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"Building Communicative Bridges in a Tri-Racial Setting"

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Report to the People

by Rep. Ron Sutton

Lawmakers are planning to return to Raleigh for a special session to redraw state House and Senate districts and devise a new schedule for this year's elections.

They will be on a fast track. The NC Supreme Court said the General Assembly should have the first crack at drawing new districts, but a Superior Court Judge can do the job if the Legislature cannot. Most legislators would much prefer drawing their own districts.

Lawmakers must sort through another layer of legal requirements when they redraw the districts.

The Supreme Court said legislative districts must elect a single member of the House and Senate and respect county lines as much as possible--at least in parts of the state. Those requirements have been added to legal requirements that districts must be roughly equal in population and not dilute minority voting strength.

As a result of the ruling, some districts drawn last year will be overhauled during the special session. Others will be changed little, if at all.

Most districts would have looked very different if the Republicans who filed the suit had their way. They proposed sprawling multi-member districts, some with as many people as a congressional district. In some urban areas, voters would have gone to the polls and picked eight (8) or ten (10) members of the state House from a list twice that long.

The result would have been more expensive campaigns as candidates spent more money to break out of the pack.

After they were elected, state legislators would have a more difficult time serving their hundreds of thousands of constituents.

The Supreme Court soundly rejected that idea of large, multi-member districts and said the General Assembly must draw single-member ones. The court also set out some specific guide lines for

lawmakers to follow in drawing the new districts.

The court ruled in a lawsuit brought by the Republican Party and Republican legislators leaders. They challenged maps drawn last year on the grounds that they violated a provision on the state constitution that prohibits the splitting of counties.

Attorneys for the state argued that the provision is unenforceable under federal court cases.

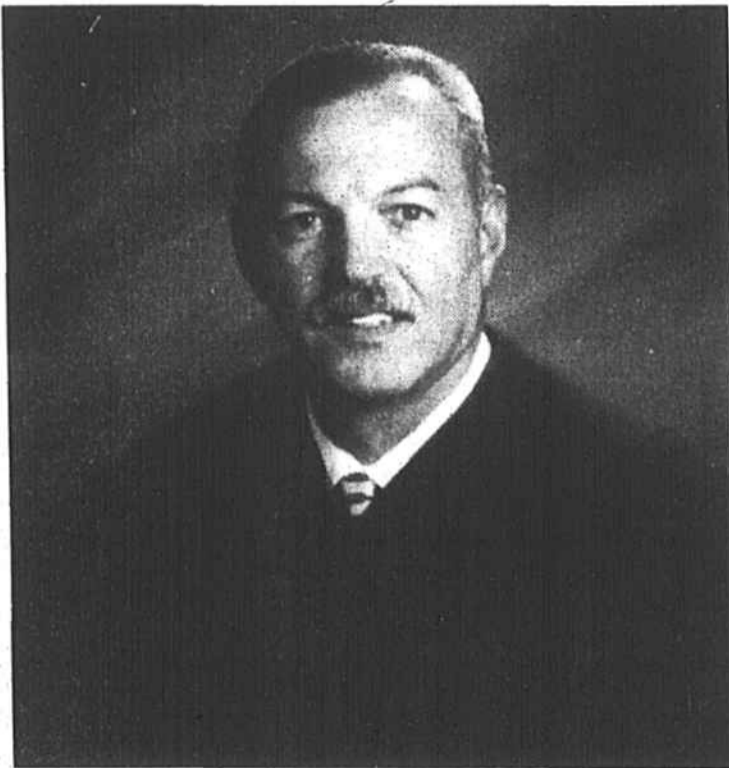
The Republican lawsuit forced a delay in primaries for the state House and Senate. To avoid the expense of separate elections for legislators and candidates for other office, the state Board of Election put all of this year's election on hold.

Putting the elections back on track will be one of the chores for the special session, which is expected to end before the General Assembly begins its regular session on May 28th.

The General Assembly Special Session begins at 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 14th, and must have a plan before the judge by noon Monday, May 20th.

"As of Thursday, May 9th, I have completely redrawn all the House Districts and will be reviewing them with members between now and the opening of the Special Session," said Rep. Sutton, the Democrat in charge of House Redistricting. In order to meet the court's deadline it cannot be "business as usual" in the General Assembly during the Special Session. "While I cannot divulge our Redistricting Committee Reorganization plans now, I can tell you we will be streamlining the process beginning with committee membership," Sutton said.

This is one of the greatest challenges this decade before the General Assembly because the results will determine which party controls our state for at least the next ten years.



Gary Locklear appointed Superior Court Judge

On Tuesday, April 23, 2002 Governor Michael Easley appointed Chief District Court Judge Gary L. Locklear to the Superior Court bench in Robeson County. This appointment comes as a result of the death of Superior Court Judge Dexter Brooks, and will carry through until January 1, 2002. Judge Locklear said, "I fully intend to be a candidate for the remaining two years of Judge Brooks' term, and then seek election for the full term thereafter."

Judge Locklear received the oath of office on Monday, April 29, 2002 at the Robeson County Courthouse with Senior Resident Superior Court Judge Frank Floyd presiding.

Judge Locklear is 53 years of age and a life long resident of Robeson County. He was born to the late Marshall W. and Gertrude L. Locklear of the Saddletree community of Robeson County. He holds degrees from Pembroke State University, Appalachian State University, and the UNC School of Law. He taught in the Community College System for five years, served as Assistant District Attorney for three years, worked in a private law firm for five years, and served as District

Court Judge for thirteen years, the last two as Chief District Court Judge in Judicial District 16-B. He is married to Molly Oxendine Locklear and they have two children, Brooke, a first year law student at UNC, and a son, Bradley, a junior at Dartmouth College, presently on leave. They are members of Berea Baptist Church in Pembroke, NC.

"Gary Locklear is an experienced, hardworking judge who can immediately help break through case backlogs while ensuring fair trials and reasoned decisions," Governor Easley said. He added, "Having been a judge, prosecutor, and a defense attorney, he (Gary) knows criminal matters from all sides. In addition, he has done civil law work and I am impressed by his years of service."

The search has now begun for a successor to fill the vacated District Court seat. The Robeson County Bar met the first week in May and selected Attorneys Greg Bell, Judith Daniels and Jack Moody as the three names to be forwarded to Governor Easley. The Governor has not yet chosen the person to fill the vacated District court seat.

United States National Award Winner

The United States Achievement Academy announced today the Roger D. Hunt, Jr. from Lumberton, NC has been named a United States National Award Winner in mathematics. This award is a prestigious honor very few students can ever hope to attain. In fact, the Academy recognizes fewer than 10% of all American high school students.

Roger D. Hunt, Jr., who attends Purnell Swett High was nominated for this national award by Ms. Carol Jacobs, a teacher at the school. Hunt will appear in the United States Achievement Academy Official Yearbook, which is published nationally.

"Recognizing and supporting our youth is more important than ever before in America's history. Certainly, United States Achievement Academy winners should be congratulated and appreciated for their dedication to excellence and achievement," said Dr. George Stevens, Executive Director of the USAA.

The Academy selects USAA winners upon the exclusive recommendation of teachers, coaches, counselors, and other qualified sponsors and upon the Standards of Selection set forth



by the Academy. The criteria for selection are a student's academic performance, interest and aptitude, leadership qualities, responsibility, enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve, citizenship, attitude and cooperative spirit, dependability, and recommendation from a teacher or director.

Roger D. Hunt, Jr. is the son of Roger and Teresa Hunt from Lumberton, NC. The grandparents are Annie Bell Jones of Pembroke, NC, and Clifton and Margarette Hunt of Lumberton, NC.

Organization Recognizes American Indian Mothers

More than 300 people attended the First Annual Memorial and Scholarship Banquet on Friday, May 10 at the Southeastern Agricultural Center-Farmers Market. Representatives across communities, across religious faiths, businessmen and businesswomen, homemakers, community leaders, elected leaders, educators, elders, sponsors, supporters and school youth gathered together to recognize American Indian Mothers and to memorialize three outstanding American Indian Women through establishment of scholarships in their memory.

AIM service awards were presented to Connie B. Chavis for Public Service; Barbara C. Goins for Cultural Awareness; Tulula Locklear for Health; Dorothy McNeil for Business; Alisha Oxendine for Government; Agnes H. Chavis for Education, and Dr. Ruth Dial Woods, AIM Ambassador for leadership. Southern Interiors, Cyna's Jewelers, All American Construction, Pembroke Tire, Mother Earth Creation, Eagle Feather Arts and American Indian Mothers, Inc sponsored these special awards. Lonnie Locklear Construction was recognized as a Coral Sponsor for the event.

Youth Awards were presented to Chyna Jade Locklear, Pembroke Elementary, Justin Deese and Elisabeth C. Locklear of Purnell Swett High School; Janie Locklear of Red Springs High School and Cameron Richard of South Robeson High School for Science Fair Awards sponsored by the 2002 Indian Education Association.

AIM Hall of Fame Memorial Awards during a memorial ceremony during which D. Ruth Dial Woods hailed the lives of three women as "Daughter of Tradition who epitomized the call to serve their communities, to lead, to model, to utilize their talents and resources where needed, who answered the call and demonstrated by example their faith in God." Brenda Brewington Brooks was an activist and human rights advocate; Brigitte J. Brayboy Cummings was not only a former Miss Lumbee but a woman of deeper beauty who garnered a model career in communication and human relations, and Delora Brewington Locklear was active in church and community activities, a full partner in business ventures with her husband, and supporter of worthy community and civic causes. Postsecondary education scholarships will be established utilizing family criterion and will be awarded by AIM at area high schools.

Special guests included June Brooks, Scotland County physical education teacher who organized national awareness of organ transplants after the death of her son, Josh Brooks, was guest speaker. Miss Fayetteville, Rebecca Revels and Miss Lumbee 2001-2002, Jaime Lowry, performed in addition to solos by Doc Lee Hunt and J. R. Hunt. The Purnell Swett Band Ensemble under the Direction of Mr. Chris McIntyre provided special music, and the Children of the AIM Ruben Center demonstrated example of traditional lessons and values learned through their participation in Center programs and activities.

Spiritual Baccalaureate for Swett High Students Planned at Berea

Berea Baptist Church will hold a Spiritual Baccalaureate for all Purnell Swett High graduates on Sunday, May 19, 2002 at 6:00pm in the Church sanctuary. Participating in the service will be the Rev. Robert A. Fairley of St. George United Methodist Church; Harold Jacobs, Minister of Music at Prospect United Methodist Church; Wesley Revels, Principal at Purnell Swett High School; and Tyson Meadors, honors student, and a member of the 2002 graduating class of Purnell Swett High. The address will be given by Dr. Dalton Brooks, pastor of Dunderach Baptist Church and former Chairman of the Education Department at UNC-Pembroke. Purnell Swett High's choir and the Berea Men's choir will provide special renditions. A reception will follow in the Church Fellowship Hall. The Berea Baptist Men organized this event to honor all Purnell Swett High graduates throughout Robeson County. All graduates are encouraged to participate and the community is cordially invited.

Nutrition to be topic of meeting

Dr. Stephen Chaney will speak at noon May 18 at Ryan's Steakhouse in Lumberton. His topic will be nutrition. Dr. Chaney is a professor of biochemistry, biophysics and is the chairman of the Department of Nutrition at UNC. For further information about the meeting, call 738-2300.

Custodians of Green Grove School Honored

Green Grove School hosted a retirement dinner for Harrell and Sarah Cummings on Monday, April 29, 2002, at 6:00 p.m. in the school cafeteria. Mr. & Mrs. Cummings have worked at Green Grove School for a total of 58 years. They both began on August 12, 1972.

Mrs. Willie Mae Robinson was mistress of ceremonies. Mrs. Mary Lawson welcomed the faculty, staff, friends, and special guests to the occasion. Rev. Bruce Swett entertained everyone with two beautiful songs. Remarks were made by Dr. Barry Harding, Superintendent, and former principal. After a delicious meal catered by TLC, Dr. Sally Jones, principal, Mrs. Mary Templeton, former principal, and Mrs. Belva McDowell, third grade teacher, gave brief remarks.

Remarks were also given by Mrs. Anita Lowry and Mrs. Ella McLaughlin, former co-workers. Mrs. Willie Mae Robinson and Mrs. Barbara Oxendine, teacher assistants. Former principal, Dr. Howard Davis, Sr., sent a letter that was read and presented the Cummings.

The school presented Mr. & Mrs. Cummings plaques for their years of service and a money tree. They were also showered with many other retirement gifts from employees and guests.

The highlight of the evening was Mr. & Mrs. Cummings' limousine ride to and from their retirement celebration, courtesy of the faculty and staff at Green Grove School.

Mr. & Mrs. Cummings, we love you, we appreciate you, and most of all, we will miss you!



From left are Robert Locklear, Sarah Cummings and Harrell Cummings



Evita Wins Four More Titles

Evita Saybrianna Sanderson has won four more pageant titles. Her first title was won of April 7, 2002. She was crowned Our Little Miss Universe 0-6 Majestic. She also won sportswear, photogenic, portfolio, prettiest eyes, prettiest hair, prettiest smile, prettiest dress, and personality in her age group.

Evita's second title was won on April 13, 2002. She was crowned as N.C. America's Sweetheart Wee Miss. She won photogenic and talent. She tied for best dress, best eyes, prettiest hair, prettiest smile, and best personality in her age division.

Evita's third title was won on April 20, 2002. She was Crowned East Coast Royal Dynasty Caswell County Sprint Fling 0-6 Mini supreme. She also won photogenic and casual wear in her age division and overall prettiest dress.

Her fourth title was won on April 27, 2002. She was crowned Royal Elegance Spring Fling Tiny Miss. She also won photogenic and sportswear in her age division.

Evita is the 4 year old daughter of Sabrina Sanderson & Michael Floyd. The granddaughter of Sylvia L. Sanderson & the late James Edward and Mary Francis Floyd. The great granddaughter of the late Gus Howard & Eva Mae Locklear and the late Ira & Nancy Sanderson.

Local Educator Attends NCCAT Seminar

CULLOWHEE-- Kerry L. Revels of Pembroke, grades 6-8 visual arts teacher at Rowland Middle School, recently attended a seminar at the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching.

Revels participated in "Rainforest and Story of chocolate," April 10-14, conducted by Henry Wong, center fellow.

Part of the University of North Carolina, NCCAT provides a year-long series of residential seminars and teacher-scholar programs for teachers and professional development activities for teachers and staff in selected school systems. At the center, teachers engage in stimulating scholarly activities and professional networking to renew their vitality for teaching and learning. Mary Jo Allen is center director.