

benton  
county



"It's that freedom train comin'; get on board, get on board."  
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IF YOU WANT THEM,  
YOU GOT TO SHAKE  
THE TREE.

Thanks to the  
Panola County FREEDOM  
READER for the idea.



## Explanation:

For two weeks, there has been no Freedom Train because the mimeograph machine at the COFO office is broken. We have found a substitute for the present--the mimeograph machine at Rust College. But what we really need is our own machine--we want this to be truly OUR newspaper. Does anybody have any ideas on where we can get a GOOD, ELECTRIC mimeograph machine--cheap?

We have changed the mailing address of the Freedom Train, so please send all articles to: Route 2, Box 100, Holly Springs. And we are expanding the editorial board--so anyone interested in helping to put out to the paper should write to the above address. AND our new policy is: no articles, no paper. Meaning: if nobody sends in any articles to the paper, there will be no paper.

Signed:

The Editorial Board

## Notice of next meeting ??

We think the next all-county meeting will be Tuesday night--but we're not sure. And we think it will be at Samuels Chapel--but we're not sure. See, we just don't know what's happening because nobody's telling us, so why don't we all come to Samuels Chapel Tuesday night, because there are a whole lot of important things to discuss.

Seriously, we hate to be nasty BUT we think the president, district chairman, and anyone who has any news for the paper has the responsibility to the readers of the Freedom Train to inform them of what's going on. No need to write up a fancy story. Just send us the information you want in the paper, and we'll write it up (Rt. 2, box 100, Holly Springs). Aviva is tired of finding out the news, and we all can't be at all the meetings. So, PLEASE, officers of the county, let us know what's happening!

## A Kindergarten? Says who?

Word of a kindergarten is getting around the county. Families with 5 year-old children are being told to sign up for this kindergarten.

The Anti-poverty program is establishing kindergartens throughout the county as part of Operation Headstart. The purpose of these kindergartens is to give extra education to young children AND to get money to poor families by hiring poor people as cooks, assistant teachers, bus drivers, etc. Each community is supposed to make plans for ITS OWN kindergarten.

Since nobody seems to know much about the Benton county kinder-

garten, many people have asked and would like answers to the following questions: who is planning our kindergarten? The superintendent? And is there a white kindergarten also? Isn't segregation against the law, especially when it involves federal money? Who is being hired to work in this kindergarten? Poor people? Uncle Toms? Can the Citizens Club put a stop to a kindergarten which is not giving jobs to poor people? Will the federal government give us funds to establish our own kindergarten?

These questions and more will be discussed Tuesday night at the Citizens Club meeting at Samuels.

# News and rumors in review:

## NEWS:

Integration petitions, signed by over 300 residents of the county were sent to the Board of Education shortly after a lawyer from Jackson spoke to some of the parents in mid-April.

The lawyer spoke to the 40 parents who will sue the county Board of Education to have their children enter the Ashland school, in case the Board turns down the petition. The lawyer spoke of things these parents might expect when attending the school and in riding the buses. He pointed out that a little Negro first-grader who was the only Negro to integrate a white school in another county of Mississippi had no trouble at all. The only thing that bothered her was that she couldn't play on the swings the first day of school. But, then, neither could the white children--because the federal marshals who were there for protection wouldn't let anybody go out for recess the first day.

\* \* \*

The Negro members for the bi-racial committee were elected a few weeks ago. They are: Cater Poplar and Eugene Steward, from the first district; Jesse Jones and L.B. Paige from the second district; Teaster Baird and Loyal Thompson from the third district; Earnest Matthews from the fourth district, and Bryant Elliott from the fifth district.

\* \* \*

## RUMORS: (Old Salem)

A few weeks ago, it was rumored that the principal was under pressure not to fire some of the four teachers that the Citizens Club asked to be fired. As a result, the people spoke of boycotting the school in July together with marching on Ashland and picketing the school.

However, latest word is that the "famous four" will be leaving at the end of this term. We hope that the people of Benton have taught them something: that democracy is stronger than dictatorship; that if you don't stand with your people, you stand alone. At least, that's how things work in Benton. We would like to wish these teachers good luck in the new school of their endeavors.

\* \* \*

A more recently reported rumor is that the grades of those seniors who participated in the boycott will be lowered. If this is true, the Citizens Club plans to take action. Meanwhile, all students who are applying at present to a college and fear that this will go on their record should see a member of the Freedom Youth Movement who will explain to them how the situation can be remedied.

## Goodbye, James

At a 3rd district meeting two weeks ago, James Batts, a citizen of Benton County and a COFO worker made a speech--a goodbye speech. Feeling at a loss for words, he said (after being offered a gift of money by those present), "You don't owe me a thing. Instead, I owe you. From you I have gained my self-respect. You have made me proud of my county, my friends, and my race."

James is now in Pennsylvania finishing his education. He plans to come back to Mississippi as a lawyer. Everyone will miss him, but we will be gaining a Negro lawyer here in the county some day.

## What will happen this summer?

by Alberta Tipler

As we think back about some months ago, we think of the time when the summer volunteers came to Mississippi. They came to Mississippi to help us. Then we think back before that time about the people in our County who wanted to do something--but leaders can do nothing without followers. We think about the people who went to register to vote and about those who didn't go because they were afraid and about those who didn't care to go.

We think about all this, and then we think about last July when our problems began to touch the hearts of others far and near. They began to touch the hearts of people who were willing to help, and by this willingness to help people, came to our county to help us.

Since we already had some leaders, it wasn't hard to get started, and with the help of people who believed in equality and justice for all, we saw what a group of people could do if they pulled together. We learned the real meaning of cooperation.

With this newly acquired strength, we began to do things. We started to raise money for a community center, won offices in the A.S.C.S. elections, and staged a successful school boycott.

But after all these things, we began to think ahead. We began to wonder and then we thought about last summer when those who knew the meaning of justice and wanted to help to bring strength to the struggle became aware of our great problem. All this brought progress. But, what will happen this summer?

## Summer Project

There will be another summer project this summer sponsored by the MFDP--not COFO--and, unlike last summer, the workers will be staying in the homes of the citizens of Benton county--not in Holly Springs.

Some citizens have already sent in their names saying that they would have some of the workers. If you would like to house some of the workers, write or see Mr. Walter Reaves, Rt. 2, Box 129, Holly Springs. You can specify the race, sex and age of the person you wish to house.

At the next county meeting, there will be a discussion on what each districts plans to do with the summer volunteers and what programs they will work on during the summer. The volunteers will be directed by the people of the county, and they will work on whatever programs the people decide they want.

## Who will lead us?

Mrs. Earnestine Evans

Now that James has gone and Aviva will be leaving in a month, we have to do our best in leading our people. We have some people who will help us to the best of their knowledge, but we must help them. Now if we want freedom like we say we do, we will keep fighting just as much as we did before Aviva and James left us. They felt that we wanted freedom, so we must make them believe it by doing the things we were doing before they left. Please do not stop! Keep on fighting for freedom and the things we believe in and one day WE SHALL HAVE OUR RIGHTS!

*Freedom or an "F"?*

by Sonny Reaves

Freedom is more important to me than a grade. My great grandparents (teachers) made grades, but they were still bound and tied by white supremacy. My grandparents (teachers) made grades. They were bound and tied by race hate, prejudices, and segregation. My mother (a teacher) made grades. She was wrapped and tied by segregation, hate, and prejudices.

An "F" is not of real importance to me. The first thing I would think of if I should get an "F" is who gave me this "F"?

Wednesday, April 14, our practice teacher, Mr. Betts, said we did not know what freedom was, nor did we know how to get it. He also stated that if any student wrote anything in the newspaper about him, he would give that student an "F". He now has his chance, because I firmly believe that freedom is more important to me than any grade he can give.

This article is proof of what I think is more important--freedom or an "F".

*Integrated Schools*

by Archi B. Richard

I would like to go to an integrated school. I would like to make friends with the whites.

I do not think it would be so bad because I once attended an integrated school. At that time I was very young and did not know anything about whites not liking Negroes. My white friends were very nice. That was in Chicago.

But now I think I'll be a little afraid. The white children may try to pick a fight or something. Soon after I get used to going, I think I will get along all right because I know some will be friendly and others won't.

I think it will be nice for whites and Negroes to go to the same school, and I think it will be better after a while. But I wonder what the white teachers would do if a white and a Negro got into a fight. Would they whip the Negro and let the white go? I don't really think that they would do it. I think once we are all together, the whites will learn to like the Negroes more.

*... And it Won't be Long*

by Freddie Washington

Freedom is coming and it won't be long,  
It might be today and it may be tomorrow.  
Freedom is coming and it won't be long.

Freedom is writing and freedom is singing,  
We are working, we are talking,  
We are hoping and we are thinking.  
Freedom is coming and it won't be long.

Come on, people, we're going to win,  
We're going to fight and win our friends.  
I still say: Freedom is coming and it won't be long.