

## The Reader's Forum

### Lack of Funds Not Adequate Reason for Failure to Merge

To the Editor:  
 Each day there is a greater need for better education beyond the boundaries of Robeson County made known to those who recognize this inequity in our society. The need for better education in Robeson County still exists.  
 The very thought that the lack of funds is the reason for not merging the five school systems in Robeson County is a lie as I see it. The N.C. General Assembly made a vehicle available to carry the load of merger in our county with the additional 1/2 cent sales tax. Not only did our Robeson County Commissioners flatten the tires of this vehicle they threw away the wheels. A vehicle without wheels travels nowhere.  
 The words and actions of the whites on the board of Robeson County Commissioners and the superintendents, members of the boards of education, of the Lumberton, Fairmont, Red Springs and St. Pauls school systems, confirms the fact that it is only an assumption that persons opposed to merger of the five school systems in Robeson County, are intelligent enough to recognize the need for better education in our county, as I see it. The attitudes of educators who oppose merger of the five school systems in Robeson County are denying the six year old his/her potential as a student now and a taxpaying citizen later in life.  
 The existence of this type of ignorance is mirrored in the following facts of so called justice as practiced in Robeson County. An Indian kills a white, Indian sentenced to death. An Indian kills an Indian, Indian is sentenced to life in prison. Is Indian killed by Indian any less dead than white killed by Indian? Young Indian, Jack Scott stopped by State Trooper Covington and charged with 1/4 ounce of cocaine. Bond set at \$15,000 cash. Deputy Mitch Stevens steals cocaine and cash evidence belonging to the State of North Carolina from the Sheriff's office in the Robeson County Courthouse and bond set at \$5,000...someone signs bond. The solution to these so called acts of justice is in the voting booths of Robeson County.  
 Are you satisfied with these conditions as voters and taxpayers?

JOHN L. GODWIN  
 Pembroke, NC

### Racial Prejudice Still Exists In the Great State of Robeson

To the Editor:  
 You know, people who do not live in Robeson County have the misconception that because there is an almost equal distribution among the three predominant races (Indian, Black and white) here in the county; racial prejudice does not exist. I have rationalized the existence of prejudice here by explaining there is power in number; therefore, if the Indians and Blacks are to be kept behind, it has to be done by prejudice. After all, if you can make a man (or woman) feel that they are not your equal, you render them powerless.  
 For example, a recent tragic occurrence comes to mind: the shooting death of Jimmy Earl Cummings by a local police officer, Kevin Stone. It would appear that Mr. Stone shot Mr. Cummings in an act of prejudice; but that was only the surface. The cover-up that followed was indeed the criminal act. Can you imagine the scene among the local authorities the following day. "It was only an Indian that was killed. No great loss to society. We'll hold a hearing for the record."  
 The whole event reeks of blatant prejudice. It reminds me of listening to my dad and granddad speak of times when they could go into the local drugstore and get a prescription filled, but weren't allowed to purchase a coke to take the medication. Perhaps you may say well things haven't changed, but it has been 50 years since then, and well it's time for a change.  
 Mind you, being an Indian myself, I've always preferred blatant prejudice. I'd rather know that you don't like me because I'm Indian. In the old days when you entered the local department store, and the clerk did not like Indians, you felt it and you left, keeping your money and your pride. Nowadays the clerk follows you all over the store and all you can do is wonder if he/she is afraid you're going to steal something.

Each year, urbanization consumes three million acres of rural land in the U.S.

But now I realize that blatant prejudice can resort to murder. I didn't honestly realize that things could/ would go to that extent. I truly believed it existed only as feelings and not in deeds. Of course, I've read my Indian history and knew that many Indians suffered and died as a result of blatant prejudice, years ago, before I was born. But in the twentieth century?


I realize that nothing will, although duly deserved, be done about the shooting. Dad always told me that there were some people in this world above the law; Mr. Stone must be one of those people.

Ironically enough, there is a high way that runs through this county, whose population is one third Indian, named after a former president who is said to take great delight in saying "The only good Indian is a dead Indian." How proud he would be today to see Mr. Stone, a man after his own heart.

Yes, indeed, folks, racial prejudice is alive, kicking... and shooting in the Great State of Robeson!

Marilyn L. Locklear  
 Pembroke, NC

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Howard Says:  
**PEMBROKE DRUG CENTER**  
 Howard Brooks, r.ph.

**Valentine's: Is one day enough?**  
 Do cards and candies given on Valentine's substitute for sincere commitment to successful homes? Of course not, but while a pleasant idea, home life must be worked at EVERY DAY to become happier and healthier.  
 Strong marriages insure stable families, of which someone once said, "If you just keep doing the things you did before you got married to get married, it would help you stay married!" Busted marriages wreck homes, inviting increased health risks.  
 This year, WORK at making your family life happier and healthier. Start with a workman's attitude and a Valentine's Day commitment.

STUDIES FROM THE BOOK OF JOHN  
 14:7) If you had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and henceforth, ye know him and have seen him.



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# COUNTY WIDE MEETING

## Of All Concerned Citizens in Robeson County to Send a Message To Raleigh - Where: Magnolia School Gym When: Feb. 19th at 7:30 p.m.

This very well could be the most important meeting YOU have ever been asked to attend. Why? - Because if we have a large turnout, our legislators will be sent a message "Do something and do it now!"

### WE MUST CHANGE THESE CONDITIONS:

- ★ Children bussed 50 miles a day and losing one month of instruction time each school year on a bus. Merger will SEND children to the closest school.
- ★ Children attending school in condemned buildings!
- ★ Parents giving up legal custody of children to residents of another school district so that child may have better opportunities.
- ★ Schools that are as much as 70% OVER their capacity while entire schools such as Fairgrove (partial used) and Purvis SIT EMPTY.

80 millions of your tax dollars are at stake! BE THERE.

- ★ Do you believe ALL school children in Robeson County deserve EQUAL opportunity?
- ★ Do you believe ALL school children in Robeson County deserve equal facilities for a modern education!
- ★ Was a former State Legislator correct when he was quoted as saying that precinct No. 1 in Lumberton "Controls the destiny of our Senator and Legislators"? If that's true YOUR VOTE doesn't count and your community is taken for granted.
- ★ Do you want a chance to let your legislators know how YOU feel about all this?

Paid For By: Robeson County Concerned Citizens For Equal Education  
 Dr. Joy J. Johnson & Atty. Horace Locklear, Co-Chairmen  
 738-0817