



PUBLISHED EACH THURSDAY

THE CAROLINA INDIAN VOICE

PEMBROKE, N.C.

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ROBESON COUNTY

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VOLUME 16 NUMBER 3

25 CENTS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 1988

LEGAL QUESTIONS STILL SURROUND LREMC ELECTION

by Connie Brayboy

On Thursday, January 14, 1988 members of the board of directors of Lumbee River Electric Membership Corporation, representatives of the administration and Conrad Oxendine appeared before Judge Craig Ellis to answer charges brought by Rev. Elias Rogers relative to irregularities in the October 6, 1987 election for board of directors of that corporation. The petitioner, Rogers, and the respondents met in Superior Court and Judge Ellis gave them thirty days to prepare their briefs prior to his decision on the matter.

Barry Nakell, attorney for Rogers had filed a petition in his behalf following his official protest of the election. At the election Conrad Oxendine who opposed Rogers outpolled him by 40 votes. The petition was entered to determine the validity of that election.

Prior to entering his petition, Rogers, a 20-year member of the LREMC board of directors, protested the election. The protest was brought before the Elections and Credentials Committee. That Committee held a hearing on Rogers' protest October 20, 1987. During that hearing the petitioner (Rogers) presented evidence of the following violations of election procedures:

- (a) Persons acting on behalf of respondent Conrad Oxendine and with his approval paid or offered to pay substantial sums of money to influential members of LREMC in exchange for supporting respondent Conrad Oxendine against petitioner.
- (b) Persons acting on behalf of respondent Conrad Oxendine and with his approval paid or offered to pay more than 40 members of LREMC \$3 in exchange for voting for respondent Conrad Oxendine against petitioner.

Other evidence was also presented at this hearing. After consideration of the evidence, the Committee voted to set aside the election and to recommend that the Board schedule a new election.

On October 27, Conrad Oxendine wrote a letter to the Committee stating that he did not understand all the purpose behind the Oct. 20 meeting and asked for a chance to prepare evidence in his defense. Such meeting was held November 3. At this meeting, Conrad Oxendine presented two witnesses who denied that they personally observed any wrongdoing in connection with the October 6 election and Board President Ward Clark Jr. who simply made a statement denying wrongdoing. Clark then refused to answer questions on cross examination. Rev. Rogers presented one additional witness in support of the \$3 vote buying contention.

Nevertheless, the Committee voted to reverse its October 20 decision and to reinstate the results of the October 6 election. According to the by-laws of LREMC two members of the committee were not qualified to serve because of their close relationship with existing directors. Those members were Janice Bullard and Jimmy Goins. Janice Bullard is a niece by marriage to Gus Bullard, board member. Goins is a nephew by marriage to board member Bradford Oxendine.

On January 14 the respondents presented a stipulation of facts. They confirmed that Bullard and Goins were related to the two board members. They also released a list of the members attending that meeting and their vote on the question. Voting yes were: Charles Brown; Janice Bullard; John L. Godwin; James Hutchinson; Brenda O. Jacobs; Madeline Jones; and Bobby Dean Locklear. The alternate, Lawrence Locklear did not vote. These members voted to set aside the Oct. 6 election. Opposing that move were: Billie Britt; John G. Elerbee; Jimmy Goins; John Pat Locklear; and J.T. Wellington.

At the Nov. 3 meeting, Janice Bullard changed her vote, as did Charles Brown. Frank Boyette, committee chairman, abstained in the Oct. 20 hearing, but voted for a new election on Nov. 3. Lawrence Locklear, the alternate voted yes on Nov. 3 as James Hutchinson was not present.

These facts leave many questions unanswered. How much pressure was placed on Janice Bullard to change her vote? Who applied that pressure? And why? In addition, to unanswered questions, something just does not add up. Charles Brown, who also changed his vote, was appointed by the management and staff of LREMC. Why did he change his vote? There seems to be an underlying pattern in all this that makes one wonder about a conspiracy between the present board of directors and management against Rev. Elias Rogers. If this is so, the question remains. What are they hiding?

More importantly, how much is all this costing the member consumers of LREMC? If the by-laws were correct in January, were they not correct in October?

At press time, several calls had been made to Ronnie Hunt, general manager, to address the question of the amount of money spent on attorneys, etc. But he has refused to return my calls. And we are reminded of an editorial we wrote in October that questioned: Is there a conspiracy between management and the board of directors? And what are they trying to hide?



REP. DANIEL H. DeVANE

DeVane Files For Re-election To The State General Assembly

State Representative Daniel H. DeVane of Hoke County filed January 4, 1988 for a fourth term in the state General Assembly, representing the 16th House District, comprised of Hoke, Robeson, and most of Scotland County.

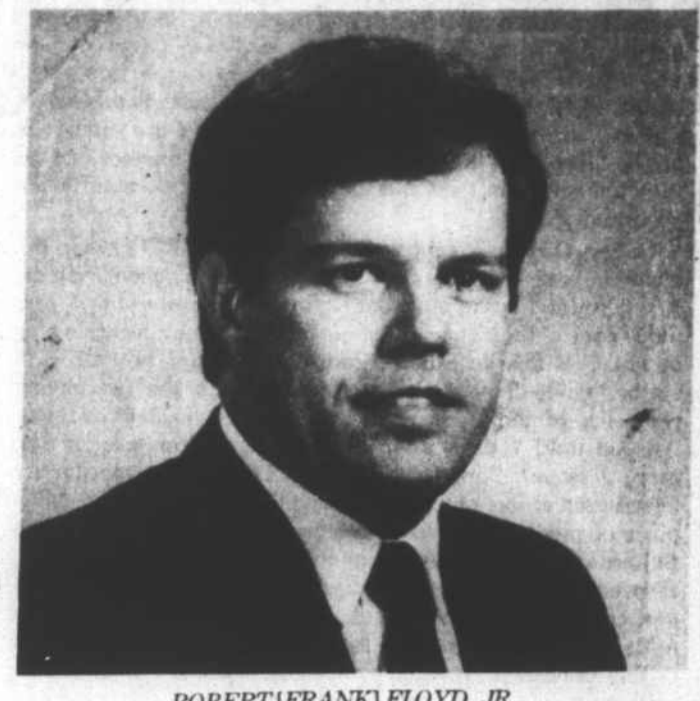
A real estate broker and auctioneer, DeVane is owner of DeVane Realty and Auction in Raeford. He has served in the State House since 1983.

He is presently Chairman of the House Water and Air Committee; Vice Chairman of the House Judiciary I Committee; Vice Chairman of the House Health Committee; and a member of the Appropriation Committee on Justice and Public Safety, of the Pensions and Retirement Committee, of the Law Enforcement Committee, of the Employment Security Committee, and the Wildlife Committee.

There had been speculation that DeVane would not seek another term as a legislator, but instead would run for Hoke County Sheriff if Dave Barrington retired in 1988. DeVane says by filing he is ending speculation. "I am not interested in the sheriff's job," he said. "I did have some supporters who encouraged me to seek the job, but I felt with my seniority and experience in the General Assembly, I could better serve the people of Hoke, Robeson, and Scotland Counties as a member of the House." DeVane added, "One of the most important things is to build credibility and know who to trust, and seniority plays an important part."

Prior to being elected to the State House in 1982, DeVane served as a Hoke County Commissioner for 6 years and is a former chairman of the Region N Council of Government.

DeVane, his wife, Alice, and their 15 year old son, Howie, live in Raeford. He is a volunteer fireman and a member of First Baptist Church in Raeford.



ROBERT (FRANK) FLOYD, JR.

Floyd Announces Candidacy For District Court Judge

Robert (Frank) Floyd, Jr., of Fairmont has announced his candidacy for the District Court Judge of the 16th Judicial District, which includes Robeson and Scotland Counties. He has filed as a candidate with the State Board of Elections.

Floyd's experience includes eight years of law practice in Fairmont, where he shares a practice with his brother, Charles E. (Charlie) Floyd. They handle all types of cases in courts from Magistrate level to the State Supreme Court.

Floyd said "I have dealt with a wide variety of legal cases and I feel that not only will I bring a new outlook to the bench but also an understanding of the problems facing the Courts."

The oldest of six children born to the late Robert Francis (Bobby Frank) Floyd and Ellen Barnes Floyd, he came from a family of lawyers. His heritage includes his lawyer father who also was the first Chief District Court Judge elected when the present District Court System was established in the 16th District in 1966. His grandfather, Francis Wayland Floyd, practiced law in Fairmont for many years and served as a member of the State House of Representatives for five terms.

Candidate Floyd is married to the former June Leggett, also a native of the Fairmont area, who is a teacher at Rosenwald Elementary School in Fairmont. They have three children, Catherine Elizabeth, 13, Leigh Ellen, 9, and Robert (Bobby) McIntyre, 2.

Floyd graduated from Campbell College in 1976 with a B.S. Degree in Geology, cum laude, and from Campbell Law School in 1979. While at Campbell he was a member of the Epsilon Pi Eta Honor Society. He played baseball at Campbell and in his Junior year was named All District Third Baseman and in the Summer League was selected as an outfielder on the All District Second Team. Also during his Junior year he was designated Most Valuable Player on the Campbell nine.

A past president of the Fairmont Tornado Club, he is a volunteer coach and umpire in the Little League and a volunteer referee for the 7th and 8th grade football.

A member of the First Baptist Church, Floyd serves as a Trustee, Chairman of the Board of Deacons and teacher of the Adult I Couples Sunday School Class. He also served as a teacher in the children's and youth classes and as chairman of the nominating committee. He is a Mason and also past president of the Fairmont Civitan Club.

Floyd is also a member of the Robeson County Bar Association, the North Carolina Bar Association and the State Bar.

Candidate Floyd is seeking election to the Judge's post now occupied by Adelaide Behan (Judge's positions are identified only by the name of the incumbent and candidates do not run at large, but must specify which seat they are seeking). Of the four present judgeships in the district, this is the only one in which the incumbent's terms is expiring.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

Wilber & Bertha Locklear



Wilbur and Bertha Locklear deliver a bag of food to the senior citizens at Mt. Olive Baptist Church.

By Barbara Brayboy-Locklear
Special To The Carolina Indian Voice

"There's plenty out there in the community for others to do, and they ought to be up and doing it—especially Christian people," says Wilbur Locklear. The Moss Neck community resident practices what he preaches.

Locklear and his wife, Bertha, both retired in 1985. He spent 27 years with the N.C. Department of Correction as a prison guard in Robeson County. She left the classroom of Robeson County schools after 30 years of teaching students in elementary education. A decade was spent in teaching basic studies, while two more were spent as a speech therapist.

Two years ago, Mrs. Locklear contracted with the Robeson County Board of Education to teach speech therapy when the only remaining therapist retired. Two days each week, she works with 29 speech-handicapped students in the county's special education program. The 54-year-old Lumbee Indian chose to work only part-time. "There were so many other things I wanted to do outside the classroom that I felt I couldn't work full-time," she says.

The energetic mother never catches up on her list of things to do. She says her over-loaded schedule is self-imposed because of a strong incentive to do for others. "Some nights I can hardly get to bed. I stay up until the last possible minute working on projects," she adds.

During the recent snowstorm which hit the area, she constructed several pairs of country ruffled curtains on two industrial-type sewing machines she purchased two years ago. Doing necessary maintenance on the machines poses no problem for the creative hobbyist. A while back she enrolled in a sewing machine repair class at Robeson Community College. Another class taken at the school enables her to upholster furniture. Still another allows her to work on small engine machines such as lawn mowers and chainsaws.

She usually assigns the task of maintaining and operating those machines to her husband of 20 years. Mr. Locklear is a familiar figure in the community in which he resides as well as in his childhood community of Saddletree.

Every week's day is spent in serving senior citizens in the communities. He pays special attention to the needs of widows. "The Bible speaks of the importance in caring for widows, and it is from the Book that I take my instructions," says the 57-year-old grandfather.

During the past months, he has spent hours cutting firewood to distribute among elderly women without husbands. A day each week is given to his widow mother, Mrs. Bertie Lowry Locklear, in rural Lumberton. On the grounds of his birthplace, he busies himself in maintaining yards and to doing chores inside the home the mother shares with a daughter.

Locklear says he has a duty to helping others. "I was raised during a time when people took time to be neighborly, and my parents taught me to have a giving attitude," he remembers.

Since retiring, the Locklears have given hundreds of hours to working with the Saddletree Senior Citizens Club which meets each Thursday. The day begins early when Mr. Locklear rises, feeds the livestock on his property, tends to other outside chores and drives the 12 miles to his lifetime Mt. Olive Baptist Church.

Once there, he reads the fellowship building for the arrival of the senior citizens. Mrs. Locklear leaves their home shortly thereafter and affords transportation to club members along the route to the meeting place.

Several hours are freely-given during the day to working with busy citizens, mostly widows, in creating various club projects. Two years ago, the Locklears, along with another retired educator, Bonnie Lowery Tatum took on the duties of distributing government surplus foods to qualified recipients in the community. Those unable to travel to the distribution place are served by the Locklears and Tatum who deliver the items to the homes. Tatum also assists Mrs. Locklear in working with the senior citizen club members each week.

The Locklears' busy volunteer schedules leave no time for annual vacations. They share a love for pier fishing and during the fall months, they steal away a day each week to enjoy the

PEMBROKE TRAIN DEPOT DESTROYED BY FIRE
In the early morning hours of Monday, January 18, 1988 around 5 a.m., the old train depot tragically burned down. According to Acting Pembroke Chief of Police Jeff Locklear, the SBI was notified and is investigating the mishap. There is no word yet on the cause of the fire.

sport at a beach.

They attend Mt. Olive Baptist Church where he has served as a deacon for 19 years. Mr. Locklear feels the churches today are falling short in supplying certain needs to their communities. He says Christianity extends farther than the sanctuaries, and that most Christians just are measuring up in their duties in their helping their neighbors.

Retirement has allowed the Locklears to give back some time to those who helped them along the way. They both express a deep sense of commitment to helping elderly citizens. "I always said if I lived to retire, I'd do more for the Good Lord and others because He'd blessed me," says Mr. Locklear, "because doing good toward others makes one sleep good at night."

Community Persons Form Group to

Protest PSU Name Change

by Eddie Hatcher

With the resurfacing of the proposed name change of Pembroke State University, the Robeson American Indian Defense was formed by those in the community who not only strongly oppose the name change, but also feel too much of Pembroke State University's heritage has been covered up and shoved to the side by outside influence.

Firstly, most of the present members of the PSU Board of Trustees not only possess little knowledge of the struggles and hardships our forefathers bore in PSU's beginning and thereafter, but they seem to have no desire in allowing the community the right and entitlement to share that history.

Secondly, the handful of members on the PSU Board of Trustees who are American Indian have fallen prey to the influential outside establishment, seemingly, and are assuredly not representative of the Indian community which proudly represents the rightful heirs of those who fought for what is now PSU.

It seems to our organization that PSU should be more concerned with issues, such as why so many of its students fail the National Teachers Exam upon graduation and seek remedies in which to correct this education, not school labeling, problem.

At a recent meeting, Mr. John Godwin stated, "Well, it seems that upgrading the phone system and the name change are the top priorities for PSU administration."

In 1887, when the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$500 for a normal school for Indians with the

stipulation the Indians erect a building for the school within two years or the monies would be retracted, how many non-Indians ran to the rescue? Had it not been for \$200 donated by Rev. W.L. Moore of the Prospect community and other local Indians, there would have been no school at that time.

The Indian community has struggled to maintain PSU an outstanding university and now that is just that, there appears to be a deluge of outsiders who are no longer capable of maintaining the prestige which PSU holds. So they feel they must control things now.

In fact, there has been a gradual takeover by outsiders notwithstanding a few Indians who have stood out.

"My forefathers worked too hard for it and I am not going to sit back while some outsider tries to take over what is ours, the Indians of Robeson County," said Ms. Betty Lowry Sanderson at the recent meeting.

The Robeson American Indian Defense is to preserve and defend the heritage of the American Indian.

will hold a meeting on Tuesday, February 2, 1988. It will be discussing several upcoming projects dealing with the proposed name change and also some of the upcoming elections. It is time we have a voice in Robeson County to

speak for American Indians of Robeson County. You can be that voice. For information about the upcoming meeting and location call: Ms. Mary Sanderson at 521-3629 or 521-6280 after 5 p.m.; or Eddie Hatcher at 521-2826 before 5 p.m.