



# THE CAROLINA INDIAN VOICE

PEMBROKE, N.C.

T/S

"Building Communicative Bridges  
in A Tri-Racial Setting"

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ROBESON COUNTY

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Thursday, April 5, 1984

## ...A CLOSER LOOK

Rev. Oscar Cummings



Rev. Oscar Cummings

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** A special service was held at Branch Street United Methodist Church in Lumberton on February 26th to honor Rev. Oscar Cummings, considered by many to be the founder of the church. The following remarks are by Rev. Jerry Lowry, the dynamic pastor of Branch Street Methodist Church.

by Rev. Jerry Lowry

A local preacher was preaching the funeral of one of his members and he really was telling what kind of dynamic man Mr. Jim Fowler was. He kept praising and praising Jim for his greatness. Finally, the mother turned to her son and said, "Son, go there and lift the lid on that casket and see if that is your father." Sometimes people can live around a person all their life and never really know him. I feel that is the case today.

So, today, I want to introduce you to a man many of you do not really know. Most of you have watched him, heard him and spoke with him. You probably know more about his faults than the good he has done for mankind. However, it is very interesting and astounding what has been accomplished under this person's spiritual leadership and in his Christian pilgrimage. That person is Rev. Oscar Cummings.

There is a saying that says, "God does not drop churches out of the sky but out of men's hearts they arise." Rev. Cummings has been a man of visions and dreams. God called him to the service of ministry and he answered the call as Isaiah of old saying, "Lord, here am I, send me."

Leaving Sandy Plains United Methodist Church where he served faithfully until 1957, he headed out on his mission. In that year God gave him a vision to organize a Sunday School program at a tenant house on the Carl Livermore Farm near Red Springs where he lived and worked as a share-cropper. It was here that sixty-five (65) people gathered—standing room only. The little house was packed with persons hungry for God's

blessings and presence. It seemed that the fields were ripe unto harvest and laborers were few. They met and had glorious times together.

One should be aware that during this time in the history of the Native American Church there was a dire need for ministers. Many churches could not find ministers and what pastors that were available were spread pretty thin. Some churches had preaching service only once a month.

With the people having a glorious time, the work had to be carried on. Rev. Cummings arose to the occasion. Having seen the need and the burning desire of the people to establish a church, Bro. Oscar helped organize the following year what is now called New Philadelphus United Methodist Church with a charter membership of forty or more persons. After failing to secure any land or find anyone willing to sell land to build a church, they found a night club located a couple of miles from that small tenant house and purchased it. The place was converted into a place of worship.

The church grew as Rev. Cummings pastored from 1957-1962. He shares that this was probably the greatest time of his life as a local preacher. He remembers Rev. Bob Mangum getting so happy that he shouted all over the place on one occasion. They just had a glorious time together praising God. Also during his service at New Philadelphus, he received vital support from Ms. Rebecca Moddemog, an ordained minister from Indiana.

Then in 1962, he was approached by Rev. D.F. Lowry and Rev. Simeon F. Cummings, his brother, and asked to go to the Branch Street United Methodist Church in West Lumberton. Branch Street was first conceived by Rev. Cummings. He saw many needs in West Lumberton, an area in which he now resides. Perhaps the greatest need he envisioned was that of a Methodist Church for the people of his community. So, Rev. Cummings held an open air service on a vacant lot adjacent to the home where Mr. Chalmus Bullard was living. Approximately thirty to forty people attended. With such a great interest, he held services in a building behind his home until a place was secured.

Bro. Oscar then discussed this matter with Rev. D.F. Lowry. The two secured permission to use a vacant garage rent free to begin services in the summer of 1962. Finally, Rev. Lowry secured money to purchase the garage and a lot of land. The Rev. Ralph Baucom, a local Baptist minister, sold the church one lot and donated another for the proposed church.

The work gradually bore fruit and in June of 1963 Branch Street United Methodist Church was formally organized with 15 members. Sister Mary Margaret Hunt was the first member. The church then became a part of the Sandy Plains Circuit with Rev. Robert Mangum serving as pastor and Rev. Cummings serving as associate. He served in this capacity from 1962-65. Today, as we sit here and see this vision come true, we glorify God for this

church. It now has 164 members and is getting ready to double to size of its present facility.

Following the Branch Street adventure, Rev. Cummings' ministry led him to Hickory Grove United Methodist Church in Clio, S.C. Under his leadership this church reached an attendance of over 100 persons. As far as we know this has never been topped. Also, he was instrumental in securing additional land to build an educational building for Hickory Grove. He served this church very effectively from 1965-69. Then in 1969 he was asked to serve Fairview United Methodist Church in Hamer, S.C. He served this appointment too with great zeal and vigor. Again we might add that he was fruitful in helping to secure an educational building for Fairview as well.

Finally, he concluded his ministry with the United Methodist Church in his return to Branch Street in 1974-75. At which time he retired. But, in reality he has not retired. He is still on the battlefield fighting the good fight of faith. For example, just recently Rev. Cummings was invited to Collins Chapel United Methodist Church to preach in a revival and 10 persons accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Revivals seem to be an area of ministry he still enjoys.

Rev. Cummings, now a sprightly 74, and his dear and loving wife, Flora, are the proud parents of eight boys and five girls. Their ministry speaks for itself. How many ministers do you know who

have effective organized two churches that are as prosperous as New Philadelphus and Branch Street? The son-writer was right. "Let the work I have done, O'Lord speak for me." Rev. Cummings was not ashamed of the gospel and his life has reflected this motto from 1957-1975. Those of us who know him still are inspired by his life and work.

See Tribute to Rev. Oscar Cummings Page 10

## Political Rally planned in Saddletree

The Saddletree Jaycees and concerned citizens of the community are sponsoring a political rally the weekend of April 7, 1984.

Festivities will include a bar-b-q plate sale, a public forum at 1 p.m. Saturday and a Country and Western dance, as well as other scheduled activities.

All candidates are encouraged to contact Mr. Hammonds for scheduling at the public forum by calling 739-4973.

## Pembroke Hearings at Pembroke Council Meeting

PEMBROKE-The Pembroke Town Council conducted two public hearings Monday night preceding the regular scheduled council meeting.

One hearing was concerning the proposed \$642,786 Community Development Grant proposal ticketed for the Jones Street area. The grant would encompass mostly housing rehabilitation and drainage. This is the third time the town has applied for the grant, with this year's deadline being April 16.

The other hearing was concerning a request by Lumbee Developers, represented by C.A. Maynor, to change a 12 acre tract of property fronting Highway 711 from RA to C3 Zoning classification. C3 is a highway business district. The tract of land is between Wonderland Day Care Center and LRDA's Annex. The 8 faceted development will include commercial development as well as components for recreational use by the public and possibly governmental agencies. The long range development was tabled for 30 days to await a recommendation by the planning board.

A number of residents in the area appeared to make sure their anti-public housing sentiments were expressed but Maynor assured them that his primary interest at the moment was to receive approval for his commercial development on the front of a larger tract he and his associates control that extends to the Pembroke Elementary School.

In Other Matters... The council heard from County Librarian Bob Fisher who discussed the possibility of establishing a branch of the County Library in Pembroke, if a site can be found and a stipend of \$5600 secured. Fisher said the library could possibly be open 20 hours a week to begin with. Councilman Henry Ward Oxendine seemed to like the idea saying, "I believe our people would support this if we went to them with the facts and asked them to help... I have a lot of confidence in our people." Councilman J.C. Thomas also said, "I believe there is a definite need for this."

Mayor Hunt suggested the town talk to some citizens and possibly appoint a library commission at the next meeting.

## Chamber of Commerce Meets Tonight

The Pembroke Chamber of Commerce meets tonight at Pembroke's Town Hall, beginning at 7 p.m. President Bruce Barton said that a major portion of the program would be involved with committee reports from the various committees, including Town & Campus, Budget, Long Range & Planning, Education, Membership, Annual Meetings & Annual Banquet, and community projects.

Refreshments will also be served, and reports will be given on what the

There the matter rested. The council also discussed the continuing budgetary shortfall at the district courthouse, and gave Mayor Hunt permission to approach the county manager and appropriate officials and tell them "to reluctantly come across with some rent monies or move out," according to a suggestion by Councilman Larry Brooks.

The county recently cut out rent monies being paid to the town for office space for three probation officials who are housed in the courthouse. The probation officers are assigned to the Pembroke, Rowland and Maxton areas.

The town also approved placing of the county tax liens in the **Carolina Indian Voice** to begin April 9.

And Mayor Milton Hunt informed the council that there is a strong possibility that Presidential Candidate Jesse Jackson will make a campaign stop in the Town in the near future, according to his campaign people in the area.

## Mayor asks input on Library in Pembroke

Dear Pembroke Resident, Mr. Bob Fisher, Robeson County Librarian, appeared before the Pembroke Town Council Monday night to discuss the possibility of establishing a branch of the Robeson County Public Library in Pembroke.

I would appreciate hearing from you concerning this matter. Pembroke would be the third town in Robeson County to have a branch of the county library; the others being Fairmont and Maxton.

Would you like to have a library in Pembroke? Would you be against such a possibility? Let us hear from you. Your views on this matter, and all items of interest, is sincerely solicited and appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Milton Hunt, Mayor  
Town of Pembroke

## PEOPLE AND PLACES AND THINGS

**JUNIOR TAR HEEL BASEBALL ADULT COACHES SOUGHT**  
The Robeson County Recreation and Park Commission is looking for adults who would like to coach a Junior Tar Heel Baseball team for 13-14 year olds in the following locations: Littlefield, Maxton, Pembroke (2 teams), Parkton and Prospect.  
Please call 738-9061 or 738-9595.

**PLATE SALE AT DEEP BRANCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
Deep Branch Elementary School's Spring Plate Sale, consisting of Southern Fried Chicken and Bar-B-Que, will be held Friday, April 6, 1984, beginning at 11 a.m. and lasting until 7 p.m.  
Plates are \$3. Sandwiches will sell for \$1.50.  
Principal is John N. Sampson.

**SUPPORTERS OF LARRY W. CHAVIS, SR. FOR ROBESON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION PLATE SALE**  
There will be a Chicken and Barbecue Plate Sale at Deep Branch Fire Department, Saturday, April 7, sponsored by supporters of Larry W. Chavis, Sr. for the Robeson County Board of Education.  
There will also be a Plate Sale for Mr. Chavis in the Green Grove area at Shirley Hunt's home, behind Green Grove School, on the same day.

**UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HOLDS PRE-SCHOOL CLINIC ROWLAND-Union Elementary School will hold a pre-school clinic on April 12, 1984, at 9 a.m., in the school's media center. Parents who have a child that will be 5 years old on or before October 16, 1984 are encouraged to come and enroll their child. Parents are required to bring the child's birth certificate and shot record. It is not necessary to bring the child.**  
Union Elementary School will hold its final PTA meeting on April 17, 1984 at 7:30 p.m. Following a short business session and the election of officers, teachers will be available for conferences in their classrooms.

**JAMES HARRIS MEETS WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN**  
James Harris, advisor to the North Carolina State ASC Committee, met with President Ronald Reagan recently to discuss the latest developments in agricultural programs and policies.  
It was fitting that Harris met with the President on March 20, which is National Agriculture Day, to recognize agriculture for its amazing record of progress and achievement.

Every American should be proud of this nation's tremendous record of agricultural achievements. It's a vital part of what makes America the great country that it is.  
Harris was attending a meeting in Washington of State Executive Directors and State ASC Committee Members who administer farm programs through the USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

**TOLL-FREE PHONE NUMBER PROVIDES INFORMATION FOR TORNADO VICTIMS**  
Disaster officials established a toll-free Disaster Information Hotline today which provides necessary information for those affected by the recent tornadoes.  
Those needing assistance may call the following number between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., seven days a week:  
North Carolina only: 1-800-682-2675.

Trained operators at this number can provide general information and answer questions about where Disaster Assistance Centers are located; about transportation arrangements for elderly and handicapped persons and other information about disaster aid available.

Gov. Jim Hunt encouraged North Carolinians affected by the tornadoes to call the Hotline. "This is one of the quickest ways our citizens can get the information they need," he said.

"We have found that having one toll-free number in the state is very effective," added Paul Hull, federal coordinating officer with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**OXENDINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLATE SALE**  
There will be a Barbecue and Chicken Plate Sale at Oxendine Elementary School on Friday, April 13, 1984, from 12-8 p.m. The cost is \$3 per plate.  
The public is invited.

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF LUMBERTON DONATES \$100 FOR "SPECIAL OUTFITS"**  
People talking to people; that's how things happen. And when it's about Very Special People, sometimes it can happen very quickly. Mrs. Rosa Sampson, the chairperson of the Very Special People Supporters, talked to Mr. Gene Warren on the campus of Pembroke State University. Mr. Warren talked to the Men's Fellowship Class of the First Baptist Church of Lumberton. They talked to their treasurer, Mr. Oscar T. Quick. And the Fellowship Class donated \$100 to help pay for "special outfits," clothing, caps, and shoes; for the 40 children who will participate in the Special Olympics in Greensboro, N.C., May 18-20. That all happened in 2 or 3 days, because it was for Very Special People.

The Fellowship Class of the First Baptist Church and the Very Special People Supporters, a support group working for the needs of special children and adults, want to support the Special Olympics Committee in their ongoing efforts to help special kids. There will be an opportunity for others in the community to assist in this effort with a Love Offering in the churches of the community on April 8.

**LOCAL "SPECIAL CHILDREN" TO PARTICIPATE IN SPECIAL OLYMPICS**  
On May 18-20, forty special children from Robeson County will participate in the statewide Special Olympics on the campus of North Carolina A & T State University in Greensboro, N.C.

These children are mentally or physically handicapped. Having been chosen because of their hard work and determination to reach high goals, they will represent Robeson County with their courage, endurance, and abilities. They need to know that we stand behind them as they strive to do their best. This year the Very Special People Supporters group would like to show their love and pride in their accomplishments by working with the Special Olympics Committee to raise money for this event.

These children exhibit a loving spirit and remarkable talent. Let's give them a chance to use this talent by lifting a love offering in your church on April 8.  
Please make your check payable to: Robeson County Special Olympics, c/o Joan Gardner, P.O. Box 1328, Robeson County Schools, Lumberton, N.C. 28358.

**SEE PREVIEW OF "STRIKE AT THE WIND" TELETHON FRIDAY AT NOON ON TV 40**  
PEMBROKE The technical crew of TV 40 was in the Pembroke area last week. They were at the Amphitheatre at Riverside Country Club where they were shooting various scenes from "Strike at the Wind", the local outdoor drama. The scenes will be shown on "Carolina Spotlight," hosted by Harold Tyndall on Friday, April 6, 1984 on TV 40 at 12 Noon.

For more information about the exciting outdoor drama, "Strike at the Wind", call 919/521-3112.

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Watch 'Strike at the Wind' Telethon Sunday 1-6 p.m. Fayetteville's TV-40

## Tornado Brings Destruction



**RED SPRINGS-**This is all that is left of United Pentecostal Holiness Church. It was sudden, without warning. Destruction. And it claimed the life of two year old Tonya Michelle Baxley, one of about fifteen parishioners trapped inside United Pentecostal Holiness Church Wednesday night [March 28] when the tornado struck the little church.

Willie S. Oxendine, trapped in his car next door, and other church members who arrived in a van for church services, watched the tornado strike its death dealing blow to the church. Oxendine said, "It was like a thousand trains coming all at one time."

See more tornado pictures and notes on Page 9.