



# THE CAROLINA INDIAN VOICE

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## Pembroke Town Manager Files Defamation Suit Against WRAL-TV 5

Pembroke Town Manager McDuffie Cummings has filed a suit against Channel 5 TV station, Charlie Gaddy and Scott Hanson. The suit was filed by Cummings' attorney, Dexter Brooks. The suit asks for compensatory and punitive damages against the defendants, jointly and severally, in at least the sum of \$10,000, the cost of the action, including a reasonable attorney fee, and that the plaintiff have trial by a jury of his peers. The suit itself further alleges that Cummings "suffered mental and physical anguish, injury to reputation and pecuniary loss, including medical, travel and other expense."

Cummings released the following statement relative to the suit: "On February 23, 1988, newscaster Charlie Gaddy of WRAL television stated on the air that I, as Manager of the Town of Pembroke, 'pressured' then Chief of Police Kirby Ammons to write a favorable letter on behalf of a person who has been convicted of conspiracy to purchase illegal drugs in the State of Florida. That accusation has no factual basis whatsoever."

"The accusation was based solely on information obtained by Scott Hanson, a reporter for WRAL, from a source who wished not be identified. I denied the accusation to the reporter prior to the newscast. Kirby Ammons himself did not tell the reporter that he was 'pressured.'"

"WRAL has wrongfully accused myself based solely on information from an unnamed source who could have no factual basis for such accusations. My family and I have been the target of irresponsible reporting. My wife of twenty years and four of our five children saw the newscast. We have suffered physical and mental anguish by having the tranquility of our home invaded by irresponsible reporters, with complete disregard for the truth, seeking only sensationalism."

"I cannot allow WRAL to treat my family with such disrespect. I am, therefore, filing a defamation action against WRAL in the superior court. A jury composed of twelve citizens of this community will determine that these accusations are utterly false. The evidence at trial will show that I did not write nor did I ever see the letter."



Harold and Dayle Locklear examine a layout of kitchen cabinets for a customer.

## SPOTLIGHT ON LOCKLEAR CABINET & WOODWORK LOCAL BUSINESS PERSONS

by Barbara Brayboy-Locklear  
Special to The Carolina Indian Voice

Choices! Choices! What will it be? Birch, bass, ash, cherry or walnut? Raised panels, plain, routed, recessed or arched panels? To the home builder or renovator it's often confusing to visit Locklear Cabinet and Woodwork Shop where cabinet samples stare at you from a "dream" kitchen located in an area adjoining the shop on Red Banks Road in rural Rowland.

But to Harold and Dayle Locklear, it's part of the art in offering customers a choice. "The customer has the final say in selection," says Mr. Locklear, general manager of the business his late father established 28 years ago.

"If the customer creates his own design, we make every effort to make it up for him," he says. He says he likens his cabinet selection to that of buying an automobile. "We can give the customer any and all he wants in the line of price and accessories."

The husband and wife team agrees that 75 percent of their customers choose bass wood for cabinets because of its mid-price tag. They say walnut is least selected because of its high cost.

Mr. Locklear, a Lumbee Indian, says he grew up making cabinets. While most of his young school mates returned home each day to recreation, he checked in at his father's shed-like shop constructed from pine slabs at the Locklear homeplace. There he would busy himself sweeping and cleaning the debris from the building which was located 1/4 mile from the present business location.

An antique "Hoover" cart was used back then in hauling away scraps and sawdust from the shop. The cart, which belonged to Locklear's late grandfather, is still used today.

The 34-year-old inherited the responsibility of operating the business after the death of his father, Bradie Locklear, in 1979. Today, along with nine employees, he creates kitchen and bathroom cabinets for private residence, country clubs and corporations. Among his customers is CP&L of Maxton. Locklear says 75 percent of his business orders come from building contractors, while the remainder comes from private builders and homeowners.

And while the business runs the whole line in cabinetwork, Locklear says he prefers doing a custom house because he

likes to work with the customers in creating any ideas they have.

Mrs. Locklear says she was drafted into the business when she married into a family of cabinetmakers. She brings to the business a B.S. degree in business from PSU and manages the financial end of the corporation. Her duties include bookkeeping and ordering supplies which are delivered weekly from distributors throughout the state. She works closely with the customers in advising them of wood types and cabinet designs.

She assists in customer selection of cabinet door fronts which range from wire mesh to beveled glass with brass inserts. The most-often-selected door design is the raised panel, say the Locklears.

A heavy backlog lends little time for the Locklears, who are both professed workaholics, to rest. "I've been in a work bind since 1972," laughs Mr. Locklear. "I'm four months behind now, and there's no catch up in sight."

Mr. Locklear points out that the process in constructing and finishing his cabinets cannot be rushed. "Everything is visible. You can just about see or feel everything on a cabinet."

And while he doesn't want to break the habit of working, he admits he is trying to break a habit of taking his work home with him. "I definitely bring my work home with me," he says. "I lay out cabinets at home, and it's become a habit I'm trying to break."

There's no time to vacation for the Locklears who say even during major holidays only two or three days at the most are used for "close-down" at the business.

"I grew up in cabinetmaking and I knew from an early age that's what my work in life would be. I learn something every day. New designs are always a challenge," Mr. Locklear says. "With a cocked head and sly grin he says, "But the greatest challenge is catching up and getting some much-needed rest. There seems none for sometime to come."

Locklear Cabinet & Woodwork Shop, Inc. is located on the Red Banks Road [State Road 1166] 5 miles off U.S. 74. Business hours are Mon.-Fri. 7:30-5:30.

## WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

### Evelyn Cummings

by Barbara Brayboy-Locklear  
Special to The Carolina Indian Voice

Evelyn Cummings is so busy in retirement that she wonders how she ever had time to work at Pembroke's post office. Yet, the mother of three children managed to do just that for 33 years.

As a fresh-out of high school young Lumbee in 1940, she entered Indian Normal School and completed a year's study before entering a business college in Muncie, Indiana. She graduated from college and accepted a clerical position with a national corporation in Philadelphia, Pa.

One day six months later a very important telegram arrived for her. It was a job offer from the late J. R. Lowry, a former Pembroke High School principal and postmaster of Pembroke. The offer pleased Cummings, a shy Saddletree Community native. Once her friends heard of the job offer they told her she would be "crazy" to come back home.

"They'd tease me about having to work in a chicken-coop," she laughs. "The post office back then was just a little building, located on the corner of 3rd and Main Street. The local folks often times referred to it as a chicken-coop."

But Cummings knew in coming home to work, she'd be near her beloved family of seven siblings and her parents, the late Willie and Riley Locklear.

The 21-year-old caught a train a day after receiving the telegram from Lowry whom she says was like a second "Daddy" to her. She immediately reported to her duties at the post office, thusly becoming the post office's first Indian female employee.

Her first assignment was stacking batches of air mail letters addressed to Army and Navy men in service during World War II which was going on then. The letters were sorted by hand. "It was a small office, and I eventually did all the operations in the post office, such as handwriting money orders, taking in packages and sending out mail," she says.

On Sundays, Cummings, a loyal church goer, would always leave home a little early, go by the post office, put out the mail while her family sat patiently in the family car before attending worship service at her beloved Harper's Ferry Baptist Church.

"I always loved my work and did until the day I retired. Now in retirement she says she never has a day of doing "just nothing." "I tried to do just that, but it's just not for me." She greets each morning ready to do what's got to be done.

A life long tradition of baking pound cakes for giving to friends and to families with special needs, keeps her busy. And she belongs to a Homemaker's Club, and is very involved in church work.

For 25 years she taught Sunday School to ten-year-olds before giving the position up five years ago. Reading became a physical strain for the 66-year-old grandmother who has undergone two corneal operations. She has been a member of her church choir as well as the Pembroke's Ladies' chorus for

more than 30 years. The shy former post mistress says she has always loved to sing, but never was brave enough to sing solos publicly. They were left for her children.

The energetic homemaker is an officer with a local V.F.W. Ladies' Auxiliary. She says while her husband, Woodrow, never served in the military, her father and brother did. And she feels a duty to honor their memory with a 30-year service to the organization.

Cummings, and her husband live in the house he built in 1945 in the Moss Neck Community. And even though they live in rural Robeson County they maintain a post office mailing address. It seems only natural they'd continue to use the post office. For it was there in 1942, a young man appeared at the service window to order a postage stamp. He got the stamp that day, he got the postal clerk a year later.



Evelyn Cummings, retired Pembroke post mistress.

### School Merger Victory Narrow But Sweet For Supporters

School merger became a reality last week in Robeson County. And when the final results came into the Robeson County Board of Elections, emotions took way to crying, hugging, handshaking and back slapping by residents who realized school merger had become a reality.

School merger narrowly passed. The official results show 11,254 voted for merger and 10,896 against. Forty-five percent of the county's 49,458 registered voters turned out, according to election officials, who attributed the higher-than-usual rate to the merger referendum.

The victory was narrow, but sweet for supporters of merger. "I'm on cloud nine. This has got to be the happiest day of my

life," said Eric Prevatte, chairman of CARE. Prevatte, who spent several thousand dollars of his own money on advertising during the campaign, said the fight over merger centered on just one issue - race.

Earlier in the week, CARE projected a bigger win, but the voter turnout was not as big as expected he said.

Fairmont's two precincts split on the referendum with Precinct 1 voting 578-441 against the merger and Precinct 2 voting 247-185 in favor.

A jubilant Joy Johnson, a member of the local group, Citizens

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## DR. JOSEPH OXENDINE AUTOGRAPHS NEW BOOK "AMERICAN INDIAN SPORTS HERITAGE" AT OLD MAIN

by Barbara Brayboy-Locklear  
Special to the CAROLINA INDIAN VOICE

"I wrote this book because I was committed to writing it. It was personal," says Dr. Joseph B. Oxendine of his latest publication, *American Indian Sports Heritage*.

Last Thursday afternoon in Pembroke State University's Old Main, Oxendine brought his book home for his people to see, buy and read. Many friends and relatives called to get an autographed copy.

Oxendine is qualified to address the history and impact of American Indian sports from a unique perspective. A Lumbee Indian raised in a segregated Indian community in Robeson County, NC, he understands the subtleties of being Indian in today's non-Indian society.

He also understands the social role played by the competitive athlete, having been a three-sport athlete in high school and college and a professional baseball player with the Pittsburg Pirates.

The value of sports helped Oxendine with self-assurance. "I left Pembroke as a very timid individual. In college at Catawba I had to interact with white people," he remembers. "As I was able to play sports and got good at it, I was able to interact with white people."

He adds, "I got some good reinforcement and feedback, and that helped me deal with social and academic problems."

He says a strong message aspect of his book is that one can achieve through sport. And as one does that, it impacts on one's total life.

The veteran educator says while his background is not total writing, he has written in the areas of psychology learning and leadership. Sports psychology is his speciality.

"My own area of academic endeavor is not the American Indians. I have not been a professional Indian. I've always been recognized as an Indian. I'm proud of my Indian heritage," he comments.

He says this book was an effort he saw to communicate to American Indians and non-Indians the history of Indian in one particular facet of a history. He sees sport as being a very important part of the heritage and background of Indians.

Oxendine says one event, more than any other inspiring him to write the book was a visit to Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Shortly after the 1973 siege at Wounded Knee, the federal government invited him along with others, who included Billy Mills, to do a workshop on sports and leisure as one of the "healing things" at Pine Ridge Reservation.

"Tensions were high and there was a lot of stress among the Indians there - a lot of anger," Oxendine comments.

The 57-year-old Lumbee Indian says he saw depressed Indian youth there. "They had athletic ability, but no aspirations to go off the reservation and compete at higher levels. They had no hope, no ambition." He says he wanted to do something about that and gave a personal pep-rally. "Hey! Indians are suppose to be good at sport. We have a rich sport tradition."

After the workshop, Oxendine returned home determined to write his book. "As I got into this book I found I had to put it in a cultural perspective. I had to show how it fit in the scheme of cultural life."

He says he got consumed by it. In creating the 326-page volume, the author found out how sports were before Columbus. He learned sport was important then because it wasn't just "fun and game." It was steeped in tradition.

He says he started out with the idea to highlight Indian sports heroes... to show who the people are... who should be models. He explains the criterion for selecting the sports personalities in the book.

"I arbitrarily established that they had to be nationally prominent persons. I had to restrict it to people who were clearly meritorious on the national level."

The college professor says the book's strong message to American Indians and non-Indians is to understand that sports tend to develop self confidence. "In sport we learn about ourselves. We learn to interact, compete and work together. And we need that in this society."

And the writer says even though he has a strong background in writing books, (He has written three, and chapters in others) he has no marketing expertise. He adds that the primary role of the book company is to market the book. Human Kinetics Publishers, Inc. of Champaign, Ill is publisher of the Oxendine book.

Oxendine says he wants to help out some with the marketing. "I hope to get this book in the public schools around the nation so not only Indians can read and establish pride about their accomplishments, but also non-Indians can read about the accomplishments of one group of people."

Last Thursday was the first official book-signing by Oxendine, who dedicated the book to his brother, Earl Hughes Oxendine, a retired educator. In the honor the author wrote of Earl Hughes, one of seven siblings: "His uncommon courage, goodwill, and spirit of family and community exhibit the best of the Big Bud Clan." The author is one of eight children born to the late Tom and Georgie Rae Oxendine of Pembroke.

Oxendine says he chose Old Main as the setting for the book-signing because the building stands as a symbol of hope of the future-a building which represents education and the Lumbee people.

*American Indian Sports Heritage* is available at PSU's Book store. Or write to: Human Kinetics Books, Box 5076, Champaign, IL 61820.



Dr. Joseph B. Oxendine of Temple University is autographing his book on "American Indian Sports Heritage" at PSU's Native American Resource Center. Oxendine, a native of Robeson County, dedicated the 326-page, hard-bound book to his brother Hughes, who resides in Robeson County. The book, which is full of pictures, sells for \$33.60, including tax, can be purchased at the PSU Book Store.