

Benton
County

Freedom

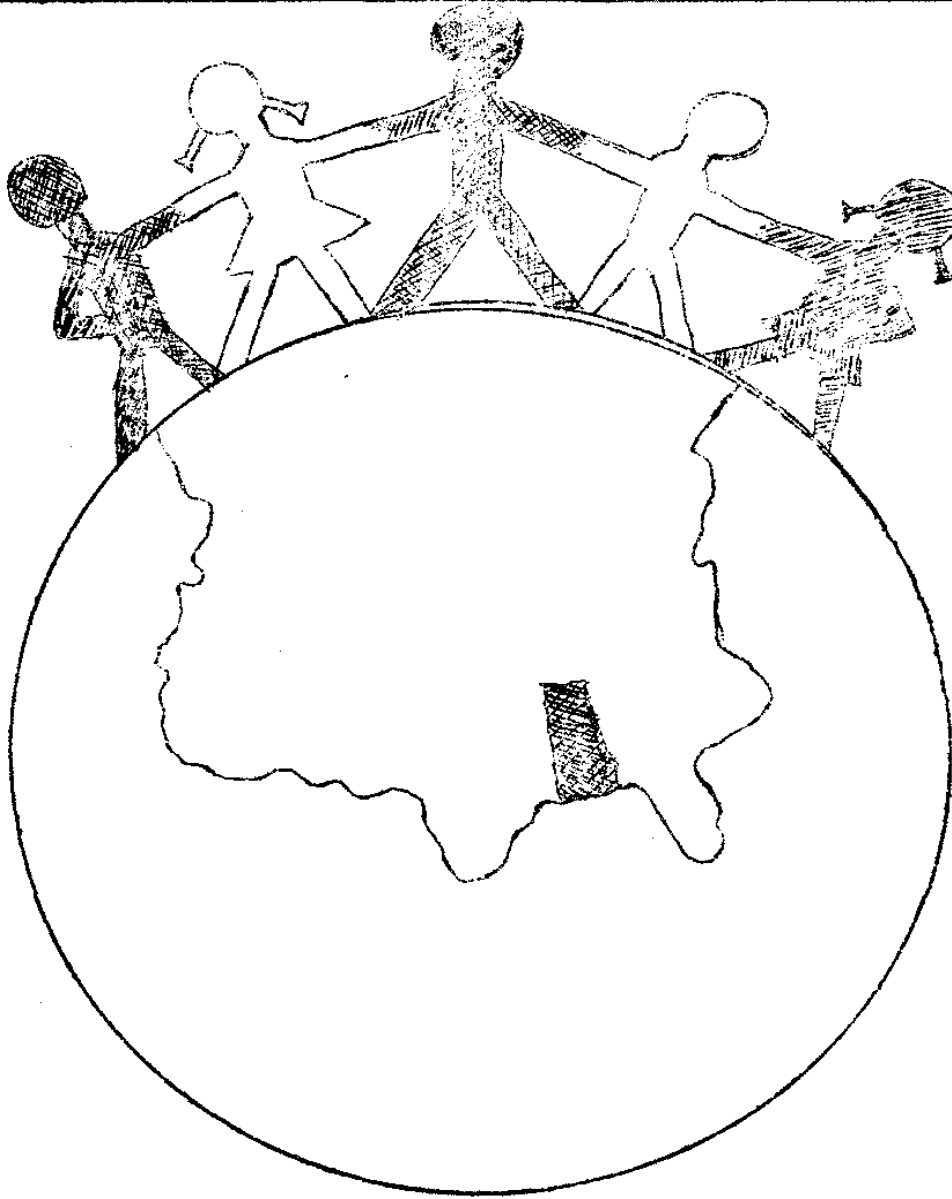
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VOL. I, NO. 3

"ONE MAN - ONE VOTE"

AUGUST 11, 1964

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FREEDOM SCHOOL



COME, LET US BUILD A NEW WORLD TOGETHER

NEWS OF THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN MISSISSIPPI

WORLD B. BOARD 1000 W. 10th Street AUGUST 10, 1964
MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF THE
CLARK COUNTY SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION

FDP IN JACKSON

by Alberta Tipler

On August 6, 1964 the delegates of Benton County met for the State Convention of the Freedom Democratic Party. The delegates included Mrs. Mae Alice Matthews, Mrs. Edie Mae James, Mr. John Beard, Mr. Lloyd Thompson, Mr. Henry Reaves, and Mr. Walter Graves. Cley Datta and Alberta Tipler were sent as observers to the convention by the Freedom Youth Movement of Benton County.

Upon arriving in Jackson we registered and proceeded to the auditorium where the meeting was being held. Presiding over the meeting was Dr. Henry Aaron. Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer led in the singing of the Star Spangled Banner and Rev. Marshall Lindsay gave the invocation.

The Key Note address was given by Miss Ellis Baker of Atlanta, Georgia. Truer words nor more sincere words can ever be spoken from the mouth of any human being. She voiced our thoughts and expressed our needs and wishes. All those minds that refused to think hard were made to realize while others were reminded of the circumstances under which we live and the challenging situation we now face in this urban age.

For the benefit of minds here who refuse to think and for the benefit of those who were not present I shall give you only a few high points from the speech of one of our great Americans, Miss Baker. Her indictment concerned the south which though in a critical condition still wants to hold on to its illegal unauthorized powers. Mississippi, in particular, has managed to convince herself that she could do anything regardless of the rules. Thirdly, is the nation which has stood by and effortlessly gazed on as Mississippi lynched, harassed, terrorized, and intimidated Negroes. These things can and will be stopped. This you can see when you look and see the work of the people and our great Freedom Democratic Party.

After warning what is rightfully ours we must not forget the poor few that may be left alone. We must reach down and pull that poor and dejected few to the heights. Then will be our time to proclaim "FREEDOM." The nation must be ready to accept changes of our modern world. Freedom and equality will come when the nation can cry as hard over the death of a Black woman's son as it does over the death of a White woman's son.

Following her very moving speech, Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer led all of us in a series of stirring freedom songs. The voices of the crowd rang out loud and clear, filled with determination to make certain that, for as Miss Baker pointed out, if the Negro is not free then no one is.

The meeting continued with committee reports which included the resolutions of the Freedom Democratic Party. Elections were held for delegates at large for the Atlantic City convention bringing the total delegation to sixty-eight. Chosen from our area were Mr. Henry Reaves from Benton County and Mrs. Annie Louise Matthews from Marshall County.

A very interesting talk was given by Mr. Raugh, lawyer for the United Auto Workers. While explaining the legal procedures for seating a new

Jackson Convention, (con't from p. 1)

party, he also showed how the Freedom Democratic Party is loyal to the National Party. The Freedom Party is pledged to support President Johnson and anyone who supports someone else is something less than loyal.

After other business a short memorial service was conducted in memory of those great people who laid down their lives for our sake in the name of "freedom." The meeting was then adjourned.

We all reached home safely with something in our hearts. We came back with more courage, hope, and a stronger belief that we're moving up. We're climbing the ladder round by round so that someday instead of saying, "We shall overcome," we can speak the words of a very real and indestructible victor, "By our efforts, We have Overcome."

* * * * *
How FREE Is MISSISSIPPI?

I think the people of Mississippi are not free, that means both Negroes and Whites. One reason is jobs. The Whites have the Negroes for their slaves. They will work the Negro hard all day and not give him a break. The Whites freed the Negroes but not that much. The Negroes don't get enough pay for their labor. The Whites can work in factories and get full pay for their work, but the Colored have to work in the fields and clean the Whites' houses and still not get full pay.

The Whites are not free either. The way they treat the Negroes is a crime to us and to themselves too. Keeping the Negro in his place and just plain hatred enslaves everyone.

Gloria Jean Winston

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

IN INTEGRATION

We are now facing the problem of what will be done about the behavior of White kids and Negro kids in an integrated school.

The best way for Negroes and

Whites to get along in an integrated school is to arrange the Whites in a seat beside the Negroes and arrange the Negro in a seat beside the Whites in every classroom. In that way the Negroes can get to know who their little White friends are and the Whites can get to know who their little Negro friends are.

In class we discussed the problems we would face in an integrated school. The freedom teachers taught us some of the things we don't know about the White kids and our very own people and how they can live and thrive in different parts of the states. So let's cooperate well with them and "WE SHALL OVERCOME SOME D-A-A-AT!"
* * * * *
Elease Brown

FREEDOM IS NOT AN EASY STRUGGLE

Voting
In order for you and, of course, everybody else who wants freedom to get it you will indeed have to fight for it.

To fight for it you must vote. Some of our race today are afraid to fight for their freedom, but in order to have freedom you must fight for it. The reason some of us are afraid to fight for our freedom is that more than half of the Negro race is under the White man's rule. The White man is their "boss" and they have to do whatever that "boss" tells him to do or else move off his land. While a few just might move off, a man with a large family just can't. But to get your freedom people you must put God in front, join in the battle and fight.
Lillie Nurley

WHY I LIKE SCHOOL AND LEARNING

I like school because I am interested in learning different things and when I finish school I want to get a job. My favorite subject is Geogra because I like learning about the world. I like to travel my maps. So people don't like to go to school because they think they should always have their way. Some don't know but Some go to ride the bus, but I go to learn.
Eleanor Munnally

Whites not free

WHY NON-VIOLENCE?

At times this way something I did not consider, but today something happened, something I had not experienced before.

Every four Civil Rights workers came to our school. I did not see them come in, but I felt their presence because our teachers began to go to the front room and talked of their being here. As the detail of what happened came to me this came to my mind -- that as a person, our principal is one of the lowest men in the world.

The workers drove up and behind them came Bennett, the superintendent. Our principal was somewhere down the hall at the time. Several minutes after this Brooks Ward, the sheriff showed up and did an awful lot of loud talking, so loud that it drew everyone's attention. After a bit of trying to settle the problem Wards pushed Peter Cummings. The second Pete started landing to a fall many of us felt as though the sheriff had pushed us because that shove came from a man so strongly opposed to the freedom movement. The second the hand made contact with the shoulder was the second my heart ached with pain, pain for my fellow race, pain for humanity as a whole.

At that time Pete accepted the fact that this man in a very real sense was nothing more than a barbarian -- a man, who at an instance, would be ready to act as a barbarian.

Why non-violence? Answer -- violence breeds violence -- man is fearing fear itself. That fear that the Negroes, along with the help of the Civil Rights workers and God may some day tear down and with it, tear down that machine of corruption which the White man has built.

How can we stop them the best way -- non-violence. Let them strike but don't strike back. Hold fast to that which is true. Most of all, hold fast to your dreams for if our dreams die we will be like a broken winged bird and a broken winged bird cannot fly.

Janeival Evans

The Negroes have been oppressed by the Whites since their arrival in America. No attempt was being made to better the Negroes' condition for a long time. Our first move began on December 1, 1955 with the arrest of a Negro woman, Mrs. Rosa Parks. That was when the cup of endurance began running over. This was our expression of longing for human dignity and freedom, but after this expression we had to find a way to fight, a way by which we could gain, a way that wouldn't lead to violence and lawlessness, a way to protest courageously, yet with human dignity and Christian love. Non-violence was the only technique that would enable us to protest this way and uphold our beliefs as Christians.

Non-violence is favored over violence because greater violence only brings on more and more violence. Violence causes bloodshed and makes any situation worse.

Non-violence is different. It's very different. It is our way of gaining public opinion. Public opinion is needed very much because we as Negroes are expected to be violent because Negroes are considered to be ignorant. We must show that our aim is not to harm but to gain our freedom. We aim to be patient and reasonable. We are not fighting to defeat the whole man and humiliate him, but to gain his understanding and friendship.

Non-violence is a way of life we can live by because of the morality. The willingness to use non-violence is a big step forward. For if we use non-violence we are likely to adopt it as a way of life. Non-violence may develop in an inflictor of violence a sense of shame which may bring about a change of heart.

Non-violence is not a way for cowards. It is a way of active resistance to evil without being physically aggressive toward an opponent. It is a strong spiritual persuader.

Another point which characterizes non-violence is the willingness to accept suffering without retaliation

*High school
incident*

Non-violence

and to accept blows without striking back. The non-violent resister is willing to accept violence is necessary, but never to inflict it. Non-violent resisters are willing to accept suffering as a part of the fight with the belief that unearned suffering is redemption and the attainment of non-violence is the creation of lasting friendship and love.

The center of non-violence is love. We must not indulge in hate campaigns, for someone must cut away the chain of hate. This can only be done by projecting the ethic of love.

The basic fact about non-violence is that one believing in non-violence has deep faith in the future. This is another reason why suffering can be accepted without retaliation.

We use non-violence because it promotes love, understanding, and good will for all men. Love is the center of this technique. Love in this connection means understanding and redemption, and good will. We must seek to have disinterested love. Love that individuals seek not for their own good, but the good of his neighbors. It makes no distinction between friends and enemies. We must accept the good as well as the bad. We must love the White man in order to ease his tensions and remove his insecurities, and fears because his personality is so greatly distorted by segregation.

Alberta Tipler

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HELP IS HERE AT LAST

WHO REALLY NEEDS IT?

I am glad that the Freedom workers have come to help us. Most of the Whites think that Negroes aren't good enough for them -- good enough to go to school with, to eat or swim with them.

I believe once we get together they will get to know us better. They'll know we're not as bad as they think. Some will be real

friendly and others will not.

If Whites and Negroes get together I think it will be better because there are Whites and Negroes who are righteous. The Negroes are just as good as Whites, but the Whites don't want to believe that. They don't want to look to us as human beings because if they do they will know that they have done wrong. And they don't want to believe that so instead, they just don't look. They just don't pay any attention. All they care about us is our work. Just as long as we work for them -- wash, iron, houseclean, etc. -- anything is alright. The nicest thing they say about Negroes is how good we work, "They work good." "This man does his work good" and all that. But they never say that this man or woman is good. All that matters to them is that we work well. But at last some thing is taking place so that Negroes can have an equal share with Whites.

We must remember that some of the Whites need freedom too. They are in no better shape than the Negroes, but they're too afraid to admit it. Freedom is not just for the Negroes, the poor Whites need it too, but they just will not speak of it. They do not want to believe it. But we know they need freedom.

We Negroes know what it means to be tied down with no freedom. Jesus knows too, and He is changing that.

It is really bad for these freedom workers to hear what the other Whites are saying about them -- calling them names like Communists. But we Negroes know it is not true.

To the Civil Rights people who are here to help us we pray that nothing else happens to them. It is sad to think of what happened to some of them and their friends. I know we are all sorry about it.

Archie B. Richer

SOME WORKING ADVICE

We all know that a Civil Rights Law has been passed, but do we all know exactly what it says?? Write your congressman for copies. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!!

ADULT SECTION: NEWS, POEMS, FEATURESNEWS DEPARTMENT'SEEDS OF FREEDOM' - BIG HIT

Holly Springs, July 26, 1964. The students of the Holly Springs Freedom School presented a play entitled "Seeds of Freedom" at Dixie Hall on the Rust College Campus.

It was developed and characterized by the Freedom School students and produced by Debbie Flynn, a school teacher from New York.

The play was an overwhelming success with over 250 people present. There were some very moving moments when some cried over the sad death of our Civil Rights martyrs.

The most outstanding characters included the following: Ira Moore, Roy DeBerry, Amelia Oliver, Jewel Adkins, Deloris Polk, Mary Crockett, Charles Caldwell, Roosevelt Echols, Mattie Oliver, Bettye and Mavis Farrow, Billie Robinson, Clara Faulkner, Dorothy Lucas, Marjean Brown, Rosilind Russell, Esther and Edna Echols, Bonnie Tidewell, and Modena Reynolds. Music was directed by Gene Hunn, a Civil Rights worker.

Others around the state will have the opportunity to enjoy this very fine drama. Many thanks to everyone involved for an outstanding job.

Bonnie Tidewell
Modena Reynolds
Edna Echols

BENTON SEES 'SEEDS OF FREEDOM'

Benton County, August 5, 1964. On Wednesday night, August 5, the students of the Holly Springs Freedom School came and rendered a play for the Freedom School at Mt. Zion C.M.E. Church. The play was based on the death of Medgar Evers. We, the students in Benton County, want them to know that we did appreciate their coming and rendering such a wonderful play for us.

We want to tell the group to come back again and be with us at any time they want. They are welcome at all times because we all are fighting for the same thing and that is Freedom, FREEDOM.

Burne Alexander

Mt. Zion, July 28, 1964. Peter Cummings, one of our Freedom Workers was arrested at the Mt. Zion C.M.E. Church, Tuesday, July 28. Peter and Charlie T. were headed for Miss DeLois Royston's home when the accident occurred. They ran into some loose gravel and the car overturned. They were not injured severely, so they drove to Mt. Zion. While enroute to the Church, they were seen by Sonnie Bryant who is a deputy of the fourth district in Benton County. He called the sheriff who came immediately. Since the accident actually occurred in Marshall County, the sheriff was called and he, too came in a hurry. All of them enjoy arresting the freedom workers because they are here to help the Negroes. The Game Warden was also there, but for what purpose I don't know.

After the officers arrived at the school, we were asked by the freedom workers to go inside the Church. We then started to sing freedom songs. After a few minutes Brooks Wards and one of his deputies started into the Church, but was stopped by Mr. Ernest Matthews, who is a member of the Mt. Zion Church. He asked them if they were looking for someone. They answered that they were looking for Peter. Mr. Matthews told them that he would get Peter because Mr. Matthews did not want them in the Church. We hadn't sent for the officers anyway. Mr. Matthews then came into the Church and told Peter and he went outside and was arrested. They carried him to jail and the other freedom workers followed him to see that nothing happened.

The Benton County law officers remained at the Church, just standing and looking, while the students of the Freedom School sang "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round" in front of the Church. I don't think they liked it very well but there wasn't anything they could do about it, so they started checking driving licenses as the cars left the Church. They managed to give Roy Nunnally a ticket for having no license.

We, the Negroes of Benton County, don't like these occurrences because we love Peter very much.

Beulah Mae Ayers

VOTER REGISTRATION GOES WELL

Ashland, July 30, 1964. On July 30, seven people from Benton County met at the Mt. Zion Church in order to drive together with freedom workers to Ashland to register. They didn't have any trouble at all. However, they did have their pictures taken while standing in the hallway of the Courthouse. A few people looked them over, I guess to make sure they were people. Anyhow, everything went well.

Beulah Mae Ayers

SECOND CONGRESSIONAL CONVENTION

Greenville, August 2, 1964. The Benton County delegates of the Freedom Democratic Party went to Greenville, Miss. to attend the Second Congressional District Meeting. We left Mr. Henry Reaves' house at 10:00 A.M. and arrived at Greenville at 2:00 P.M.

Upon entering the Church, where the meeting was held we heard those assembled singing freedom songs. Following the singing was a brief intermission for caucusing. Then the elections started. Mr. William Scott was elected chairman of the Second Congressional District and conducted the rest of the meeting. There were three main elections: delegates and alternates to Atlantic City, an executive committee, and one elector and alternate. From Benton County Mr. Henry Reaves was elected an alternate to Atlantic City Convention of the National Democratic Party.

It was good to see so many delegates from the other counties all assembled for the purpose of freedom.

A FREEDOM EVEN' PRAYER

Precious Lord, We thank You for one more even.

You have spared us to meet in the House of Worship one more time with our freedom English class.

Father I thank you for the teachers that reform us.

Father I thank you for our freedom workers. I say it is love and your power that sent them here.

Father I'm asking you to impose those who could be with us, but are afraid. Give them courage, and don't let them reject. Amen

WAYNE YANCEY IS DEAD...

Marshall County, August 1, 1964.

One of our leading freedom workers was killed August 1. His name was Wayne Yancey. Wayne was killed about 3:00 P.M. He and one of our leading citizens of Benton County, Charlie T. Selnes, were coming from Memphis on highway 78 near Redbanks when they had a head-on collision with another car. Wayne was killed instantly and Charlie was taken to John Gaston Hospital in Memphis. He is in fair condition.

I would like to say to the people of Benton County and Mississippi, this young man has lost his life trying to help us. He didn't have to come here, but he came and sacrificed his life that we may be free. Now can't we sacrifice a little of our time to help ourselves? Don't stop coming to school. If you did, Wayne wouldn't like that. So let us keep working. Let us not let the work that Wayne did go to waste. We all loved Wayne, but God saw that he needed rest, therefore, he called him to rest. Wayne is not dead, he is only asleep. His memory will be with us always as though he was walking with us each day.

Beulah Mae Ayers

GOD TOOK HIM FROM US TO REST

Saturday, August 1, 1964, Wayne was killed in a head-on collision. We, the people in Benton County and other counties, miss him for the good deeds and the good work he has done with us for his benefit as well as ours. He was trying to fight for his freedom as well as others. So the Lord took Wayne, but there are other good people to take his place. May God bless his family. Sleep on, Wayne, and take your rest. We love you but God loves you best.

Burne Alexander

Mae Alice Matthews

GREAT GRANDFATHER WAS A SLAVE

My great grandfather said that he was ten years old during the Civil War. His mother and sisters were named Mr. and Mrs. Beard. He didn't know his real name because he didn't know his parents, so of course he went by the same name as they did, Beard.

He said that children were sold just as we sell cows and hogs today. They were stood on blocks and auctioned off and of course, the highest bidder would get them. He also said that Negro women were tread just like cows.

The slaves weren't allowed to leave the plantation without permission. If they did, they were punished. Bells were put on some of them at night so they could hear them if they tried to run away.

The mothers didn't have time, or should I say, weren't allowed to give their children the proper care they needed and the cook took care of them. They were fed like pigs in a trough, altogether. She would cook corn bread and put it in milk. That is the way they ate.

Now do we want this today? No, is the answer the majority say. Are you going to stand up and fight for your rights?

We want better education for our children and we want better living facilities. We no longer want to live in slums. We

We've started, but we can't stop now because we don't want to fall down again. God has sent us help and we should welcome them with open arms. Now is the time to vote. Don't be afraid. This is what we've been asking for so don't close your door in the freedom worker's face.

Beulah Mae Ayers

WISHING SCHOOL?

On Monday, August 10, four of our Civil Rights workers tried to visit Old Salem School. They were treated very badly: cursing, lying, and shoving. To all of you in Benton County--WHAT WILL YOU DO?

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Negro women ask for some jobs, but not all of them. We think that they should be divided equally among Whites and Negroes. As the Negro race we think that we should have justice and law. Why? Because we are citizens of the United States of America.

Our boys have gone over seas and fought for this country, which is ours as well as the White man's country. Some of them died over there. And when our boys come home they can't go in the White man's cafe, restroom, hotel, parks or swimming.

When we go to a White man's home we have to go around to the back door and knock, but when he comes to our homes he comes in the front door.

I often wonder what the White people think we are. We are all God's children and He loves us all because He made us in His own image and likeness. I am praying for the freedom workers to be successful in carrying out God's work and may God guide them back to their homes.

Ethel Matthews

ENTERTAINMENT IN BENTON

Mt. Zion Church has indeed been fortunate this past week. Twice we were the lucky audience to two groups of singers. On August 11 two folk singers, Jean and Jim, presented a series of folk tunes and freedom songs. They were joined by Gene Hunn, a regular staff worker, who sang a few of his own songs. We especially enjoyed the one entitled "Talkin' Equal Rights Blues." On Thursday, August 13, we again were treated to an evening of song. This time a group of four Civil Rights workers, called The Freedom Singers. They were just wonderful. They sang and we sang and we all sang together. Some of the songs were happy such as "Ginga Odinga" and some were sad such as the one about the Mississippi River and the three missing workers. FREEDOM SINGERS, COME BACK SOON!

NEGRO LAMENTS AND HOPES

The Negro is hated without a cause,
 And he is not to blame.
 He wipes the tear drops from his eyes,
 And lives on jus' the same.
 When you come to making laws
 The Negro has no voice.
 Matters not how gray his head,
 He's always jus' a boy.

In the field of liberal arts,
 And work that's kinda rough
 The Negro works with ease and slight,
 He really knows his stuff.
 Often his eyes is blinded with tears
 His way on earth is dark.
 No one to tell his troubles to
 So he tells it all to God.

Stigmatized and buffed about,
 He's pressing through the storm
 South of the Mason Dixon line
 The Negro have no home.
 There are thousands of honorable
 Negroes,
 Some are living, some are dead
 Like the leaves that fade away
 Not hardly a word is said.
 So wake up Negroes go register and
 vote
 And fight for your rights.
 Burne Alexander

HEAD UP -- BE PROUD

Some Negroes seem to be afraid
 To stand up for their rights.
 God has sent us leaders,
 So hold up your head and fight.

We are all flesh and blood
 Just like the White men are.
 Let him keep on digging ditches,
 He can't get very far.

The freedom workers are being shot at
 at, scaled and put in jail
 And we can't open our doors to them.
 How would we feel if we should get
 to heaven
 And God had closed the door?

The White man wants to see your
 head down
 And he's trying to keep it there.
 But, hold your head up high
 And deman your share.

I am talking about the share of
 freedom
 That's what we are looking for.
 God gave this land to everyone
 He didn't say it goes for the
 White and tall.

Beulah Mae Ayers

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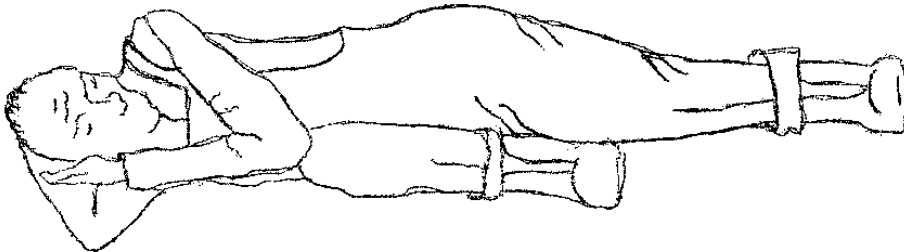
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AND FROM SOME OF OUR YOUNGER STUDENTS...

I WILL MISS WAYNE A LOT

I am sorry that Wayne got killed in a car. I like him because he has a large voice. He had a bigger voice than any one. I liked him because he was a freedom worker. He sings lots of freedom songs. He passes out papers. He plays ball. He plays ball with Benton County and Mississippi boys. He was at the picnic before he got killed. I like him very much. He came to freedom school every day. We miss Wayne. But we should keep working for freedom. "We shall overcome."

Gail Ann Hamer

A LETTER TO ALL OFYOU WHO WANT FREEDOM

Dear friends of the Freedom School, I know that the days seem hotter since Wayne has died and I know that we were sorry and that we will not get over it soon. And like most peoples say, trouble don't last all ways. I like the Freedom School and hope that I can come forever I can and if it is possible to come.

Good-bye from

Helen Marie Richard

WHY I LIKED WAYNE

Why I liked Wayne. I like Wayne because he made songs more gay because he had a bigger voice than anybody else. We are very sorry that Wayne is dead, but no one can help it.

Good-bye Wayne

Linda Fay Ruther

I WAS SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT IT

I was sorry to hear about Wayne having a wreck. I feel terrible. The last time I saw Wayne was Friday.

Emma Jean Reaves

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT SCHOOL

Well, the things I do to learn is to listen to what other people say and take notes of what I hear when I listen. I like to take notes what I'm doing.

My favorite subject in school is reading. I like to read because I like to look at different kinds of pictures in the story. But if I don't pay any attention to anybody, well, I just won't know anything. Sometimes I look like I'm not paying any attention, but I was paying attention all along.

Mary Lean Nunnally

WHAT WE DO IN OUR SCHOOL

Our school has some nice activities and some activities that are not so nice. Our school activities are baseball, dancing, and exercising. We exercise for about thirty minutes per day. Our exercises are Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays. On Tuesdays and Thursdays we have health.

For gym we have to buy one-piece gym suits. The boys only have to pay \$1.90 but the girls have to pay \$2.70.

Our teacher is a man. Some of the exercises are hard for the girls such as the duck walk. We have 45 minutes in the classes. Most days it's hot inside and outside. Our teachers tell us to go outside to get fresh air but when we do go out there is only the hot sun and so it is not pleasant to us.

We also have a music teacher so we sing.

We have a break from 12:00 to 12:30 but we have no place to go. We get a lot of work from our five teachers.

Shirley Jean Richards



Shirley RICHARD

This heart is for you and for me, for love and freedom, for the light of freedom. Let everybody stay in that heart.