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PEMBROKE, N.C.

"Building Communicative Bridges  
In A Tri-racial Setting."

ROBESON COUNTY

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## TOXIC WASTE MEETING SET FOR PEMBROKE

Officials from various state agencies, boards, and commissions will be coming to Pembroke on Monday night, March 24, to listen to public documentation and expression against the siting of the proposed GSX hazardous waste treatment facility in Maxton. The meeting is being held at the request of the County Commissioners of both Robeson and Scotland Counties. The Public Meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Performing Arts Center at Pembroke State University.

If licensed, the GSX facility would be the largest hazardous waste treatment facility in the Southeast. The plan is to place the plant just 4,000 feet from the Lumber River in sandy, porous soil. In numerous public meetings, critics have shown that this location is one of the worst possible locations for such a dangerous facility in N.C. Accepting up to 64 truckloads of toxic waste each day and an unspecified amount of waste by rail, the proposed facility will be dumping up to 1/2 million gallons of waste water each day into the Lumber River. GSX has a very poor track record and has been fined and pleaded guilty on charges of mismanagement of hazardous wastes in several states. At the present time, a report on the GSX landfill in South Carolina is recommending that thousands of dollars be spent to further investigate and document the changes which are taking place in Lake Marion, S.C. due to contamination from the GSX facility there. Citizens opposing the proposed GSX facility here have raised serious questions and provided documentation on the issues of the company's poor track record, the massive scale of the proposed operation, public safety and health, the serious risk to groundwater and county water supplies, and the question of liability.

Recently, there have been meetings with GSX officials and citizens in both Laurinburg and Lumberton. The meeting in Pembroke with State Government officials will be the largest meeting which will be held regarding the proposed GSX facility. Similar to the large meeting in Cumberland County regarding the proposed low-level radioactive waste incinerator, the meeting is being held at the Performing Arts Center in order to receive a capacity crowd.

Commenting on the March 24 meeting, Mr. Wyvis Oxendine, Robeson County Commissioner from the Pembroke-Maxton area, stated: "Of all the public meetings, this will be the most important since this one is being sponsored by the State. They are the ones who will make the decision on the GSX proposal. It is time for the people of Robeson County to let the officials in Raleigh know exactly how they feel about GSX. We can't afford to sit back and let a few do what everybody should be doing. Our voices must be heard loud and clear on our united opposition to GSX. We can't do that by staying at home and watching television or an ACC ballgame."

Mr. Adolph Dial, Chairman of the American Indian Studies Program at PSU, stated that: "The March 24th meeting is a very important meeting and the future of our lives depends on it. For hundreds and thousands of years, the Indian people of this land kept the rivers clear and the air pure. If we are not careful, we will destroy our good environment for profit and create a bad situation that can never be undone. Everyone should attend the March 24th meeting. We should overrun the Performing Arts Center. The more the opposition and the larger the crowd, the more the State and GSX will realize that this is the wrong place."

Mr. John Godwin, Board Member of Robeson County Clergy and Laity Concerned, stated that "what we are attempting to do is to stop these people from declaring chemical warfare on us that is exactly what they are planning. This is experimental for GSX because they have never operated a facility like this. As far as concrete knowledge about what will happen, they don't know. People need to let our elected officials know that we are not happy with their nonchalant response to those who have elected them."

The Public Meeting will be a time at which State decision-makers will be presented more evidence against GSX. The evidence will concentrate on their problem ridden proposal and their poor track record, including technical and geological data about the site they have chosen, a history of the fines and charges against them, and other specific concerns related to the proposal.

Mr. Rod Johnson, Community Organizer with Robeson County Clergy and Laity Concerned, maintains that "residents from all over the Southeastern portion of the State have a great deal to lose if this company locates here. Everyone has to use water. Robeson County residents will be the most severely harmed if the ground and surface water supplies are contaminated. There are many rail lines and roads upon which these toxic wastes will be transported. Even if you don't live near the plant or use county water, you'll be exposed to the risks of fatal accidents during the transportation."

Pointing out that a contamination clean-up could cost several million dollars and more, Johnson maintains that the company probably could not afford it or try to contest paying damage costs to families and property owners. Also, Johnson stated, "One of the most ludicrous factors behind the whole proposal is the fact that this company is not trying to locate near the major sources of this waste production. Scotland and Robeson Counties produce only a very small fraction of all the State's waste that needs treatment. It is unfair and unsafe to locate this facility here. We must get involved and stop this before the damage is done."

In planning for the meeting, Rev. Mac Legerton, RC/CALC's Executive Director, stated: "Churches, Associations, Community and Civic Organizations, and Businesses need to start planning now to have their members and employees attend the public meeting. Many citizens remain uninformed about GSX. When they find out, they become involved because they realize the serious impact that this facility will have on their lives, their children, and their community. If the Performing Arts Center can be filled for a cultural event or an LREMC Annual Meeting, then there is no reason why it shouldn't be overflowing on March 24. We must all work together to see that it is."

## Appointee To 1986 White House Small Business Conference



Dennis Lowery, formerly of Pembroke, has been selected as a delegate of North Carolina for the White House Small Business Conference to be held in August 1986 in Washington. The Conference is designed to bring business leaders together to discuss issues and problems and make recommendations for the future of the Small Business Administration. The presentation by the delegate will be presented to the President and Congress.

Dennis Lowery at present is the only known American Indian selected as a delegate. His efforts will be to make Small Business Administration more accessible and simple the needs in North Carolina. He hopes to address different areas of North Carolina to gain input for his presentation. Along with Dennis Lowery from North Carolina is Murchison "Be" Biggs of Lumberton.

Lowery is president of Continental Industrial Chemicals, Inc. of Charlotte, NC.

## Larry Rodgers of Pembroke State is a Trail Blazer Among Black in Athletics



Larry Rodgers

by Gene Warren

He's an affable type fellow, usually having a smile on his face. Nothing seems to bother him. He seems to be the kind who takes life in stride.

But Larry Rodgers, the 35-year-old black head cross country and track coach at PSU, is a pioneer. A trail blazer.

This black from Siler City has broken the color line a number of times in the last 21 years. He was:

-The first black varsity athlete at Jordan Matthews High School in Siler City in 1965.

-The first black coach at Pembroke State University. He took over the head coaching duties in both cross country and track in August, 1981, thus becoming also the first black head coach of a men's varsity sport at a predominately white school in the 16-campus University of North Carolina system.

Hubert West was black head coach of women's cross country and women's track at UNC-Chapel Hill in 1980, but didn't become head track coach of the UNC men's team until January, 1982.

"I don't know of any head black coach of a men's team before Larry among predominately white schools-- public or private--in North Carolina," said West, speaking by telephone from Chapel Hill.

When Rodgers enrolled at Jordan Matthews High School in Siler City, it was before integration of schools. "We had a freedom of choice situation in those days," Rodgers said. "Some kids at school--and some of my teammates-- called me names, but not to my face. It was nothing new. I had heard 'nigger' before."

As a sophomore in 1965, he made the varsity football team as a wide receiver, kicked off, and was on the punt return team. He also made the basketball squad.

In his junior year in high school, Jordan Matthews started its track program, and he was one of the first blacks on the track team. He was a kind of Jesse Owens, running the quarter-mile and half-mile, the mile relay, the 100-yard dash, and taking part in the long jump and the high jump. He proved so outstanding in track that as a junior he won the state meet in the 440 run.

As both a junior and a senior in high school, he started at center despite the fact he was only six feet tall. "I was one of the tallest men we had," he said.

In track as a senior, he captured the state meet again in the 440 and also added the 880 crown.

Three colleges contacted him about a track scholarship: Pembroke State, East Carolina University, and North Carolina A & T University.

## Indian Dig Site Preserved

Chapel Hill-Archaeologists will be able to continue studying a 20-acre historic site on the Eno River where remnants of pre-Colonial Indian villages are buried, thanks to a New York investment banker.

The Preservation Fund of Hillsborough, Inc. announced Friday that Richard Jenrette, a banker and a member of the board of trustees at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, had agreed to buy the Hillsborough site for \$120,000.

The preservation fund had obtained a six month option on the property last August that was due to expire February 28.

"He really has saved us," said John Kennedy, Jr., chairman of the fund.

The site, in a horseshoe bend of the Eno River 15 miles from Chapel Hill, contains six Occaneechi village sites.

Archaeologists from UNC think the site may be the Occaneechi Town visited in 1701 by English surveyor and historian John Lawson, who wrote about the Indian village.

## Receives

## Doctorate



Dr. Olivia Schwartz

Olivia Lowry Schwartz participated in the winter convocation at the George Washington University, Washington, D.C. on February 16, 1986. At that time she was formally awarded a doctorate. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Lowry of Route 3, Rowland, NC. Olivia resides with her husband, Dr. Tommy L. Schwartz, in upper Marlboro, Maryland. They have one daughter, Teresa V. Schwartz, of Beltsville, Maryland.

Olivia's dissertation, *The Micro Computer and Reading: A Survey in The State of Maryland*, was successfully defended on April 2, 1985 and the degree officially awarded on September 30, 1985. She received a B.S. from PSU in 1962 and a M.A. from the George Washington University in 1974.

The former first lady, Lady Bird Johnson, was the speaker for the approximately 850 graduates. Mrs. Johnson's son-in-law the former governor of Virginia was among about 5,000 people attending the ceremony, where Mrs. Johnson received an honorary doctor of public service degree.

"Coach Ed Crain (then cross country and track coach at PSU) went over to St. Andrews Presbyterian College and watched me in our Central Tar Heel Conference Meet. He asked me what were my plans, was I planning to go to college. I told him I didn't know. He told me he'd like for me to run at PSU and get an education. He called me three or four times and convinced me to come to PSU," said Rodgers.

In those days, Pembroke State's track and cross country programs were in their infancy. In fact, the school had only a dirt track whereas today it has some of the finest track facilities anywhere.

Larry Rodgers helped to build the PSU track tradition. He won honorable mention All-American honors in the mile relay at Arkadelphia, Ark. He was chosen "Most Valuable" on the team in track in both his junior and senior years. He was all-district in both the mile relay and quarter-mile.

The track championships flowed into Pembroke State, including the prestigious state intercollegiate championship which the Braves won in 1972 at Duke over all schools in the state, including the Big Four. That was, ironically enough, the last year the state meet was held-- and the huge trophy is now a proud part of the PSU trophy case.

After graduation from PSU in '73 with a B.S. in physical education, Rodgers worked in industry for eight months and then with the Fayetteville Parks and Recreation Department for another eight months. Then in 1977, he became assistant coach at South View Junior High School in Fayetteville in football, basketball and track. In 1978 he joined Douglas Byrd High of Fayetteville as assistant coach in cross country and track. From 1979-81, he moved up to head cross country coach and head women's track coach at Douglas Byrd.

Having earned his M.S. degree in physical education at N.C. Central University in 1979, he was qualified for a college position. It came at his alma mater--PSU--in the summer of 1981 when he returned to Pembroke State to teach and remained as head cross country and track coach, beginning that August.

Rodgers has continued the strong PSU cross country and track tradition in his efforts to fill the shoes of Dr. Ed Crain, now chairman of the PSU Health and Physical Education, and Recreation Department. Rodgers won NAAIA District 26 "Cross Country Coach of the Year" honors in 1981 and 1985 and Carolinas Conference "Track Coach of the Year" honors in '82, '83, '84 and '85.

He knows what racial prejudice is. "In high school, as long as I was with the team, I could eat the pre-game meal by going in the front door of a restaurant. That was on Friday. But on Saturday by myself, I had to go around to the back of the restaurant to get my meal on a tray," said Rodgers.

As a college athlete, the transition was smoother. "Our PSU teams had a lot of togetherness and a lot of unity. Everyone was a student-athlete. I can't remember any particularly bad situation. Of course, people would stare at you when you entered a restaurant with the team."

Even today Rodgers is conscious of the fact that he is a rarity as a head black coach. "It was like in '81 when we went to an NCAA meet at Lowell, Mass. We had meetings, and I was the only black coach there," he said. "You look around and realize you are the only one."

Rodgers is proud of the cross country and track programs he represents. "Pembroke State University has a lot of respect from other schools. The opposition always wants to know: what has PSU got this year?" They always find a strong challenge as the string of championships prove.

Rodgers is married to the former Shirley Nicholson of Hamlet. They are parents to two daughters: Deidre, 17, and Tina, 4.

## ATTEND STATE 4-H COUNCIL RETREAT



Attended State 4-H Council Retreat, left to right: Jill Payne, assistant 4-H agent; Paul Boggs; Doug Bernhardt; Michael Salter; Bert Bernhardt. Not pictured: Deidra Sutton, Demetria Hunt, Lisa Gilchrist, Kim Lewis, Tammy McCollum, Rhondette Jones and Wendy Sammons.

Eleven Robeson County 4-H'ers attended the State 4-H Council Retreat in Raleigh Feb. 8 and 9. The 4-H'ers had an opportunity to develop their leadership skills in seminars and meetings held during the retreat. They also attended several informative workshops concerning this year's state project. The theme for the state project is "Back to the Future in 4-H" and relates to our heritage in several areas including cultural arts, agriculture, family and 4-H.

Four-H'ers were encouraged to use their leadership skills and share their experiences and ideas with the county and their respective community 4-H clubs. Members of the Robeson County delegation in attendance included: Deidra Sutton, Demetria Hunt, Paul Boggs, Doug Bernhardt, Bert Bernhardt, Lisa Gilchrist, Kim Lewis, Tammy McCollum, Rhondette Jones, Wendy Sammons, and Michael Salter. Leading the delegation were: Ruth Bernhardt, 4-H leader; and Jill Payne, assistant agricultural Extension agent.