, de-annexing Fairgrove School and not submitting the plan to the U.S. Justice Department as required. Britt was a foe for years of those who espoused breaking "double voting" in Robeson County. Double voting was an evil political devise whereby voters residing within one of the then five city school units (Maxton has since merged with the Robeson County Administrative School Unit; the other city units are Red Springs, St. Pauls, Fairmont and Lumberton) voted on their own respective board of education makeup and, at the self-same time, voted on the membership of the board of education for the Robeson County School Unit. They, in effect, "double voted." The federal courts ruled on the case and threw "double-voting" out in 1974, ruling that the political devise "discriminated against" the mostly Indian county residents who resided and voted within the confines of the county school system.

Britt, as attorney for the Fairmont School Unit, seems to have been party to a violation of the 1965 Voting Rights Act because the 1969 annexation (or more properly the de-annexation of Fairgrove School) was not submitted to the justice department until 1974, some five years after the fact. But the irony is that the justice department did not object to the annexation by Fairmont even though it was not submitted to the justice department as demanded by the federal laws prior to implementation. And the justice department did not seemingly object to Fairmont giving back Fairgrove to the county even though Fairgrove was an "all Indian" school at the time. The Fairmont annexation covered about half of Sterling's Township in 1969. Whites, at the time, seemed desperately to be trying to get out of the county system which was (and still is) predominantly Indian. After taking Fairgrove out of the Fairmont School Unit (mostly white) the school unit, via HEW's 1970 School Desegregation Plan, closed all school lines, trapping many Indian students in place. The irony is that Fairgrove School has since closed and been merged with Rowland, creating South Robeson High School. For the above reasons, and other legal corollaries, Britt was expected to remove himself from hearing the suit. Unfortunately he did not do so and Robesonians of all shades and hues are watching him closely. He is bound to make everybody mad and subject himself to ethical if not legal questions by sitting in judgement of a situation he helped create.

Memorial Service for Ralph T. Seuhr

BY CONNEE BRAYBOY

A memorial service was held at Prospect School on Monday afternoon for Ralph T. Seuhr. Mr. Seuhr succumbed to a cerebral hemorrhage on Thursday morning. Officiating at the service were Rev. Bob Mangum, pastor of Prospect United Methodist Church, Rev. Wilton Cummings, fellow teacher of the deceased. And comments and prayer were offered by William C. Chavis, assistant principal, James A. Jones, principal, Jennings Bullard, teacher. Few people have endeared themselves to a community the way Ralph T. Seuhr did at Prospect. He performed his student teaching there and continued to teach there for ten years. He had the rare distinction of being liked by faculty, students and community. A feeling of sadness filled the gym as fellow teachers spoke of his dedication and concern for the students. Many tears were shed by teachers, faculty and staff, students and patrons of the community and school. It was very evident that Mr. Seuhr will be sorely missed by all who knew him. Words always seem so inadequate at these times, but Rev. Wilton Cummings seemed to say it all when he quoted his favorite book: "Be ye also ready for in such an hour as ye think not..."

PSU Fund-raising Details Page 3

Indian Heritage Week Celebrated

by Beverly Lindsey

Fort Bragg-The JFK Center celebrated "Native American Heritage Day" Sept. 24, with a fantastic musical program presented by Lumbee Regional Development Association's Lumbee River Singers and Dancers from Pembroke, NC.

The theme was amusical tribute "Welcome to Our Homeland." One of the guest performers was Jackie Jacobs Miss Lumbee.

Singers Miriam Oxendine and Willie Lowry rendered several popular songs, and the Lumbee River dancers and singers performed several musical numbers climaxed by "I Like Calling North Carolina Home," and "We are Lumbee."

Prof. Adolph Dial, from the PSU faculty, welcomed the audience and gave a talk on "Milestones in American Indian History."

The special celebration at Fort Bragg was part of the state-wide recognition of Indian Heritage Week.

LRDA participated in the festivities with a reception and presentation last Thursday at Pembroke. Serving as hostesses were Miss Lumbee, Jackie Jacobs and Little Miss Lumbee, Tara Sampson.

Edicts from both Pembroke and Lumberton were presented to LRDA in recognition of Indian heritage Week Sept. 20-26. Pembroke Mayor Pete Jacobs and Lumberton City Councilman Glenn Maynor presented the official commendations.

The reception at LRDA's Annex complex was part of a week long observance locally. Other activities included a talent show, museum tours, open houses and an old fashioned gospel sing last Sunday afternoon.



Jackie Jacobs, "Miss Lumbee", made a special appearance at the John F. Kennedy Center's tribute to Native

American Heritage Day, Sept. 24. [U.S. Army Photo by SFC Ron Freeman]



Willie Lowry and the Lumbee River Singers were part of the musical tribute, "Welcome to Our Homeland". The Lumbee Indians from Pembroke,

NC were part of the John F. Kennedy Center's program honoring Native American Heritage Day. [U.S. Army Photo by SFC Ron Freeman]

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GARAGE & TIRE SERVICE

P.S.H.S. WARRIOR OF THE WEEK

After being idle last week, the Pembroke Warriors return to action again this week against traditional rival Prospect in the last non-conference game of the season.

As it has been since the series began, tomorrow's game shapes up to be an emotional one for both sides. For the Warriors, it is a chance to gain revenge for consecutive losses over the last two years at the hands of the Cats. For Prospect, it is a chance to get their season on track after going winless thus far.

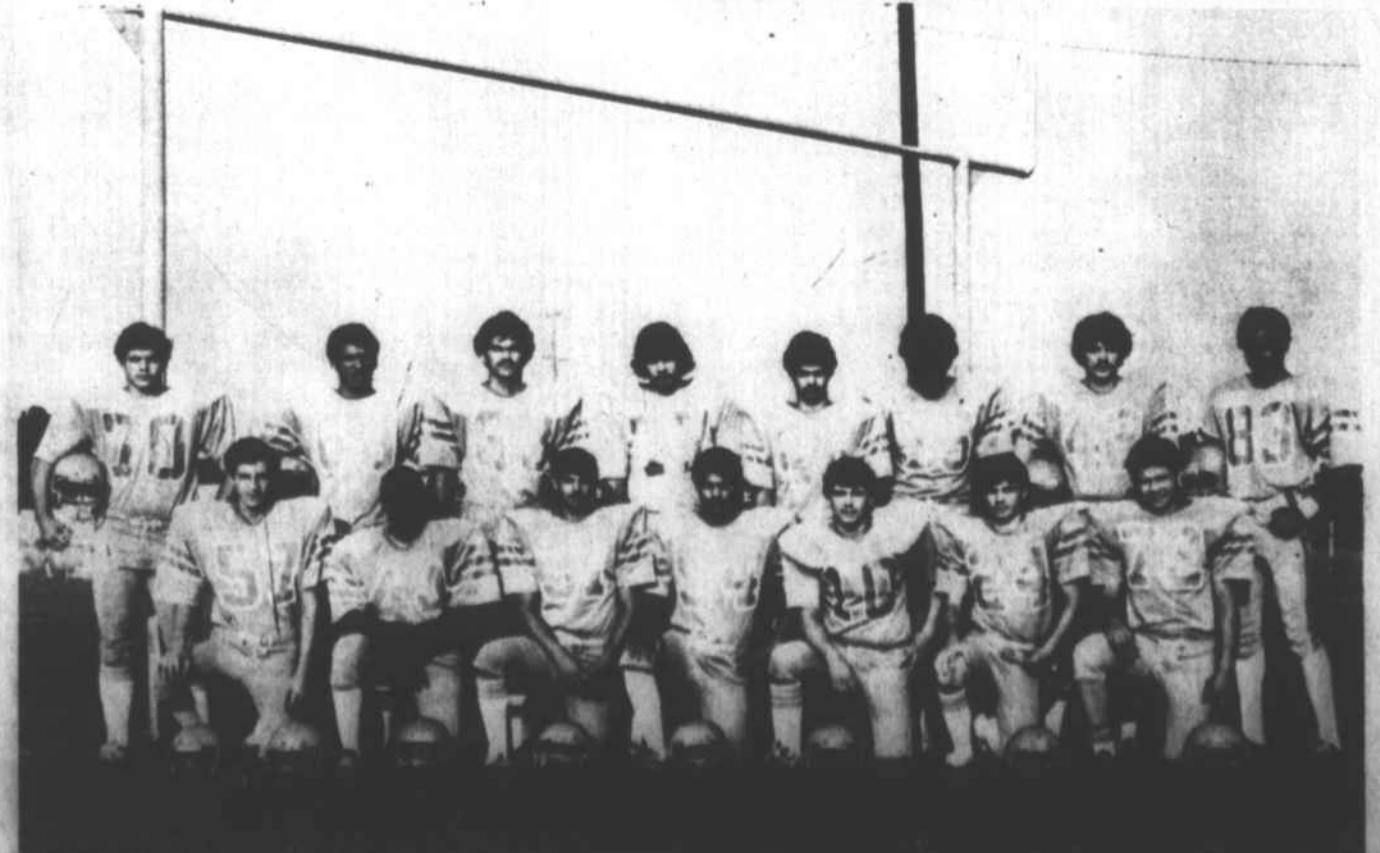
The week's layoff has not seemed to have hurt the Warriors. Practices have gone well and the team's intensity appears high. It has also allowed injuries incurred at Gumberry to heal. The team should go into the game with no major ones. The only question mark may be defensive lineman Randall Jacobs who has been a standout all season. Jacobs injured a knee in the Gumberry game and had to be taken out. The coaching staff seems to believe he will be able to see some action Friday.

In an interview Monday, James H. Locklear, Pembroke athletic director and defensive coach indicated that the Warriors are planning nothing new for this game. "We're going to continue with what we've been doing. At least on defense. It's worked all right so far." What has worked is an aggressive defense that has allowed only 20 points total in four games.

The biggest problems for the Warriors have been penalties and turnovers. In three of the four games thus far the Warriors averaged nearly 100 penalty yards per game and had offensive drives stopped by costly turnovers. A lack of intensity and a loss of concentration are probably at the root of these problems. Intensity should be no problem in this game.

Some observers have suggested another possible problem. Could the Warriors possibly be looking beyond the Prospect game to next week when they face the state's third ranked 3-A team from Clinton? To this question, Coach Locklear was definite. "No. This game (Prospect) is too big." Just how big remains to be seen.

The Senior Varsity Football Team Is Collective "Warrior of the Week"



The senior varsity football players, pictured above will try for their first victory against the Prospect Cats since they have been playing, when the Pembroke Senior High Warriors host Prospect tomorrow night at Pembroke. Pictured from left to right (front row) John Dial, Paul Smith, Bobby Sampson, Chris Graham, Anthony Locklear, Michael McCartney, Terry Deese. (Back row) Randal Jacobs, Terry Jones, John N. Oxendine, Ray Bevington, Bryan Maynor, Roscoe Charles, Wayne Jones, Ryan Turk. Not pictured: Duayne Locklear and Kenny Chavis.