

Rep. Ron Sutton announces bid for re-election to House of Representatives-District 85



major accomplishment was my bill to extend the life of the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center. Without an extension of time to raise additional funds, the Indian Cultural Center would have gone out of existence in May 1997. My bill not only gave them four additional years, it caused the entire Board to be reorganized and placed the Board under the oversight of the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs. The new Indian Cultural Center Board is to be sworn in on December 15 in Raleigh.

"Another of my statewide bills became law on December 1st. It is the Speeding to Elude Law. This bill significantly strengthens the penalties for attempting to speed and elude a law enforcement official in the performance of their duty. Now the officer can break off the chase once he can identify the vehicle. In addition, there are eight aggravating factors that when violated can cause the charge to be a felony with a loss of driver's license up to three years. Similar bills have been filed for the past several years without success. My bill makes N.C. one of the toughest states on eluding drivers. It is expected to save many lives each year.

"When the Senate Budget had provisions for 6 million dollars for a University of North Carolina at Pembroke Dormitory and one million for the Southeastern Farmers Market and Agricultural Center, I fought diligently to cause the House leadership to keep them in the final budget. This was a combined effort of the entire delegation and as the senior member of the delegation I worked exhaustively to coordinate our efforts.

"One of the most significant bills passed this past session was the Excel-

lent Schools Act. This Act, with bipartisan support, significantly raises the salary of teachers, raises student performance standards, raises the standards for prospective teachers entering the profession, and places more accountability at the school and individual levels.

"Another important accomplishment is the stronger DWI law. It significantly toughens sentencing and allows the state to take and sell the vehicles of repeat offenders, with the proceeds going to the public schools. The purpose of this law is to "get tough" with repeat drunk drivers who continue to drive when their license is suspended or revoked for a prior DWI offense. While I supported the final DWI Bill I worked diligently to modify the vehicle confiscation provision in committee. Although I could not get them totally eliminated, I was able to let them softened somewhat with provisions that allow certain owners other than the charged driver to keep their vehicles.

"I chaired a Judiciary II Subcommittee rewriting the dog fighting laws of this state. It is now a felony and penalties are tougher and more easily enforced. Another bill I handled in committee and on the House floor was one making individuals civilly liable for their rescue costs when they willfully ignore proper authorities asking them to leave certain potential disaster areas and later are rescued at government expense. This should reduce taxpayer expenses rescuing people that cause their own dilemmas.

"In addition to the above bills, I was involved in several others that had an impact on the citizens in District 85.

"One bill allowed the North Caro-

lina Indian Cultural Center access to \$1,000,000.00 for operating expenses. This was unrelated to my prior bill extending the life of the center.

"A second bill eliminated the position of the Robeson County Coroner. The county commissioners had not filled this vacant position and asked that it be eliminated to conform with most other counties in the state.

"Another of my bills requires all statewide district attorneys to give a written notice of dismissals when the defendant and/or their attorney are not in court. This prevents instances of individuals remaining in jail at taxpayers expense after charges against them have been dismissed.

"I was the chief sponsor of a Resolution honoring the life of the late former Representative, Dr. Adolph L. Dial. His family and friends were invited to be present in the House Chamber during the presentation honoring his life and service to society. All other local delegation members joined in co-sponsoring and speaking on the Resolution.

"Another important responsibility I had was serving on the Congressional Redistricting Committee. We re-drew the 12 Congressional Districts and I was able to keep Robeson, Hoke and Scotland Counties basically in the same posture as before redistricting.

"I am working with various Hoke County individuals and groups on efforts to consider the merits of developing Hoke County Commissioner Districts. This is a matter that the entire delegation will be considering in the near future.

"I directed vigorous attention to the amount of highway construction, highway maintenance and ground highway safety improvements ongoing in the District. I have led the fight for stoplights, improved road shoulder and road construction.

"The much needed turn lanes and stop light improvements at the NC 710/SR 1339 West of Pembroke is

soon forth coming. Construction has begun on the intersection after the contract was awarded a month ago. A much needed new light was installed in Lumber Bridge, another near Prospect School and at other locations through the District.

"The five laning of Prospect Road from NC 711 to Eureka Road near St. Annah Church is a product of my initiative. This will be a tremendous safety factor near the university as well as enhances the looks of the university and surrounding area.

"My membership on the Appropriations Committee, Sub-Committee on Transportation allows me to keep constant contact with Department of Transportation officials. In addition my personal and professional relationship with the two DOT Board Members serving this region is also a factor in getting things done for this District.

"Presently, ion between sessions, I am a member of the Juvenile Code Sub-Committee of the Governor's Juvenile Task Force as we rewrite the juvenile laws of this state. In addition I am working with Wilton Wilkerson and the other members of our Litter Task Force in Robeson County to improve our litter situation. This is a group I formed to address the far reaching problems of litter in Robeson County.

"There are several things that still

need to be addressed. Locally we need more funding for the Farmers Market and Agricultural Center. The University of North Carolina at Pembroke needs funds for the Economic Development Center Building on campus. The new North Carolina Indian Cultural Center Board will need assistance as they move forward towards construction at the cultural center. We need to get additional industry paying decent wages to replace and add to those that are leaving or reducing employees. We need to continue

funding our public schools, improve teaching salaries, and explore more alternative learning opportunities for our students.

"Although certain crimes are on the decline, we need more state troopers as the number of drivers and vehicles on the roads are increasing significantly each year. We need to explore more effective and efficient ways for the state to assist local law enforcement with the drug problem in our state.

"Another key area that must be addressed is that of the hog farmers and our environment. We are working diligently to resolve this issue in a manner acceptable to the farmers and the local citizens. Water pollution and especially the waters of our rivers must be addressed immediately. Safe drinking water is critical and we cannot allow ourselves to get behind on this issue.

"I have enjoyed serving District 85 for the past two terms and I'm looking forward to continuing to represent you in the future. I thank you, the voters, for your past faith in me and reiterate my vow to always represent all my district to the best of my ability.

"My District 85 local office is located in my law office on Union Chapel Road in Pembroke. I stand ready to assist you in any way I can. I invite you to either call my district office at (910) 521-4797 or visit my district office between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday at 208 Union Chapel Road in Pembroke should you need or desire my assistance.

"Between sessions I will be traveling extensively throughout District 85 in Robeson and Hoke Counties. I solicit your support as I begin my campaign for a fourth term. If I can be of assistance do not hesitate to call on me."

Lumbee River EMC returns \$1.5 Million to members on December electric bills

Amounts to Individual savings of \$25.00 per 1000 Kilowatt Hours (kWh)

Red Springs-Lumbee River EMC's board of directors has approved returning approximately \$1.5 million in credits to members on their December electric bills. The credits will be reflected on individual electric bills, and will amount to \$25.00 per 1000 kWh (kilowatt-hour) usage. The amount of savings will vary depending on how much electricity the member uses during the billing cycle.

of a relatively mild winter so far, but some of the savings can be credited to the efficiency of the employees and the cost-cutting efforts of the board of directors and staff," said Ronnie E. Hunt, the co-op's steady growth was also cited as one of the positive factors resulting in the return of the \$1.5 million in savings to the members.

The general manager said in closing, "Returning these savings to the members in the form of credits, rather

than paying dividends to stockholders, is just one more way co-ops distinguish themselves from large, for-profit utilities. I am happy that your co-op was able to return these savings to the members during this holiday season."

Lumbee River EMC is a member owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative, overseen by a board of directors elected by the members, serving approximately 39,000 customers in Robeson, Cumberland, Hoke and Scotland counties.

Tribal Council wants LRDA investigated because of Audit Report

The Tribal Council for the Lumbee Tribe of Cheraw Indians has released the following news release relative to the June 30, 1996 Audit Report for Lumbee Regional Development Association (LRDA).

"We, at the Lumbee Tribal Government are deeply concerned that federal funds to provide jobs and job training opportunities for Lumbee people have been diverted to other purposes. According to the recent LRDA audit report, approximately \$70,000 of Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funds for one year were diverted to LRDA Administration, rather than into jobs and job training for Lumbee people as intended by the federal grant.

The LRDA audit states that the actual amount of federal JTPA dollars that may have been spent in non-authorized JTPA activity for 1995-96 as "indeterminable." Moreover, LRDA auditors report that their findings are a "repeat finding" from the previous year, indicating to us, at the Tribal Government, that the spending of federal funds in non-authorized federal activity is a reoccurring problem at LRDA.

"Over the years LRDA has received approximately \$100 million in federal grants to provide needed services to the Lumbee people. At the point, we

have no certain knowledge of just how much of this money may have been diverted to "unallowable" LRDA activity.

"We do know, however, that in the past few years LRDA has experienced serious financial problems. It is evident from the audit report that LRDA, a non-profit corporation, is managing a high long term debt, secured by land, equipment and at least one vehicle. In addition, LRDA is involved in bankruptcy proceedings with Lumbee Industries, a for-profit corporation owned by LRDA. With the period of time covered by the audit report, the audit report notes that LRDA paid out to Lumbee Industries approximately \$69,000 and, four months later, wrote the \$69,000 off as a 'bad debt' on the LRDA financial statement.

"The Lumbee people are fortunate that the news of this audit got out. Otherwise the Lumbee people would never know what LRDA does or doesn't do in the name of the Lumbee people," said Dr. Dalton P. Brooks, Chairman of the Lumbee Tribe. "This whole incident just proves the need for the Lumbee Tribal government to be administering these funds," said Brooks.

"When I served on the Constitution Assembly, we responded to the people's demand for a government that was

accountable to them. LRDA, on the other hand, is accountable to no one except its board of directors," said Council member Linda Hammonds. "Because these funds were granted and administered in the name of the Lumbee people, LRDA owes the Lumbee people a full explanation.

"We believe the LRDA, we responded to the people's demand for as government that was accountable to them. LRDA on the other hand, is accountable to no one except it's board of directors," said Council member Linda Hammonds. "Because these funds were granted and administered in the name of the Lumbee people, LRDA owes the Lumbee people a full explanation.

"We believe the LRDA audit report mandates public scrutiny.

"We believe the Lumbee people are entitled to a full disclosure of the facts and that the best way for this to happen is through a federal investigative audit. For these reasons, The Lumbee Tribal government will call upon the appropriate authorities for a full investigation into LRDA's management of federal funds."

Mr. Delton Oxendine, Speaker Lumbee Tribal Council

Dr. Joseph Bell addresses AISAES Conference

Dr. Joseph T. Bell, Lumbee from Pembroke, North Carolina spoke at the Annual Indian Science and Engineering Society Conference at Houston, Texas, on November 22, 1997.

Navajo); and Walt Hollow, M.D. (Assiniboine/Sioux). The panel talked about opportunities in health careers for Native Americans and also about diabetes in Indian country. The Conference/Workshop was attended by approximately 70 students ranging from high school to college and medical students.

Also attending the Annual Confer-

ence were high school students from AISES chapters in Robeson County, the University of North Carolina at Pembroke AISES chapter the North Carolina Chapel Hill AISES Chapter, Native American medical students attending the Conference from North Carolina included Christina Hardin, Janet Harris, Tina Griffin (Lumbee), and Andrew Haputo (Cherokee). For Native American students in-

terested in science, engineering, or health professions, AISES is a wonderful program to get involved with on a high school, college, or professional level. If there are any questions concerning AISES, please contact your high school or college counselor.

Next year's Annual Conference for AISES will be in Denver, Colorado, the first week in December.

Workshops Planned to Trainer Tutors

The Robeson County Church and Community Center offers (at no charge) a two session workshop to train volunteer tutors. These certified tutors are prepared to tutor school children in reading at the County elementary schools. The workshops are held at one of the resource rooms in the Planetarium of the Public Schools of Robeson County. For more information and to register for the workshop call Polly or Dan Cunningham (trainers) at 521-4230, or the Robeson County Church and Community Center at 738-5204.

Pembroke Fire Dept. to host fund raising event

The Pembroke City Fire Department is having a special fund drive for the next several weeks in cooperation with Community Support Services. Families will be contacted by phone and asked to make a pledge. Each family that pledges receives a beautiful 10x13 Canvas Mount Portrait, compliments of the Fire Department. Proceeds are being used to equip a first response vehicle. For any additional information call 1-800-253-2638. They appreciate your past support and look forward to your help this year.

Gospel film available for local churches

The film "The Shroud" is available to be shown at your church by request. Also available on the 16mm film is "Daniel in the Lion's Den." For further information call 521-8928.



Harvey Godwin, center, contributes to UNC Pembroke scholarship programs. Pictured are Chancellor Joseph B. Oxendine and Mrs. Denise Page Chair of the UNCP Foundation Inc. board of Directors.

Godwin contributes to UNCP scholarship programs

PEMBROKE-- Harvey Godwin knows how to give thanks during the holiday season.

The president of West Eagle Job-Net, whose son is a third generation student at The University of North Carolina at Pembroke, recently contributed to three projects at the University. Beneficiaries of Mr. Godwin's second \$1,000 in two years to the UNCP Foundation, Inc. are the UNCP Music Society, the Native American Resource Center and the Julian T. Pierce Endowed Memorial Scholarship.

"My family and I owe a lot to this institution" said Mr. Godwin, a 1990 UNCP graduate and a Chancellor's Club member. "My mother is a retired school teacher, and without this school, she would have never had the opportunity."

UNCP Chancellor Joseph B. Oxendine thanked Mr. Godwin for the gift. "The Godwin family's long association with the University is something for all of us to celebrate," Chancellor Oxendine said. "And we thank Mr. Godwin for remembering us with contributions to three important programs."

"Rock 'n roll is not one of the Music Department's courses; but they have encouraged Cody by giving him a lot of positive feedback," Mr. Godwin said. "I believe that gifts to the Music Society are a good investment."

Mr. Godwin said the Julian T. Pierce Scholarship, which he has been associated with from its inception, is a growing endowment at UNCP. Two scholarships to UNCP students were granted this year from the endowment. "We're very proud of the community effort behind the Pierce Scholarship," he said. "This is a proud day for me to give back something to the University that means so much to me."

Mr. Godwin's selection of the Native American Resource Center is also rooted in the family history. The center has recently made available recordings of the Lumbee tribal elders including an interview with John Godwin, Mr. Godwin's grandfather.

"The family was very excited when we heard about this project," he said. "We have made an appointment to hear the recordings over the holidays." Harvey Godwin has found a lot to give thanks for, and UNC Pembroke is a better place because of his generosity.

Well, known for his role of Henry Berry Lowerie in the outdoor drama "Strike at the Wind!" Mr. Godwin is the president of the thriving employment agency, West Eagle Job-Net, which has six offices in North Carolina. His son Cody, is a music major and a member of the popular rock band Stone Feather.