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Front Page Editorial of the Carolina Indian Voice

The World According to the Robesonian's Bill and O.H. Lewis and Other Items of Interest

The Robesonian's Bill Lewis and O.H. Lewis have a cockeyed view of life in Old Robeson, as we see it here on the front pages of the Carolina Indian Voice newspaper. It is a way of life that has not existed in Robeson County for some time now. The Lewis boys, in our opinion, will forever see things from a 1950s slant. Long before Indians and Blacks were allowed to participate in the political life in these parts. It will never be like that again, if right thinking people will keep their wits about them.

Someone recently asked us if the Lewis boys (Bill and O.H.) were related, and we said that we thought not except in a philosophical sense. In that way, Bill and O.H. are brothers, even twins, indeed! Both speak an 1860s Democratic Party mentality that ended when the North won the Civil War. The Lewis boys would have you believe that the Confederate flag is still flying. It isn't, no matter what they and Pat Buchanan say. The Civil War is over. The North won! Honest! Bill Lewis is actually the general manager of the Robesonian, the so-called county, daily newspaper. It has never been anything, in our opinion, than the voice of the conservative element in Robeson County that for so long ran things economically, politically and socially. Recent changes are quite evident in Robeson County, except in the pages of the Robesonian. Notice the masthead sometimes. How many Indians or Blacks do you see there? How many writers, either Black or Indian, do you see in the pages of the Robesonian? They have two writers, one Black, and one Indian. I suppose, to pacify the 65% of the population (40% Indian, 25% Black), Robeson County according to the 1990 Census, has a population of 105,610 made up of 40% Indian, 25% Black, and 35% White. (Figures rounded off). Ask the Robesonian sometimes how many Indians and Blacks actually work for them, other than those who ride by and throw the newspaper out in your yard. How many Indians and Blacks are in management, how many are reporters, how many work in the back in accounting or in the press room, or in any other capacity? Then ask them how many Indians and Blacks subscribe to the newspaper. It might shock you to find out that probably more than half the subscribers to the Robesonian are Indians. Aren't those amazing figures? We think these figures reflect badly on the Robesonian, which has put itself forth as the county, daily newspaper. Some may say that the Indian Voice is biased,

and we might agree with that sentiment. After all, as we have noted many times in the past, the Carolina Indian Voice tells it like it is mostly from the perspective of the Lumbee Indian.

White conservatives like Bill Lewis and O.H. Lewis, and the newest kid on the block, John Culbreth, the young editor of the Robesonian, continue to tell you what you think about this and that, including the latest fiasco about the tax valuations in the county. They never tell you that they speak with a White Conservative tongue, and do not always wish Indian and Black constituencies well, editorially speaking, of course. It's o.k. to be conservative, it's not o.k. to mislead you about it. Have you ever read a disclaimer in the Robesonian? Why is it that everything you are told in the Robesonian comes from the pens and heads and hearts of the Lewis boys, John Culbreth, Brant Clifton, and their ilk? Where are the Black voices? Where are the Indian voices? You won't find them on the editorial page of the Robesonian. So, as you can see, the world, according to Bill and O.H. Lewis is cockeyed to us here in the heart of the Lumbee community. If you were riding through Robeson County, and picked up a copy of the Robesonian to find out what the natives are up to, you would be fooled terribly.

These Lewis boys are something else. O.H. Lewis writes a column entitled "Reality Check." That it is someone suggested that the "O.H." stands for "Old Hot Air", but we don't hold to that extreme a position. O.H. is probably a nice fella, if you were ever allowed to get to know him. Our problem with him is he seldom has any thing good to say about a person of color and hardly ever anything bad to say about a WASP (White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant). For instance, he still praises former Sheriff Hubert Stone, and in the last few days has been singing the praises of White County Commissioner Marion Rice. History has shown that it is political death to be praised in the pages of O.H. Lewis' column. O.H. loves to bash Sheriff Glenn Maynor, County Commissioner E. B. Turner, School Superintendent Purnell Swett, and folk like that. We are not professional pollsters here but we have noticed that O.H. Lewis is a good way to read the political winds. If he gets on a run and gets to praising someone, say like former Sheriff Stone, that person will, more likely than not, lose the next election. If O.H. blasts you in his

column, you'll probably do well in the next election. O.H. Lewis is out of touch with reality, that's the reality check, as we see it here.

Bill Lewis, the general manager of the Robesonian, writes a column entitled "Bits and Pieces." It is that, for sure. Mostly his bits and pieces are about some conservative icon somewhere, and seldom showcases Indians or Blacks. Over the years, under Lewis' leadership (sic), Rev. E.B. Turner and Mr. Purnell Swett have received some of the hardest knocks in print from Lewis and his minions, and have, on occasion, been referred to disrespectfully as "E.B." and "Purnell" in print, certainly not a proper way to address someone holding their political positions. One a county commissioner and preacher, the other the county school superintendent. Terry Smith, who we consider to be the wrong-footed school board member, and Brant Clifton, the conservative darling writer at the Robesonian, recently blasted Mr. Swett by inferring that he had improperly kept Richard Monroe, a member of Mr. Swett's administrative staff, from speaking at a recent meeting at Robeson Community College concerning the controversial tax evaluation for the county. It was a story, as we see it, concocted from hot air. It is the kind of story that we have come to expect from The Lewis-led Robesonian.

It is our contention the extremist views of the Lewis boys, Brant Clifton and others on the pages of the Robesonian are one of the reasons that our county does not have a viable two party system. How can we be expected to support extreme conservatism in a county where Indians comprise a majority of the population and the Blacks comprise 25%? This extreme conservatism underlies the mentality, we believe, that Indians and Blacks should stay out of positions of power. It is our view that every political position, as well as all other positions, including the management of the Robesonian, should reflect the racial make up in the county.

And for the record, we give you those figures again: 40% Indian, 35% white, 25% Black. Therefore, we consider it proper and right that we have three Indian, three Black and three white County Commissioners. We consider it proper and right that the County Manager is Black.

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of front page editorials about the state of affairs here in Robeson County. More next week!

Church Activities

Revival at New Bethel

Revival services will be held at New Bethel Holiness Methodist Church March 17-23. Sunday evening service will begin at 7 p.m. Week night services will begin at 7:30 p.m. New Bethel is located on Ionia Church Road between Rowland and Fairmont. Evangelists will be Patrick L. Cummings, pastor of Hopewell Holiness Methodist Church, and Curtis Oxendine.



Joint Revival at Salem & Island Grove

A Joint Revival between Island Grove Baptist Church and Salem Missionary Baptist Church will be held March 10-15. Rev. Larry Locklear is pastor of Island Grove and Rev. Donald Bullard is pastor of Salem Missionary Baptist Church.

Services will begin at Island Grove, Highway 710, on Sunday, March 10 at 7 p.m. Monday and Tuesday night, March 11-12 services will begin at 7:30 p.m.

Services will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights at Salem Missionary Baptist Church, located in the Red Hill community. Services will begin at 7:30 p.m. each night.

The message will be delivered each night by different speakers. Special music will be provided. The public is cordially invited to attend these services by both pastors and both congregations.

Plate Sale & Yard Sale at Elrod Baptist

Elrod Baptist Church will be having a chicken/barbecue plate sale and a yard sale at the Pembroke Town Park on March 19, beginning at 6 a.m. Plates will be \$4, combination plates will be \$5. Various items will be available at the yard sale, including farm equipment, livestock, household items, clothes, etc.

Gospel Sing and Revival at Prospect UMC

Prospect United Methodist Church will be the site for a Gospel Sing on Saturday, March 16 at 7 p.m. Prospect UMC is located on Route 3, Maxton, across the road from Prospect School. The sing will feature the Singing Scotts, the Pierce Family and the Prospect Community Men.

This Gospel Sing is the prelude to the Spring Revival at Prospect UMC which will begin on the next Sunday, March 17 at 7 p.m. and at 7:30 p.m. Monday, March 18 through Friday, March 22. Plan to attend the gospel sing on March 16 and the revival on March 17-22.



Piney Grove's Annual Spelling Bee was held Feb. 8. The winner was Laura Suggs from Mrs. Debbie Meekin's sixth grade class. She is the daughter of Ronald and Brenda Thompson. Runner up was Pamanekia Taylor of Mrs. Shirley Cain's fifth grade class. Other participants were Emily Baker, Joshua Abner, Chad Bartley, Justin Jones, Lance Spaulding, Christa Canady, Shanena Britt, Laura Oxendine and Mitchell Williams. Mrs. Delois Lowry was the caller. Judges were Mrs. Shirley Cain, Mrs. Della Lamb and Mrs. Marian Emanuel. Shown is Laura Suggs, Piney Grove's Spelling Bee Champ.

Piney Grove School's Activities



The Robeson Soil and Water Conservation District Essay Contest winners from Piney Grove School are shown above. From left to right they are: Sharina Locklear, first place; India Jones, second place; and Chandru Graham, third place. Congratulations to these winners.

On January 26 the cafeteria of Piney Grove School had Super Bowl bag lunches in honor of Super Bowl XXX. The cafeteria also had a contest of who was going to win and what he score would be. Tickets were checked and winners found. First place winner was Tiffany Connors from Mrs. Hedgepeth's first grade class. Second place was Dewey Hammonds from Mrs. Wanda Locklear's first grade class. Third place were winners Whitney Blanks from Mrs. Brooks' pre-k class and Brandon Brayboy from Mrs. Eunila Locklear's sixth grade class.

Walk/Run to benefit Cystic Fibrosis

The Southeastern Lifestyle Fitness Center will sponsor a 5K (3.1 mile) Walk/Run for benefit the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation on Saturday, March 30, at the Center, 4895 Fayetteville Road. Registration will begin at 9 a.m., event at 9:30 a.m. Free refreshments, trophies and prizes. The entry fee is \$5 per person. For more information, call Barb Bullard at 738-5433.

Robeson County Farm Bureau President Attends Conference



Study Commission on Agricultural Waste. N.C. Farm Bureau Labor Specialist Paula Gupton said that the organization would be following possible changes in Workman's Compensation law this year, particularly as it applies to agricultural employers. She noted that this year increased attention would be given to migrant housing inspections and all regulations as they apply to Worker Protection Standards (WPS).

N.C. Farm Bureau General Counsel Julian Philpott told the county presidents that at least a dozen counties would face tax revaluation issues this year and emphasized the need for Farm Bureau members to stay active at the local, state and national levels. He said, "Considering the many elective offices that will be voted on in 1996, this will no doubt be a watershed year in the political arena."

North Carolina Farm Bureau officials from the "mountains to the coast" met recently in Raleigh for the organization's annual President's Conference. Robeson County Farm Bureau President Lycourous Lowry was briefed on priority issues affecting state farmers, including initiatives to address animal waste and nutrient management concerns. Farm Bureau staff also reported on possible recommendations to come from Governor Jim Hunt's Blue Ribbon

County Farm Bureau Presidents, state vice presidents and board members meet annually in Raleigh to discuss state and national agricultural concerns, as well as issues of local importance which may require unified action. N.C. Farm Bureau President W.B. Jenkins explained, "Farm Bureau operates on the principle of 'grassroots' leadership, whereby state policy and action is determined by the 100 county Farm Bureaus."

Activities at Pembroke Housing Authority

On February 24, 1996 eight youth from the Housing Authority attended the Rockingham Speed Race at Rockingham, NC. The youth enjoyed all the excitement that took place at the race.

We would like to thank Pembroke State University Campus Police for getting the tickets for this event. We would also like to thank our volunteers for giving their time to help chaperon. A big thank you goes to Hardee's of Maxton and the Express Stop of Pembroke for their contributions to this event.

February 29 was a big night for ten of the youth from Pembroke Housing Authority who went to see the play "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" at the Pembroke State University Performing Arts Center. The play offered entertainment for everyone who attended.

Youth from the Housing Authority attended an Animal Show held at the Robeson County Public Library Auditorium on March 2. The event was to help educate the youth about different types of animals. Some of the youth were in an interview with Channel 13 News at the end of the show.

Upcoming Activities
On March 15 Pembroke Housing Authority 4-H Club, "Helping Hands," will be sponsoring a Rock-a-Thon at the Youth Center at Maynor Manor. This exciting event will be from 5:00 p.m. til 11:00 p.m. The proceeds will be used by the 4-H Club for special projects.
Mitchell "Bosco" Locklear, Drug Elimination Program Coordinator, encourages everyone to come out and support this worthy cause. There will be refreshments for everyone to enjoy. Locklear said.