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"Building Communicative Bridges
In A Tri-Racial Setting"



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New agreement for judgeship

From Staff Reports

On Monday April 4, 1988, Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan met with members of the local legislative delegation of Sen. David Parnell and Rep. Daniel De Vane, Pete Hasty and Sidney Locks and members of the committee to elect Julian Pierce. The meeting was held concerning the

committee's request for a special legislative session to re-open the filing for the new superior court judgeship in order to allow a minority candidate to file for the position.

After much discussion, in the spirit of Julian Pierce, a compromise was reached where by the election process would not be disrupted, instead an additional superior court judgeship would be proposed for Robeson County and the delegation and Lt. Governor would fully support its creation.

The implementing legislation will be proposed in the legislative session which will take place in June, 1988. All agreed that the present laws relating to the death of a candidate after the filing deadline need to be addressed, but such changes should not apply to the current election.

By this act all parties, at the meeting, agreed that this step will further the cause of unity in Robeson County.

Pembroke attorney Dexter Brooks has announced that he is very interested in the judgeship which is to be created. District Attorney Joe Freeman Britt would win automatically, but the office of district attorney would be vacant and would require an appointment. With this agreement, those desiring to vote effectively against Joe Freeman Britt would not have the opportunity for eight years, the length of the superior court judgeship.

local bulletin

SGH SEEKS TEEN VOLUNTEERS

Southeastern General Hospital needs 75 teen volunteers for summer work. A variety of jobs, from delivering mail to working directly with patients, is available for 14 to 19 year olds.

Teen volunteers must have a grade average of at least 70 for the past school year, be available for a personal interview and a series of orientation classes.

For more information and an application call 738-6441, extension 7521.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

Dr. Earl C. Lowry

By Barbara Brayboy-Locklear
Special To The Carolina Indian Voice

He's a Robeson native son whose philosophy throughout life has been: "If you want to leave footprints in the sands of time, you'd better wear work shoes." In the case of Dr. Earl C. Lowry, the physician still wears his moccasins.

He's traveled the world and dined with European queens. He's "doctored" soldiers, generals and presidents on native and foreign lands. And four times each year he travels "home" to Robeson County to visit relatives and ride through the countryside around the community of Elrod to reminisce of years growing up.

Lowry was the first of eight children born in 1907 to Rev. D. F. and Jessie Hatcher Lowry. His father had just two years before become the first student to graduate from the Croatan Indian Normal School located outside Pembroke.

Young Lowry spent his years attending Hopewell Graded School. After school hours were spent feeding cows, mules and hogs on the "good-size" farm his father tended in the Elrod Community. There, too, were hours spent plowing the land. After graduating from graded school, he entered Cherokee Indian Normal School.

Once there, he lost himself in study and learning during school hours. After class, he did likewise - only in a different setting.

While waiting for his mail-carrier father to complete his route and pick him up for return home, the high school student would wander across the road from school into the medical office of Dr. Governor Locklear. Once there, his ever-curious mind took control. The stage was set for an experience that was to have a lasting affect on the young boy who knew he'd one day be a physician.

"Dr. Locklear took an interest in me because I discussed and appeared interested in what he was doing," Lowry remembers. "I knew right then I was going to study medicine and I pursued it."

"Often times when Dr. Locklear had a patient, he'd send me back in his pharmacy to get the patient two ounces of cough syrup and label it," he adds. There was never any money paid to Lowry during his visits to observe. The knowledge he received was pay enough.

Lowry graduated as president and top student in his class from Cherokee Indian Normal School in 1924. His father encouraged him to go away to college, and he enrolled at McKendree College in Lebanon, Ill., where he studied pre-med before transferring to the University of Chattanooga a year later.

Taking advantage of a college rule whereas an "A" student could carry an extra course load, Lowry easily completed the four-year program in three. With monies from his Methodist Church scholarship spent, he returned to the Indian Normal school as a teacher. There he taught for two years until he earned enough money to pursue his dream of becoming a doctor. With 1,400 dollars in hand, he enrolled in Vanderbilt University Medical School in Nashville, Tenn. In 1933, at age 25, he graduated. He had trained in general surgery. His residency followed at Vanderbilt.

The 81-year-old colonel says he didn't return to his native county to practice because he'd trained himself and qualified in a certain way in surgical procedures that wouldn't be available in any hospital in Robeson County. He was doing major cases that were preferred by practitioners to surgeons. He adds that another factor in his decision to not return was, since the days of Henry Berry Lowrie, he'd been interested in a soldier because his ancestors helped fight every war this country ever fought. "I was not only interested in surgery, but military surgery."

So he went into the U.S. Army. But before he did, he married, a Vanderbilt classmate, Olivia King. "I probably would have married the nurse sooner, but interns during that time didn't make money. They received just room, board and laundry," Lowry laughs.

It was the beginning of a long career for the couple. Mrs. Lowry never practiced nursing after marriage; she chose instead to follow her husband all over the world where he practiced medicine in multiple languages.

He says he saw anybody that was sick and who wanted care. He was repeatedly appointed to serve on special missions. In many instances, soldiers were transferred to Lowry's station for surgery.

Among the physician's famous patients were Charles De Gaulle, President Dwight Eisenhower, Generals Omar Nelson Bradley and George Patton. He took care of Patton for years

and in his final illness. The general's death certificate bears Lowry's signature. Of his forty-some years in service, he says, "I was a soldier and did what I was told."

The busy grandfather won't say he's retired. Since leaving active military duty, he has served as a special consultant and is subject to call if needed. When he isn't on the golf course, he's pitting around the grounds that surround his Des Moines, Iowa home. He enjoys gardening because it evokes memories of times spent working the earth as a youngster.

Then there's the pet project he started over 40 years ago of writing his book on Henry Berry Lowrie. The life and times of the legendary figure are of special interest to the physician in that Lowrie was a brother of the physician's grandfather, Calvin Lowry.

Lowry is fascinated by the Lowrie era. "I have a complete documented story of Henry Berry from his birth until he left Robeson County in 1872." He says he has spent recent years in studying what the outlaw/hero did after he left the area. "I've interviewed his descendants, been to his grave and have researched his conduct following his departure from NC." Lowry says that two of Henry Berry Lowrie's sons personally took him to the gravesite in Tenn.

The writer/physician says he hasn't published his book yet because he wants to be completely certain it's 100 percent accurate. And that he has other duties keeping him from having time to donate to final documentation of information. Two weeks ago, Lowry returned to the area where he grew up. He attended worship service at Hopewell Church Land, later strolled through the church cemetery, pausing to read the inscriptions on the weathered headstones, his mother's included.

It was a time to reflect on memories of friends and relatives gone on in death. It was too, a time for the farm-boy doctor to send a message of hope and encouragement to others of his race, especially the young people.

"I am positive that one's success is a product of what one puts out. It doesn't make a difference whether one's an Indian, white or black. If one can excel in the mission which one's assigned, the world will take note."

The doctor's prescription is to be taken in four dosages. "Stick to (true) facts briefly. Always be on time at any assignment, including a class. Be awake, sober and ready to receive whatever is conducted during a class session. Serve up accuracy and completeness and others will come ask you to do things."

Dr. Earl C. Lowry's footprints in the sands of time prove he knows what he's talking about. His is a prescription any age patient can use.



Dr. Earl C. Lowry, stands in the backyard of his late father's homeplace in Pembroke.

A Tribute To JULIAN PIERCE

Editor's note: The following is a tribute to the late Julian T. Pierce. It contains a eulogy given today at The North Carolina Capitol in Raleigh by Mrs. Christine Griffin.

We have come to the state's capitol today to eulogize Julian T. Pierce. He must not be forgotten. He must be recorded in our history as a great leader, a man who fought for justice, equality and a better life for all people in Robeson County. His name must be recorded in the history books as a man whose compassion was bigger than himself. A man who like Dr. Martin Luther King had gone to the mountain top and had seen the Glory of the Lord. He saw a people who had hope in their eyes who had had no cause to hope before. He saw a people who was determined to bring about changes to our county, changes that will allow us to be the best we can possibly be. Changes that will destroy the forces of evil in Robeson County that have oppressed us throughout all of our generations. We must not forget the man who in his short life accomplished more for our people than any leader before him.

Julian received a letter a few months ago that called him the Honorable Julian T. Pierce. He said to me "that is incorrect, I have not earned that title yet." Well I am here to tell you today that Julian T. Pierce has earned that honor. On March 26, 1988 at approximately one o'clock in the morning the ballot was cast and Julian won by an overwhelming landslide. Therefore, his tombstone should read "Here lies The Honorable Julian T. Pierce". A man of compassion. A man who had a passion for justice and equality for all people. Julian hated the poverty and oppression in Robeson County that destroyed the hopes of our people. He hated the drugs that have been dumped into our county to destroy the minds and control the hearts of our people.

Before Julian's resignation from Lumbee River Legal Services as Executive Director, I had served as the Administrator of the program for five years. He allowed me to look into his heart. He shared the contents of his mind with me, and I saw a man destined to be a great leader for all that was good and right. I saw a man possessed with his love for people. I saw a man whose intelligence and insight was far advanced over any I had met before. I saw a lonely man whose burden and dedication to his work left very little time for himself. I saw a man who cared very little about material things.

I remember vividly the morning he told me that he had decided to seek the superior court judgeship. He was sitting at his desk with his leg thrown over the side. I looked at him and "I said are you serious" and "he said yes. I cannot allow a cold incompassionate man like Joe Freeman Britt to sit in judgment over our people. I must oppose him." I sensed the urgency that he felt and I said "Julian I've got mixed feelings about this. I understand your concern, but I really hate to lose you from the program; you know we can not replace you." He said "Christine this thing is too important to allow Joe Freeman Britt to step into that position unchallenged." I said "I understand. But if you are serious about running you've got to change your image. You've got to buy you a pair of shoes and get rid of those with holes in the bottom. You have got to buy you some suits and get rid of the polyester pants you wear." He laughed and said "I know."

Julian gave of his time, his heart, and his finances. He had very little left for himself. He loved people--He loved his friends--He loved his family--Most of all, he loved his children.

He was Executive Director of Lumbee River Legal Services for 9 years. During that time his number one commandment was to treat clients with dignity. He said "They suffer enough indignities on the outside; they suffer enough oppression and poverty on the outside; in our office, they are somebody."

Julian could not have given up the fight for justice and equality if he had known his life depended on it. His compassion for people was overwhelming and all consuming. His sincerity and dedication to his work was amazing. His passion for justice, equality and a better life for all people in our community was more important to him than himself.

He was my hero; he was my mentor; he was my friend; he was my superior but he never made me feel inferior.

He was the best hope that we had. He was our general--but the army of people whose lives were touched by him must carry on his fight to stamp out injustice, oppression, bigotry, poverty and all the ills that go with them.

His campaign slogan was that we need changes in Robeson County. We need to tear out the roots that nurture bigotry, hate, and oppression so that all people can gain their rightful place in a society that is big enough for all of us.

But he would say to us this evening that we must not use the same weapons that have been used against us to bring about change. We must use the electoral ballot to elect public officials that will represent all of us regardless of race, creed or religion.

I said to him a few weeks ago, "Julian, you need to start telling people about the things you have accomplished--you need to tell them about the health consortium that you worked to establish, you need to tell them about your work on the Lumbee recognition petition. You need to tell them about the work you did for school merger. You need to be recognized for your accomplishments." He said to me "Christine, the fact that all people have access to quality health care in Robeson County regardless of their ability to pay, and when we gain federal recognition, and the fact that all children can now have access to a quality education is recognition enough for me."

Julian T. Pierce represented the best in the human spirit and as I said to him on many occasions, I loved that spirit in him.

I have never met a man like Julian before and because of the uniqueness of his spirit I do not anticipate meeting another. I feel blessed to have known and worked closely with him for five years. I never failed him in life, and I can not fail him in death even if I wanted to. It's a religion to me now. I will spend the rest of my life carrying on the work that Julian started. However, I am a small pawn to be used for this purpose. We must all join together for justice and equality. We must all join together to stamp out the influence of evil men and women among us who want to retain the power to oppress, enslave and control us.

Julian T. Pierce would expect no less of us. He, like Dr. Martin Luther King had a dream, a dream that someday we would be judged by the content of our character and not by the color of our skin. A dream that we use the electoral ballot to overthrow the forces that oppress us. Together we can make that dream a reality.

News Brief



GERALD STRICKLAND

Governor Jim Martin has appointed Pembroke resident Gerald Strickland to the state Board of Sanitarian Examiners. Strickland replaces Edward M. Wilkins and will serve until Dec. 15, 1991.

Strickland, 38, is the environmental health supervisor for the Robeson County Health Department. He received his bachelor of arts degree in history at Pembroke State University in 1976.

Strickland, president of the Pembroke Jaycees, is a member of the North Carolina Public Health Association. He is also a member of the North Carolina Environmental Health Association.

The state Board of Sanitarian Examiners licenses sanitarian examiners and regulates sanitarian operations in North Carolina.

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ISN'T THIS A

Beautiful Day!

***** SCHOOL NEWS *****



Pamela L. Brooks, a junior nursing student at University of North Carolina at Greensboro, has received a Fuld Foundation Fellowship to attend the Fifth International Conference and Exhibition on Cancer Nursing in London.

Brooks, daughter of Paul and Pauline Brooks of Route 1, Pembroke will attend the conference, "Cancer Nursing: A Revolution in Care," on Sept. 2-9. She is among 100 Fuld Fellows, who will receive airfare, housing and expenses from the fellowship program.

The conference is sponsored by the International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care and is expected to draw approximately 1,500 nurses. The Fuld Foundation is the largest private U.S. foundation supporting nursing education.

As a Fuld Fellow, she also has been invited to attend the April 6-10 convention of the National Student Nurses Association in Pittsburgh.