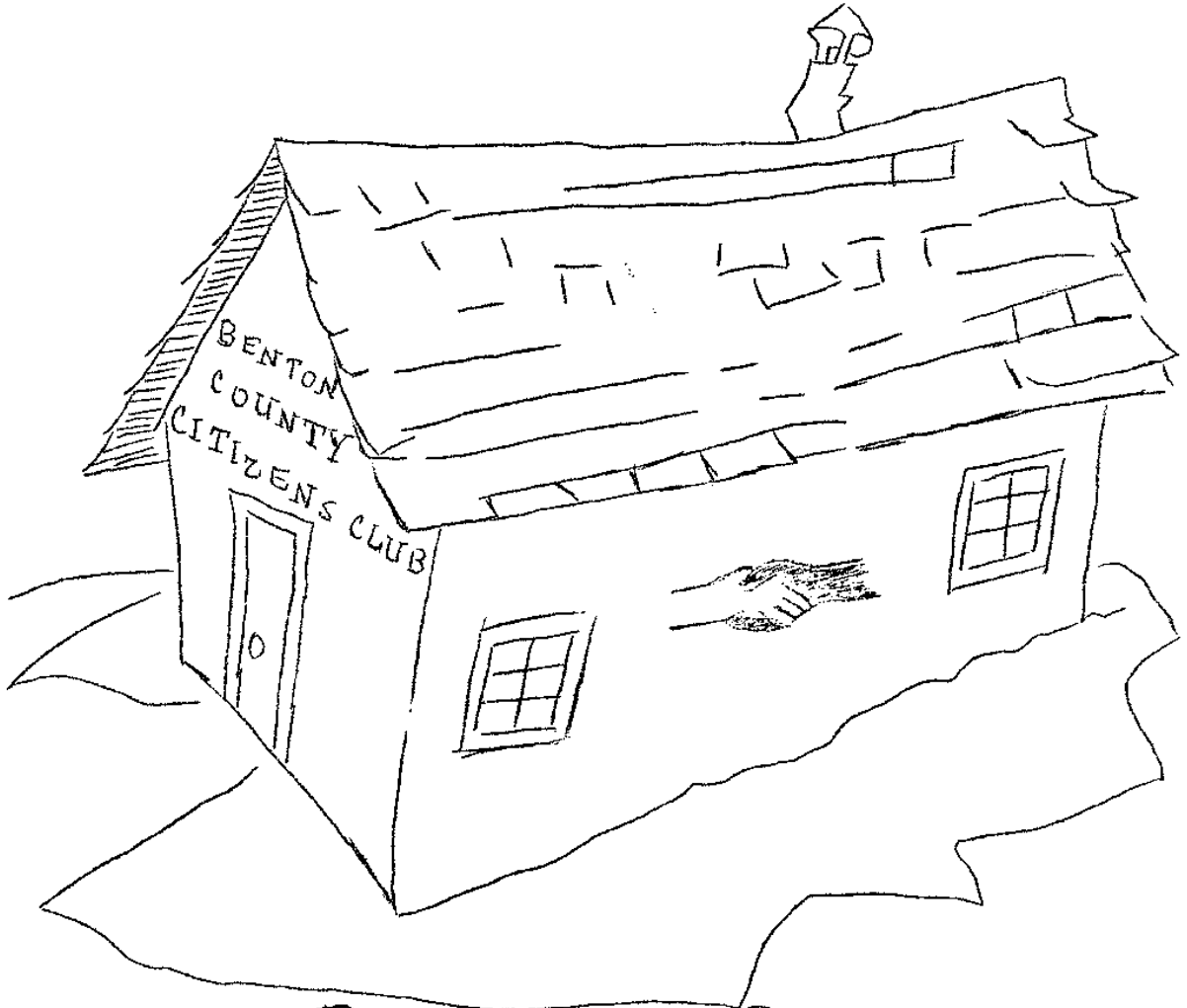


benton
county



"It's that Freedom Train a comin'; get on board, get on board."
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THE NEW CAPITAL



OF BENTON COUNTY

BENTON TO HAVE CIVIL RIGHTS OFFICE!

One, two: pick up the tools;
 Three four: cut the door;
 Five, six: get the window fixed;
 seven, eight: hammer it straight;
 nine, ten: we did it again!

Yes, Benton county has another first: our very own civil rights office! It is in the process of being constructed and is located in the western part of the county between the 2nd & 3rd districts, between Albert Tipler's and William Beck's homes.

The office grew out of discussions last weekend with some of the young people and at a section captains' meeting over the idea of having our own office right here in the county where we can run off our own newspaper, plan programs, and answer problems concerning FHA, welfare, voter registration, etc.

And so construction began on Thursday, supervised by Cater Poplar and Charlie Reaves. The office is being built from materials donated by citizens of the county. In addition, lumber costing \$81.00 was bought. It is hoped that we will be able to raise the money for the cost of the lumber at the citizens club meeting this Tuesday night.

Meanwhile, construction is progressing, and all citizens are asked to donate labor, materials, money, and trading stamp books to equip the inside of the office. Come on over to where we're building and have a look! This is our office, and it will be as nice as we help to make it. So let's all help to make it a real community effort.

Once the office is open, all citizens of the county will be welcome to come in and discuss their problems. White folks are welcome too.

1 & 12 to integrate

Answering a preliminary injunction from Judge Clayton, the board of education has submitted a plan to desegregate the 1st and 12th grades in Benton county this autumn.

We expect to have at least two more grades integrated, but we don't know which ones they will be yet.

The plan of the board is as follows: all students in the 1st and 12th grades can choose to enroll in whatever school they want. If too many students apply for Ashland, then they will be sent to Old Salem on the basis of which school they live closer to.

This means that if a large number of Negroes enroll in Ashland so that it is overcrowded, then some white as well as Negro students will be reassigned to Old Salem. Thus, it is important that many Negroes apply at Ashland, so that both schools will have to be integrated.

The board also plans to keep the split session at Old Salem but not at Ashland. Many people feel this was done in hopes that Negro 12th graders will need to work in the field and will then not be able to enroll at Ashland.

Enrollment at Old Salem begins on July 26, and at Ashland on Sept. 6. All 1st and 12th graders planning to enroll at Ashland MUST NOT ENROLL FOR THE SUMMER SESSION AT OLD SALEM.

A special meeting for all parents planning to enroll their children at Ashland school will be held at the home of Henry Reaves on Thursday night at 7:30. Everyone interested is cordially invited.

REGISTER & VOTE!

FREEDOM SCHOOLS BEGIN

Freedom schools are scheduled to begin tomorrow in three different places throughout the county. Classes for adults and children will be held in Negro History, political education, English, special tutoring, and anything else that people are interested in. Classes will meet from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Sims Freedom School will be supervised by Roy Nunnally together with summer volunteer, Sidney Sugarman.

Hardaway Freedom School will be headed by Earnestine Evans, assisted by volunteer Bob Traer. Since the deacons did not agree to let the classes use the church building, they will use the old school building next to the church. At the next Hardaway meeting day, the congregation will decide whether or not to permit the freedom school to use the church building.

The 3rd district freedom school is headed by Clay Batts who will be helped by volunteer Jim Bates. The school will be held either at Samuels or Harris Chapel. If the congregation at Samuels decides at their meeting day today to let the school use the church, then classes will be held there. If not, then classes will be held at Harris, beginning tomorrow.

Plans are being made to set up baseball teams at each school. Later in the summer, the teams might play one another.

Literacy classes to help people improve their reading and writing and to help pass the voter registration test will be held commencing next week, after the teachers receive their training this week at Sims.

Plans are also being made to set up a freedom school at Royston in the near future. It will be headed by Janevial Evans together with Mrs. Nelma Tipler and assisted by volunteer Bob Feinglass.

People from the Fayette County project might come down to help teach adult classes. In addition, a law student working in Holly Springs has offered to give a class in the 1964 civil rights act and in school desegregation.

Everyone is invited--be you 5 or 500. See you tomorrow at freedom school!

Literacy teachers

A special literacy workshop and class will be held this coming week as part of the freedom school program. Ten Benton county ladies will learn how to teach literacy to a small class of adults who wish to improve their reading and writing.

The ladies will be taught by a woman from the Fayette County project how to teach literacy. They will learn by watching her teach a class which will meet starting tomorrow at 4 p.m. at Sims chapel. The class will meet each day during the week.

The ten ladies who will then become literacy teachers in the freedom schools are: Sarah Robinson, Rebecca Dorse, Ellie Steward, Flora Murdoch, Mattie Lou Smith, Annie B. Evans, Nelma Tipler, Clay Alice Crawford, Burne L. Alexander, and Lora Batts. They and any others interested in teaching literacy will meet in a special workshop today at 5 p.m. at Sims chapel.

Some questions for the Board:

We have some questions we would like to ask Mr. Bennett, the Board of Education, and ourselves. Like, why were six teachers from Benton county fired when Marshall county teachers were rehired?

Why aren't busdrivers told whether or not they have jobs until school has almost begun? Are the 5 busdrivers in the integration suit being rehired?

Why were two cooks not rehired? Why wasn't the custodian rehired? How could he have been negligent in his duties if it is taking two men to replace him?

Why didn't the Board inform the Negro citizens about Operation Headstart? Why weren't jobs open to all who wished to apply? Why did we have to call a federal investigation to get Negro children in the Ashland center, even though it was supposed to be open to all races?

Why wasn't our school committee consulted about the new teachers hired?

Why weren't Negro parents asked if they wanted to continue the split session, even though white parents were asked?

And why won't Mr. Bennett discuss these questions with the Citizens Club?

Most of these are old questions and we have been asking them for a long time, but we never have received an answer to them, and we think we should keep on asking until we do receive answers.

We are adult citizens of the county and intend to be listened to and spoken to as adults, and if the Board hasn't yet recognized that fact, we wonder what

we have to do to make them recognize it?

It's hard to believe anyone would try to treat us like this, because when they put us behind them, we were looking at everything they did

Perhaps another boycott is called for. It seems that when white people start losing money--like the money given to the county by the state board of education for the number of students attending school--then they start listening to Negroes.

The 2nd district is holding a special meeting tomorrow night at Sims to discuss boycotting the summer session. Perhaps we all need to discuss this.

Supt. not available

by Ellie B. Steward

Last Sunday at a section captains meeting, it was decided to invite Mr. Bennett to speak at a special meeting to the citizens. I, as secretary, was asked to call him.

On Tuesday I called his office. His secretary told me to call Wed. because Mr. Bennett was in a meeting. I left a message telling her why I had called.

I called back Wednesday. The secretary said, "Mr. Bennett isn't available." When the operator asked when he'd be available, she said, "He's not available," and kind of laughed.

On Friday I called again. His secretary again said he wasn't in. I asked if Mr. Bennett would be able to talk with us. She said she really didn't know, Mr. Bennett wasn't in and she didn't think he would be in for the rest of the week.

Food to strikers

Clay E. Batts

On July 4, Mr. Odie Rose and I went to Shaw, Mississippi, to deliver \$50.00 worth of food that the Citizens Club had donated to the striking workers down there. We left our house around 5:30 and after a long but relaxing trip, we arrived in Shaw around 11:30. We had to ask around a little before we found the COFO office.

Everyone was glad to receive the food, and they told us of one man's farm that hadn't been chopped this year. They gave us some leaflets about the strike on the farm which was written by one of the tenants.

I was sorry we didn't have long to stay to talk to the people about the strike, but we had to get back before dark.

CALENDAR:

Sunday, July 11: literacy workshop for those interested in teaching literacy, 5 p.m., Sims.

Monday, July 12: Literacy class, Sims, 4 p.m.

Monday, July 12: Opening day of freedom school, Sims, Hardaway, and either Samuels or Harris, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Monday, July 12: special meeting of 2nd district to discuss summer session at Old Salem; Sims, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 13: all-county meeting of citizens club. Man from the state employment office at Oxford will speak on Job re-training programs and Youth Corps, Samuels, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 15: meeting of parents interested in integrating Ashland school; home of Henry Reaves, 7:30 p.m.

Train puffs:

* The citizens of the 4th district have decided to organize like the other three districts and will form their own district organization of the citizens club on Monday night, July 19 at Royston chapel. District chairman will be elected on that night.

* Our fourth volunteer Bob Feinglass has finally arrived, bringing with him a rather used car and a beautiful mimeograph machine for our new office. Bob will be working in the 4th and 5th districts.

* Our three volunteers spent this last week in Hattiesburg learning about FDP plans for the summer. They will report on their trip to the all-county meeting Tuesday night.

Student group formed

Clay E. Batts

On Monday, June 28, students of north Benton county were invited to a meeting of the East Fayette and East Hardaman county student union.

Officers were elected. They are president--Hugh A. Gray, Fayette County; vice-president--Willie B. Watkins, Benton county; secretary--Carolyn Meadows, Fayette; Ass't. secretary--Clay E. Batts of Benton treasurer--Alonzo Asbery, Fayette; parliamentarian--Phillip Williams of Benton county.

The Student Union will have their meeting on each second Monday night of each month at 7:30 p.m. The first project they are going to undertake will deal with Newton's Place.

LAST MINUTE NEWS: The Old Salem P.T.A. is planning their annual picnic on the last Saturday in August. Y'all come!

reply to the Southern Advocate*Myths about Negroes*

by Earnestine Evans

The Advocate is at it again!. They have written articles about p-o-o- Negroes' conditions, describing it in a way to show how helpless the Negroes were, unabl't to think for themselves. As if this wasn't bad enough, they had to print another of their famous fantasies about the Negroes and the Civil War.

Talking about the Klan, the Advocate says, "The ex-slave had made som mistake....A hooded figure stopped in front of his cabin door and the rider demanded: "A drink of water!" When the water bucket and dipper were brought, a skeleton arm was extended from under the waving sheet."

Now, really! Tell me, how many Negroes do you know who would go outside at night to carry water to a strange voice in the dark?I can't imagine a Negro bringing water to a stranger, especially with a cracked accent, since he is so used to expecting beatings from white men.

The Advocate also says: "Knowing where trouble was brewing often brought a group of Ku Klux riders, horse and rider concealed in silence draped in bed sheets."

I wonder just what "trouble" was it that roused the Klansmen to their sheets? Was it because Negroes were no longer their slaves? Or because the Negro was trying to make it on his own? It seems to me that this "trouble" was really the fear of the white man that he'd no longer have anyone to plow his fields for him.

Finally, the Advocate says, "Perhaps this was not the best law, but a people in desperation had to have some order and if fear without cruelty could bring better conditions it was best."

How could fear on the part of the Negro be without cruelty on the white man's part? How can 5,000 lynchings since 1880 be "without cruelty?" How can murder and rape be considered "order?" And what "better conditions" did it bring? Today the southern states are the poorest in the nation, and white southerners live in constant fear that some day the Negro will take revenge for all the cruelties done him in the past.

We suggest that if the Southern Advocate needs to fill space, why not try something like this:

What is Truth to me?
Telling and making others believe...or
Smiling and laughing in public...or
Feeling love that is unseen...or
Leaving off that which will hurt...or
Knowing you are my brother
on this side
of the Mason-Dixon line.

What is Truth to me?
Working to make us all free.