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Festive Gospel Music Festival to be held April 28

By Gene Warren

In an event which is being promoted as a first for Pembroke State University and a "cultural event," a Gospel Music Festival, sponsored by PSU, will be held Saturday, April 28, at 7 p.m. at PSU's Performing Arts Center.

Five different groups will be performing with all varieties of gospel music.

These include:
*Willie Lowery of Shannon and Lori Locklear Cole of Rowland.

*Shelia Lowry of Pembroke.

*The Meares of Lumberton.

*The Paynes of Ohio.

*The PSU Gospel Choir.

Admission is \$5 for everyone. The Performing Arts Center is in charge of ticket sales. Its phone number is 521-0778. Checks made out to "PAC" or credit card orders will be accepted.

Tickets are available at the following PAC ticket outlets: Dee's Hallmark Shop in Lumberton, McNeill Jewelry in Lumberton and Red Springs, Quick Copy in Laurinburg, and The Dancer at Cross Pointe in Fayetteville. Tickets are also being sold by the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association in Pembroke, and Christian Book Store, Comic Book Shop, Merrimac Music Co., and the Robeson Baptist Association in Lumberton.

The idea of having the gospel festival was that of PSU Chancellor Joseph B. Oxendine, who appointed a 10-member committee of PSU and community representatives to plan the event.

"I want us to have a good, lively enjoyable gospel sing," said Oxendine. "I would like for us to fill the house, make a joyful noise, do it successfully and do it every year."

Oxendine said PSU wants to sponsor it "because gospel singing is part of the culture of this region. It is traditional and a good art form."

However, he cautioned that it cannot be an "old-fashioned revival" because PSU is a state-supported institution. "It cannot be a church service with preaching, testimonies and altar calls," he said. "Rather this is a program of music."

The gospel festival committee chaired by Harold D. Jacobs of Pembroke, believes it has an outstanding program for the event.

Willie Lowery and Lori Locklear Cole are part of a group called "The Beacon Lights," who will be performing. Lowery, whose musical achievements include writing the musical score for the outdoor drama, "Strike at the Wind," has written and published 300 songs. His musical career has taken him around the country. He has been the recipient of the Hinda Honigman Cup for musical composition, presented by the N.C. Federation of Music Clubs. He has also been part of a group called "Lumbee," whose recording, "Streets of Gold," was chosen No. 1 in pop music in North Carolina and the "Pick

Hit of the Week" by ABC Magazine.

Lori Locklear Cole has traveled up and down the East Coast as a singer and has also sung with the Tyler Family, a gospel group from Shannon. Other members of "The Beacon Lights" are Kenny Cole, husband of Lori; Clyde Jones, Gwen Locklear and Gwendolyn Dimery, all from Robeson County.

Shelia Lowry has sung on television, at churches in the surrounding area, for clubs and for the "Miss Lumbee" pageant. A senior Music Education major at PSU, she is also choir director at First United Methodist Church of Pembroke. A mezzo soprano, she sings contemporary Christian music with one of her favorites being, "In the Name of the Lord," sung by Sandi Patti, one of the great voices in gospel music today.

The Meares have performed in all sections of the eastern United States and have a weekly radio program at 4 p.m. on WSTS Christian radio station in Laurinburg. Managed by Thomas Meares, they include his wife, the former Cathy Britt, plus Wayne Britt (Cathy's cousin), and Charlie Nobles. Among the places they have performed are the Baptist World Mission Rally in South Carolina and the Methodist Camp Meeting in Delaware. They have a number of recordings among their achievements.

The Paynes, made up of five family members from Ohio, have had their talents displayed on both video and through albums. They have been described as one of the most creative forces in southern gospel music, having recorded their first album in 1981 and many since then. The group includes the founders, Mike Payne and his wife, Loreen, plus Payne's brothers, Mark and Keith, along with a cousin, Bill Sizemore. Joining the group in 1988 was Reggie Grimmett. Mike Payne is considered one of gospel music's finest writers. He co-wrote with Ronny Hinson "When He was on the Cross (I was on His Mind)," which was named "Song of the Year" at The Singing News Fan Awards in both 1985 and 1986.

Completing the list of entertainers for the gospel music festival will be the Pembroke State University Gospel Choir, a group of 14 first organized in 1981. This choir has performed in Robeson and adjoining counties and also in South Carolina. President of the choir is Jennifer McLean of Council. Director is Demetrius Strickland of Rowland, and pianist is Robert Williams of Salem. Other members include: Durwood Bynum, Salisbury; Rosalyn Edwards, Winston-Salem; Donna High, White Plains, N.Y.; Nicola Kearney, Sanford; Sabrina Maloy, Laurinburg; Monica Kornigay, Goldsboro; Ellen McLaughlin, Southern Pines; Keisha Parks, Hubbardston, Mass.; Tony Spaulding, Laurinburg; Audrey Taylor, Nassau, Bahamas; and Ravondalyn Thompson, Albany, N.Y. Glenn Miller of Lumberton, a professional director, will also be assisting the choir on April 28.

Chancellor Oxendine says the gospel music festival will be "good for Protestants, Catholics, Jews and persons unrelated to any organized religion."

In Memory of Julian Pierce: Keep his dream alive May 8



by Connee Brayboy

Julian T. Pierce was brutally murdered in his Wakulla home March 25, 1988. The Lumbee Indian attorney was a candidate for a newly created (for minorities) Superior Court Judgeship. He was opposed for the position by Joe Freeman Britt who had served as Robeson County's District Attorney for sixteen years. Pierce's candidacy was a symbol of hope for progressive minded citizens who strived toward justice, fair and open government, equality in the judicial system... a symbol of hope for a better world for our children.

Unfortunately, Julian Pierce did not live to see his dream fulfilled. He dreamed of a safe, healthy environment in which to live and raise a family. Even in those troublesome times that have intensified since his death...Pierce's candidacy held out a beacon of hope...hope for a county where the tri-racial population could attend school together, work together in harmony toward one common goal of unity and brotherhood... a goal of equality and fairness in the workplace as well as judicial system...Judge Pierce would be a judge who tempered justice with mercy...He would extend compassion...He would be fair as well as honest.

His tragic death for a while obviously destroyed any pretense of harmony. His death became a statistic and many people believe that his murder remains unsolved. The seriousness of the problems faced by citizens then and now are still not being addressed to the extent that all people feel free and unoppressed... There are public servants who were in positions of power then, and still are, who refuse to take any dramatic action to correct the ills that pervade the county. The sheriff of this county, as well as other elected or appointed officials, have seemingly chosen to ignore the problems and have shown little that indicates the urgency required to correct the problems we all face. We all know that the problems facing us won't go away. The problems remain. They won't disappear. Many of our officials seem to react to situations and have failed in any attempts to provide positive leadership and guidance. Many in elected positions have apparently expended their energies seeking financial and political gain. They have manipulated people through the court system, their place of employment, the school system and any other area they could use to divide the people of the county and maintain their own positions of power. The list of unsolved murders here, rampant drug distribution, increase in violent crimes, selective prosecution of certain individuals, failure to arrest others or seek indictments when evidence is available, allowing convicted drug dealers to walk free, the generation of young people who seem to be addicted to or involved in the drug distribution...these are all evils that we have to face....These are a small part of the bitter

harvest the voters of Robeson County must face... Julian Pierce struggled against division and suspicion. He made tremendous strides toward easing generations of hatred, distrust and division. If he had lived to see some of the fruits of his labor, life would have changed dramatically for the better for many oppressed people. His message was one of sacrifice. His message was one of service. His message was one of compassion. His message was one of equality. His message was one of accountability. Because this was his message, members of all races supported him. Because all races supported him, hope remains alive...Truth can still be recognized.

It has been said that evil flourishes when good men do nothing. The problems we face are our problems. They have been created by us and we have allowed them to continue. We are ultimately responsible. Each of us must accept responsibility for our destiny. Each of us must do more to make home a better and safer place to live. The spirit of Julian Pierce must not be forgotten. History will record that he was a great leader. History will recall him as a man who fought for justice, equality and a better life for all people. I believe that he looked into the future and saw the opportunity before us May 8th. He saw a people who was determined to bring about changes that will destroy the forces of evil that have oppressed for generations. His campaign slogan was one of change. We must tear down the barriers 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. He foresaw Robesonians united in their efforts to correct the system that has failed us all.

Julian Pierce's spirit cries out to us. We hear him saying: "You must not use the same weapons that were used against me. You must use the ballot and elect public officials who will represent all of us." We hear his spirit calling for a record turnout of voters May 8th. It was his dream that someday we would all be judged on the content of our character and not by the color of our skin. He dreamed that we would use the ballot to overthrow the forces that oppress, the chains that bind us to an economic, social, educational, and political system that is not working in the best interest of all people.

On May 3, 1988 Joe Freeman Britt was defeated for Superior Court Judge by the voters of Robeson County. Julian Pierce won by 2500 votes. Julian was not here in body to serve. It was a shallow victory. Britt serves now by default. He lost the election and continues to serve. That is not right. Sadly, the victor is dead...He cannot serve although he would urge us to continue the struggle.

On May 8, 1990 we have an opportunity to experience a victory that is going to be tangible. We can unseat Hubert Stone and others who do not support equality in economics, education or politics and do not especially support "justice for all."

If each of us will remember the past and consciously decide to keep the spirit of Julian Pierce alive, there will be no more Hubert Stones...no more Joe Freeman Britts who seem to rule with iron hands...People who specialize in oppression, deprivation of positions, job opportunities, educational equality, fairness and honesty. Leaders who epitomize evil exist because of our failure to do what we know is right. The problems we like to attribute to them ultimately evolved because we have failed to take our responsibility seriously. We fail so many times to move with confidence and authority. We are all capable of articulating the problems. We are all capable of quoting the proper statistics. But we must do more. We must begin that first positive step May 8th. We must exercise our right to vote. We must vote for change. Afterwards we must demand accountability from our elected officials. We must vote for change. To do so is a positive statement that we will no longer tolerate an environment that is dangerous for an Indian to challenge a political system. Julian Pierce would expect no less from us. Remember Julian Pierce. He was elected but unable to serve. Remember Julian Pierce and all others who have fallen victim to Robeson County politics. Our survival requires concise and determined action in the voting booth May 8th.

This article was written by the editor and contains her opinion and view of the political system in Robeson County. It is written here as a tribute to the spirit of Julian Pierce and as an incentive to turn out the vote May 8th.



Principal Bill James Brewington pictured is Aaron Godwin, overall winner in the Science Fair.

Students honored for Science & Math

Recently Pembroke Junior High held its annual Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Fair. Student projects were set up in the library with the following winners being announced:

In the mathematics fair the first place and overall winner was Amy Locklear. The second place winner was Jeremy Jones and the third place winner was Wendell Locklear.

In the Science Fair there were three categories. In the Physical Science area Antonio Wilkins was the first place winner. Kevin Lowry was the second place winner and Marcus

Bullard was the third place winner. In the Earth Science category Shannon Chavis was the first place winner. Kim Oxendine was the second place winner and Alissa Hunt was the third place winner. In the Biological Science category, Aaron Godwin won first place. Ted Brooks won second place and Micah Oxendine won third place. The overall winner for the Science Fair was Aaron Godwin.

In the Social Studies Fair there were six categories. In the U.S. World category Anita Jacobs won first place. Kevin Brayboy won

second place and Adrienne Vasquez won third place. In the Local, State area Patrick Cummings won first place. Danyelle Hagans won second place and Matthew Cummings won third place. In the Economics area Betty Jo Freeman won first place. In the Sociology category Tracy Bullard won second place. In the Political

Science area Crystal Fedor won first place and Jody Cummings won second place. In the area of Geography Greg Bullard won second. The overall winner for the Social Studies Fair was Crystal Fedor.



Crystal Fedor, overall winner for the Junior High, receives a trophy from Social Studies Fair at Pembroke Principal Bill J. Brewington.

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