

"Building Communicative Bridges
In A Tri-Racial Setting"

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LUMBERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNEXATIONS NOT ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN LAST TUESDAY'S VOTING

Compiled from Staff Reports

On Friday, October 30, 1981, the United States Supreme Court stopped residents of the Lumberton School District annexation areas outside of the city limits from participating in this past Tuesday's election for the Lumberton City Board of Education. The top court decision over-ruled the decision of a lower court panel consisting of Circuit Judge Dickson Phillips and district judges Franklin Dupree and W. Earl Britt (Britt is a Robeson native just recently appointed to the federal bench).

majority Indian schools of the county, including Magnolia and Piney Grove. After extensive contact with local residents and after personally viewing the meandering, convoluted lines, federal officials concluded that the intent and purpose of the annexations was to insure the inclusion of the predominately white subdivisions and areas adjacent to the City of Lumberton while excluding predominately Indian or Black areas.

UNEQUAL STANDARD FOR RELIEF

Some Background
Robeson County is one of 39 counties in North Carolina subject to the provisions of the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965. Under the Act, local units of government, such as the Lumberton City Board of Education, must obtain federal approval for all changes in the law affecting voting, such as annexations to the local unit, before the changes can be enforced. The United States Attorney General is charged with the responsibility of enforcing the Act and must determine that such changes will not adversely affect the voting power of minorities before they may be approved. The Act was virtually ignored in Robeson until 1974 when Dexter Brooks, while a summer intern with the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice, catalogued for federal officials the wholesale local violations of the federal law. At the time Brooks was attending the University of North Carolina School of Law in Chapel Hill; he is now in the general practice of law in Pembroke and coincidentally represents the Robeson County Board of Education.

At the same time that these annexations were occurring many Indians, especially in the western part of the county, were being forced to attend non-Indian schools located in the various city units instead of their traditional schools in the county school district. This requirement lead to near violence at Prospect School in 1970, nevertheless, local legislators were not disposed to grant to the Indians the same relief that was granted to whites. While the whites were seeking to get into the city school units, the Indians were seeking to get out! It should also be noted, however, that the Indian residents in the Piney Grove area were seeking to be annexed to the Lumberton City School Unit in contrast to the Indians in western Robeson. The result was the same in each case, however, as the wishes of the whites were granted while the wishes of the Indians were denied.

A TALE OF TWO LAWYERS

Interesting enough, about this time, a similar annexation occurred to the Fairmont School District in Sterlings Township, however, this annexation was submitted to and approved by federal officials. The Fairmont Board of Education was represented then by W. Earl Britt (who as a federal judge is now sitting in judgment of the Lumberton case) and the annexation was approved at a time when local folks were less knowledgeable concerning the provisions of the Voting Rights Act. The residents of the Lumberton annexed area were represented by W. Osborne Lee, Jr., a Lumberton attorney who is well-known to our readers because of his unsuccessful, hotly-contested legal efforts on behalf of Alfred W. Cook against the Town of Pembroke. Mr. Lee did not see that the annexations were properly submitted to the justice department at the time of their occurrence and, as a consequence, seemingly, must bear much of the blame for the subsequent

federal disapproval. Many persons were surprised, some pleasantly, when the Lumberton Board of Education retained Mr. Lee to assist their own experienced counsel John Whisart Campbell to defend against the voting rights suit brought by Lumberton River Legal Services headquartered in Pembroke. As some saw it, Lumberton had hired the very man to get them out of the mess who had gotten them into it in the first place; perhaps this is why Mr. Britt now sits on the bench rather than Mr. Lee.

POLITICAL EFFORTS BY LUMBERTON

According to knowledgeable observers, this is the first time that any case arising out of Robeson County has been carried to the United States Supreme Court. What they have been unable to obtain through the legal process, however, the Lumbertonians are now seeking to obtain through political persuasion. According to informed sources, "Obbie" Lee was recently a visitor to the Department of Justice in Washington, DC in the company of Ed Johnson and Tom Gibson, two local conservative political pols. Johnson is the Republican County Chairman and a life insurance salesman while Gibson was an unsuccessful candidate for sheriff in 1978. Each is also a member of the local right-wing political action committee - the Conservative Response. Given the Republican administration in Washington, seemingly political bands of all featherings will be flocking together in an effort to do politically what they have been unable to do legally. John Merritt, Congressman Charlie Rose's Chief Administrative Assistant, who also attended the meeting, termed the meeting "highly irregular" and, upon finding Johnson and Gibson there, "against my better judgment."

Again, according to informed sources, Lee tried to persuade the Justice Department that Lumberton was even handed because of the annexation of a Black area in South Lumberton also. In this regard, it should be noted that the Black area was however an annexation to and by the city proper and not just to the school district, thus, the Black area is now within the city limits unlike the contested annexations. It would seem that Mr. Lee is comparing apples with oranges in his desperate efforts to persuade justice to rescind its objection.

WHERE THE SITUATION STANDS NOW

The United States Supreme Court has addressed itself to only one issue in the case: that the residents of the annexed areas may no longer vote in Lumberton School Board elections. As a necessary consequence, however, such residents are no longer qualified to serve on that school board, thus, Ms. Dorothy Powers was ruled an ineligible candidate in Tuesday's voting. The same would also be true of another member presently sitting on the board. The issue yet undecided is whether the students who resided in the annexed areas may continue to attend Lumberton Schools or whether they must attend the county schools. Knowledgeable sources are not too optimistic about the plaintiffs prevailing on the issue before the same local federal court, however, they are quick to point out that an appeal from such an adverse decision would again go directly to the U.S. Supreme Court where the odds are rated at better than even. It should be noted for local politicians that Justice Sandra O'Day Conner, a Republican and President Reagan's only appointee to the court, voted with the majority to enjoin the annexed areas from further voting. They do point out, however, that such an appeal will not be heard as quickly as the last time since the annexed areas will no longer be voting in further elections.

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VETERANS DAY SET FOR NOV. 11

THANK YOU!

WEAR IT PROUDLY

It Shows You CARE!



Give generously!
Wear it proudly!

VFW Post 2843 sponsors an observance of Veterans Day each year. There have been many activities slated for Nov. 11, 1981.

The observance will begin at 10 a.m. Wednesday morning when the largest parade in Post history will travel through

down town Pembroke. According to Post Commander Bobby D. Locklear, more than 70 units are expected to participate. Immediately following the parade, the flag raising ceremony will be held in the Town Park.

Special guest speaker for this occasion

will be Harvey D. Bien, Major, Infantry, Assistant Professor of Military Science. Major Bien is a native of Independence, Mississippi and is a 1970 graduate of the University of Mississippi. As an undergraduate at the university, Major Bien received a Bachelor of Arts Degree with a concentration of Biology. He was also designated as a Distinguished Military Graduate from the Army ROTC Program and he was commissioned into the U.S. Army as a Regular Army Second Lieutenant on May 31, 1970.

Major Bien has served on Active Duty since his graduation from college, and his assignments include being stationed with the 82nd Airborne Division, Ft. Bragg, NC; the 2d Infantry Division, Camp Casey, Korea; the 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized), Ft. Carson, CO; and the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), Harvey Barracks, West Germany; and the 1st Region ROTC Instructor Group, Campbell University.

Major Bien is presently assigned as the Assistant Professor of Military Science at Pembroke State University, and he has held this position since October 1, 1980.

The Honorable James A. Jacobs, Mayor of the Town of Pembroke, has proclaimed the Week of Nov. 9-14 as Buddy Poppy Week in Pembroke. He has commended the purchase of poppies to

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

by Steve Tyner

Most observers expected the Warrior's game with East Bladen to be a tough one. Pembroke was 5-1-2 and E. Bladen was 5-3. Both teams were tied at 2-1 in conference play. The Warriors were ranked 10th in the state 3-A polls and no doubt East Bladen would have loved to knock them off.

Incumbents return to office in Pembroke

Pembroke-Mayor James A. "Pete" Jacobs had the fight of his life on his hands but he managed to eak out a narrow victory over his challengers, former Mayor Reggie Strickland and Sam Dial who presently serves on the council.

Jacobs won by the narrowest of margins with 263 votes; Dial garnered 253 and Strickland finished close with 240. It was the closest mayor's race in Pembroke's history.

Incumbents Larry T. Brooks and Milton Hunt easily retained their council seats with 440 and 426 votes respectively. Harry Oxendine gained 325 votes in his first try for public office. And Henry Smith finished last with 262 votes. The campaign, always spirited and some times bitter, brought out 795 voters.

IN OTHER RACES IN THE COUNTY...

In Lumberton, two incumbents bit the dust as newcomers Coble Wilson Jr. and Robert Hardin won council seats besting Bruce W. Davis (Precinct 8) and O'Neill Bennett (Precinct 3) respectively. Mitchell Taylor in Precinct 2 did not receive any competition and Hubert Gore won easily in Precinct 5 over Atlas Hickman 206-107.

Wilson beat Davis in Precinct 8 389 to 249 and Hardin won easily over Bennett 379-196.

With Ms. Dorothy Powers ruled ineligible to vote or run as a contestant Herbie Oxendine (incumbent), John P. Parker, William Brian and Sidney Locks won uncontested seats on the Lumberton Board of Education.

Fairmont returned incumbent Mayor W.B. Webster and incumbent councilmen Calvin Haggins, Rudolph Currie and Charles Kemp to office. Webster soundly whipped challenger D.W. Williamson 618 to 85. Haggins led the balloting for the three council seats with 591. Currie tallied 456 and Kemp 363. Finishing out of the money were O. Howell and Bryon Tedder with 231 and 321 respectively.

by Steve Tyner

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scored in the next play with Winfred Johnson tying the score with his extra point kick at 8:51 of the second quarter. Neither team could move the ball consistently for the rest of the quarter until before the half. East Bladen began driving toward a score with about two minutes to go. Several long runs put the Cougars on the eighteen with plenty of time for at least a field goal. On a second and two, quarterback Reeves broke through the Warrior line, eluding defenders. Luck once more smiled on the Warriors, as Reeves fumbled just outside the goal line. The ball rolled into the end zone where Bobby Sampson fell on it for the Warriors, killing the Cougar scoring threat.

In the second half, the Warriors demonstrated why they deserve their ranking in the state 3-A polls. Taking the opening kickoff, they used a balanced attack of runs and passes to move 90 Yards for a score with Anthony Locklear passing to Kenny Chavis. A try for a two-point conversion off of a faked kicked, normally successful, was not so this time as a Cougar defender picked of the pass. The Warriors took a 13-7 lead while running off over nine minutes on the clock.

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This week's "Warrior of the Week" at Pembroke Senior High is Devy Bell. Bell was instrumental in the 20-10 victory over East Bladen last Friday night catching several key third down passes that kept warrior drives going. For the game, Devy caught five passes for 66 yards.

The Carolina Indian Voice sponsors a \$250 Christmas Shopping Spree

...as part of subscription drive

PEMBROKE--The Carolina Indian Voice is kicking off a massive subscription drive this week which is sure to have considerable interest with our readership. It is our Christmas gift to everyone.

Beginning November 5, the Carolina Indian Voice will begin "keeping a list" like Ol' Santa. We will keep "a list" of those who take out a new subscription, or renew their subscription to The Carolina Indian Voice until December 17. On December 18 we will hold a drawing at the offices of the Carolina Indian Voice to determine our "\$250 Christmas Shopping Spree" winner. You do not have to be present to win!

The drawing will be open to all those who renew or take out a new subscription between November 5 and December 17. If you already have a subscription you may renew your existing subscription and extend it for a year. Our lucky winner will win a check for \$250 made out to either of our three major food store advertisers, Bos, Piggly Wiggly, or Harris Teeter of Red Springs. Sign up now and take a chance on winning our \$250 shopping spree at Piggly Wiggly, or Bos in Pembroke, or Harris Teeter in Red Springs.

This is our way of saying "Thank you!" to our readership and to our advertisers. The contest is open to Robeson County residents only.

The rules are simple. Take out a new subscription or renew your existing subscription. Too, the check to our winner can only be redeemable at either Piggly Wiggly in Pembroke, Bo's in Pembroke, or Harris Teeter in Red Springs for the purchase of food. This way we can say "Thank you" to you the public and our wonderful food store advertisers, Bo's, Piggly Wiggly, or Harris Teeter.

This is our way of saying "Merry Christmas!" to all of you. We are thankful to you for your support in the past and we are looking forward to more readers to the Carolina Indian Voice, the chronicler of the happenings and concerns of a good and vibrant people.

See our advertisement on page 9 in this issue of the Carolina Indian Voice.

See more Results Page 11