

*labor donated*

**benton  
county**



*"It's that Freedom Train a comin'; get on board, get on board."*

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Boulah Mae Ayers,  
Editor

WHO'S THAT YONDER  
WITH SKIN OF BLACK;  
IT'S L. B. PAIGE  
AND HE WON'T TURN BACK.



# NEGROES WON ENTIRE COMMUNITY!

For the first time since Reconstruction, Negroes were elected to public office in Benton County last Monday, as Mr. L. B. Paige, Mr. Clabon Jackson, and Mrs. Sarah Robinson won the top three positions on the ASC community B committee.

Mr. Paige received 183 votes and became chairman of the committee, Mr. Jackson received 181 votes and became vice-chairman of the committee, and Mrs. Robinson received 170 votes and became regular member. Running behind the top three candidates were Mr. Wayne Akins with 165 votes and Mr. Kenneth Leake with 150 votes. Both men are alternates on the committee, which means they can only attend meetings if any of the top three members are sick.

Negro candidates in communities A and C lost. In community C, the Negro candidates received 91 and 89 votes, as compared with over 200 votes received by the top five white candidates. It was concluded that there are more whites than Negroes in this community, since only 5 eligible Negroes did not vote.

In community A, on the other hand, about 40 eligible Negroes did not vote, chiefly because they did not receive ballots and were too fearful to go to the ASCS office and ask for one. In this community, the three Negro candidates received 93, 94, and 94 votes, as compared with 150, 149, 145, 143, and 136 votes received by the five white candidates. Since many ineligible whites are thought to have voted, it must be concluded that if the elections had been conducted fairly, with every eligible Negro voting, Negro candidates would probably have won in Community A.

Eight other counties in Mississippi ran Negro candidates in the

ASC elections, but none did as well as Benton, even though all had a higher percentage of Negroes in them. Madison did second best, electing one man to the chairmanship of a community. The other counties decided at a meeting in Batesville last Tuesday to demand that the elections be held again because they were not conducted fairly.

Benton County's candidates were also present at the meeting, but they decided not to demand a re-election, even though Benton county's election was not conducted fairly. They decided to keep what they had won and next year try to win Community A.

Now that the election is over, the Citizens Club plans to make an investigation of extra acreage allotted to Negro farmers by the ASCS and send its report to the Agriculture Department in Washington, D.C.

## Chairman's statement:

by L. B. Paige

I am grateful that I was elected to the committee of the ASCS, and I am even more grateful that I was elected chairman of the committee. I do thank the people of Benton County for their cooperation and for their votes which enabled me to be placed on the committee. I will do my utmost to be a good committeeman.

## Committee statement:

We, the community committee of community B of Benton county, feel grateful toward the people of this community. We feel that it is an honor as well as an opportunity to be elected as your committeemen.

We assure you that we will do our very best to serve you as a good, true, and honest committee.

## FDP to challenge seating of Mississippi Congressmen

Do you remember the Freedom Vote held last October 30-November 2? In that election, more people in Benton County voted for Lyndon Johnson and Fannie Lou Hamer than the number of people who voted for Barry Goldwater and Jamie Whitten in the regular election.

But it didn't count. On January 4, the Freedom Democratic Party is going to Washington, as they went to Atlantic City in August, in order to make this Freedom Vote count. On that date, Congressmen who were elected in November are supposed to take their seats in the United States Congress. But the Freedom Democratic Party (FDP) feels that the Mississippi Congressmen do not have a right to be seated in Congress since they were not elected by ALL the people of Mississippi but only by the white citizens and 5% of the Negro citizens of the state.

So on January 4, 1,000 Negroes from Mississippi will go to Washington to protest the seating of Mississippi's congressmen, while FDP lawyers will present their case before the public.

This Thursday, December 17, at 7:30, a special meeting will be held at Samuels Chapel to inform Benton county citizens of the details of the challenge and to elect about ten people to go to Washington in January. Everyone in the county is urged to attend this meeting.

Meanwhile, all citizens are urged to write letters to Mrs. Hamer who is in Washington, telling her what we feel is wrong with Mississippi and how we would like to see it changed. Her address is:

Freedom Democratic Party  
1353 U Street  
Washington, D. C.

FIND OUT MORE ON THURSDAY NIGHT!

## Report on ASC vote-counting

by Beulah Mae Ayer

We went to Ashland on December 7 to observe the counting of the ASCS votes.

My friends picked me up at 8:30 and we went to the courthouse. We sat in front--of course, we were looked at hard. We couldn't hear the names being called because the man who was reading the ballots seemed to choke whenever he had to call out all-Negro ballots.

Aviva asked Mr. Stone to call the names a little louder. He agreed but didn't seem too satisfied about it. But he really got nervous when Aviva challenged two of the white ballots belonging to Nicky and David Akins who are both under 21. Both ballots were disqualified.

Mr. Tony Farese, our ever-present county attorney, welcomed us by playing camera man. He took our picture, telling us, "Smile, you're on candid camera."

## NO VOTERS IN BENTON COUNTY

THERE ARE NO REGISTERED VOTERS IN BENTON COUNTY! Yes, it's true, neither black nor white citizens of the county can vote. In addition, the registrar's office is closed and no one can take the voters test.

This is the latest development in the U.S. government's suit against Mr. Mathis. Mr. Mathis has thrown away all the old books, and nobody can vote.

What remains to be done is to establish new rules for registering to vote--rules that will be administered equally to black and white.

All this was told to the citizens club last Tuesday night by Mr. Nicholas Flannery of the Justice Department. He will keep us posted of all further developments.

# NEGRO POETRY SECTION

The following poem was sent to us by a member of the Benton-York project from York Pennsylvania, Mr. Douglas G. Parks. It was written by a friend of his in South Africa:

Where the rainbow ends  
 There's going to be a place, brother,  
 Where the world can sing all sorts of songs,  
 And we're going to sing together, brother,  
 You and I, though you're white and I'm not.  
 It's going to be a sad song, brother,  
 Because we don't know the tune,  
 And it's a difficult tune to learn.  
 But we can learn, brother, you and I.

There's no such tune as a black tune.  
 There's no such tune as a white tune.  
 There's only music, brother,  
 And it's music we're going to sing  
 Where the rainbow ends.

\* \* \* \* \*

*... from Benton County:*

## INTEGRATION

by Melvin Wallace Jones

Integration is a thing for all mankind,  
 No matter if you're black or white.  
 We want to be treated equally,  
 We don't want to fight.

We don't want to have riots,  
 Because it doesn't do any good,  
 Because it could damage the lives  
 Of our future childhood.

Integration is a thing  
 That cannot be set aside.  
 Integration is a thing  
 That cannot be forgotten.  
 It's something we can't hide.

## Plays to be presented here

The COFO office in Holly Springs is announcing the presentation of two plays by the Free Southern Theater on December 17 and 18 at Doxey Hall on the Rust College Campus.

All people in Benton and Marshall Counties are cordially invited to attend the performances of "Waiting for Godot" on December 17 and "Purlie Victorious" on December 18.

Admission is free, and the performances will begin at 7:30 p.m. The cast of the Free Southern Theater is integrated.

## Buy selectively!

At the last meeting of the Citizens Club, it was decided that Walker's Grocery Store and Western Auto Store in Ashland did not deserve Negro trade because of unkind remarks made about and to their Negro customers. All Negro citizens are urged to support this decision.  
**BUY ELSEWHERE!!**

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD  
(Continued from 2 weeks ago)

At first most runaways were satisfied if they could just reach the free soil of the North, but there came a time when that wasn't enough. The Fugitive Slave Law was the climax of a long series of efforts by the slave states to have the government of the United States require free states to help capture and return escaped bondsmen. The friends of freedom in the North were angered by the law, and the underground railroad began to operate as never before. First it was used to help Negroes who had already settled on free soil to reach Canada before they could be returned to slavery. Then it began to reach down into the South, and thousands of others were rescued from slavery each year.

Some of those who won their freedom in this way spent the rest of their lives helping others to escape. Of these Harriet Tubman was perhaps the most famous. This stern-faced woman had been a slave in Maryland. In her early years she had been cruelly treated. Then she traveled the underground to freedom and began to take her revenge on the slave system. She did this by returning to the South and leading others from the darkness of bondage toward the light of the North Star.

Not all slaves had the fearlessness of Harriet Tubman. Not all of them knew how to fade into a forest as she did. Not all were able to walk on the big road with a straight face so as not to arouse the suspicion of the patrolmen who watched for runaways. Not all could find their way through strange cities like Philadelphia and strike out for the next station on the way. Not all had the heart to walk alone in the big unknown world. Many of them needed a companion, and Harriet Tubman knew that she was the one to help them.

After her own deliverance she made no less than nineteen trips to the South, helping hundreds of other slaves to make their way to freedom. She didn't talk much about her activities, since it would have been unsafe to do so, but underground conductors like William Still of Philadelphia, who kept records of passengers, frequently mention how often that heroic dark woman passed their station leading a band of fugitives. Harriet herself said on one occasion, "On my underground railroad, I never run my train off the track and I never lost a passenger."

An indication of what slaveholders thought of her may be gathered from the fact that they offered a reward of forty thousand dollars for her capture during the time when she was most active. But nobody collected it. Harriet would suddenly show up at an antislavery meeting in Michigan or Ohio, upper New York State or Massachusetts, say a few simple but moving words to those present, and travel on. Talking wasn't her talent. She was a woman of action, and her work could never wait very long.

Her pictures indicate that she was a woman of simple, if not crude, appearance. Some of her front teeth were missing, and it was said that she had lost them as a young girl on the plantation when she was hit in the face by an overseer. For this Harriet paid back her former owner with interest.

The high mark of her adventures came in 1857 when she undertook to match her own father and mother out of slavery. Getting those tottering old people past danger seemed an almost impossible task, but Harriet did it. After her death the people of Auburn, New York, among whom she had settled, put a tablet in the public Auditorium in her honor. Of her they said, "She braved every danger and overcame every obstacle."

Another who could not sleep peacefully while his fellow men were still suffering in slavery was Josiah Henson. Like Tubman, Henson was born in Maryland, but it was not until after he had been sent to Kentucky that he made his escape. In his case, getting away was not difficult. He enjoyed the complete confidence of his owner and traveled from state to state in the master's interest. In fact, he was placed in charge of other slaves. But his own welfare did not blind him to the condition of others. Henson looked at slavery from every point of view and decided there was no good in it. Then he considered the idea of running away and decided as a Christian and part-time preacher that it was no sin. He preached a few sermons in friendly churches on the Ohio side of the river, raised a few collections, and bought a ticket to Canada.

In Canada he became a leader among the fugitives from slavery who had settled there. Then his mind turned to the relatives and friends he had left behind, and he went to work in their behalf. Sometimes he returned to the South to assist those who could not leave without help, but mainly he aided by lecturing and telling his own story and thus raising money to pay the way of others. He was able to account for one hundred and eighteen Kentucky people brought out of slavery by his efforts.

Perhaps even more important to the cause of emancipation, however, was another result of his personal story. Harriet Beecher Stowe heard Henson tell it and later read his book, The Life of Josiah Henson. She was so impressed she decided to write a novel on a similar subject, using Henson as a model for her hero. The character she created was something of a namby-pamby and didn't actually resemble Josiah Henson very much, but Mrs. Stowe's book became a great sensation. It was Uncle Tom's Cabin, and its influence on America was so great that Abraham Lincoln once smilingly greeted its author as the "little lady who made this big war."

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THE END

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NOTICE: The Citizens Club is attempting to help sharecroppers who are kicked off their place because of participation in the ASC elections or in any civil rights activities. If you have a house available on your land or any extra cotton acres or you know of someone who does, please give this information to Mr. Henry Reaves or to any officer of the Citizens Club.

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All stories, poems, and other articles are always welcome--please keep your contributions to the Freedom Train coming in. Give them to Beulah Mae Ayers, editor, to an officer of the Citizens Club, or send them to 100 Rust Avenue, Holly Springs, Mississippi.

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ONE MAN---ONE VOTE